

# RESEARCH REPORT



## Survey of Canadian Municipalities: Regulatory Measures for Housing Affordability and Choice



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# **Survey of Canadian Municipalities: Regulatory Measures for Housing Affordability and Choice**

**Prepared for  
Research Division  
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

**by  
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June 1, 2001

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Despite all of this help and expert assistance, it is likely that some errors and omissions remain in this document. These are the responsibility of the authors, and we hope that they are few and not significant.

*Peter Spurr*

June 4, 2001

*Chapter 1*

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## SURVEY OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES: REGULATORY MEASURES FOR HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND CHOICE

### Introduction

This research highlight describes the findings of a survey of Canadian municipalities, conducted during the summer of 2000. The survey explored issues and activities associated with planning and building regulations and approvals processes that affect housing affordability and choice.

### Objectives and Methodology

There is a need to better understand the experience of Canadian municipalities with regulatory reform in relation to improving affordability and choice in housing. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), in collaboration with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), set out to improve this understanding through a broad survey of municipalities, so that all parties involved have good information about the measures that have been tried and those that are under consideration.

The aim of the survey was to elicit this information by asking questions about many aspects of regulation, approvals processes and housing affordability and choice and by securing responses from the wide variety of municipalities across Canada. One hundred and ten municipalities were surveyed, representing all sizes of cities

in each region of the country. The survey was carried out in the summer of 2000 by a national team of professionals, located in or near their respective study regions.

The survey process began in each selected municipality with the surveyor contacting a senior official in the municipal planning department (usually the director or Commissioner of Planning), and sending her/him a copy of the survey questionnaire. It explored six main themes concerning local housing affordability and choice:

- key local issues;
- relationships with major regulatory instruments;
- reforms associated with land-use regulations;
- reforms associated with building regulations;
- reforms associated with the approvals process; and
- other measures.

Depending on the wishes of the respondent, the survey was either administered on the telephone (approximately 80 surveys) or completed in the municipality, by the staff the municipality deemed to be the most appropriate, and returned to the surveyor. The latter method usually entailed follow-up by telephone to clarify particular responses.



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**Table I: Municipalities Surveyed, by Population**

<b>Under 50,000 (I)</b>		<b>50,000 - 99,999 (I)</b>	<b>100,000 - 299,999 (I)</b>	<b>300,000 - 999,999 (I)</b>		<b>Over 1 Million (I)</b>
Moose Jaw	Wetaskiwin	Shawinigan	Regina	Winnipeg	Niagara Falls	Châteauguay
Chibougamau	Fernie	Drummondville	Sydney N.S.	Morinville	Cambridge	Brossard
Thompson	Brandon	Fredericton	Chicoutimi	Sainte-Foy	London	Laval
North Battleford	Lloydminster	Cornwall	Trois-Rivières	Québec	Kitchener	Saint-Jérôme
Gaspé	Rouyn-Noranda	Sault Ste. Marie	Saskatoon	Springfield	Grimsby	Ajax
Portage	Yarmouth	Medicine Hat	Saint John	Sillery	Burlington	Verdun
Yorkton	Timmins	Lethbridge	Gatineau	Strathcona Co.	Hamilton	Oakville
Thetford Mines	Camrose	Charlottetown	Moncton	Gloucester	Ottawa	Montréal
Elliot Lake	Cowansville	Red Deer	Sherbrooke	Welland	Stoney Creek	Mississauga
New Glasgow	Yellowknife	Prince George	St. John's	Edmonton	Halifax-Dartmouth	Toronto
Fort St. John	Whitehorse	Chatham-Kent	Hull	Calgary	St. Catharines	York
Baie-Comeau	Salmon Arm	North Bay	Windsor	Nepean	Victoria	Markham
Woodstock	Sechelt	Belleville	Thunder Bay	Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth		Maple Ridge
Loyalist Township	Whistler	Nanaimo	Sudbury			Vaughan
Port Alberni	Bracebridge	Chilliwack	Barrie	Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton		Surrey
Owen Sound	Orillia		Whitby			Vancouver
Cobourg	Iqaluit		Guelph			
			Kelowna			
			Abbotsford			

I. These city-size groups are based on the 1996 population of the Census Urban Area in which the municipality is located.

**Table 2: Is Housing Affordability an Important Issue?**

<b>City-Size Groups (1996 Population)</b>	<b>Responses by Municipality</b>				<b>No. of Cities Surveyed</b>
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>No Response</b>	
Under 50,000	15	14	5	0	34
50,000 - 99,999	6	5	4	0	15
100,000 - 299,999	10	8	1	0	19
300,000 - 999,999	12	10	3	1	26
Over 1 million	10	4	2	0	16
Totals - as numbers	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
- as % of all responses	48%	37%	14%	1%	100%

Table 1 lists the 110 municipalities that were selected to represent all cities and regions of Canada. In the Table, they are grouped in five size categories, depending on the 1996 population of the census urban area (CMAs, CAs, and so on) in which they are located. They range from quite small places like Iqaluit, with a 1996 Census population of 4,220, to huge cities within the largest metropolitan areas, including the City of Toronto which has a population of 2,400,000.

### Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice

The affordability of housing is an important issue for municipalities all over Canada. When asked "Is housing affordability an important issue in your city?" 85% (94 of the 110 municipalities surveyed) responded that affordability is "important" or "somewhat important"

(see Table 2). The 16 municipalities that indicated housing affordability was "not important", were mainly small to midsize places in central Canada where respondents explained that housing prices are relatively low and the vacancy rate is quite high, so concerns about affordability are currently reduced. On the other hand, most large cities considered housing affordability to be an important issue.

Municipalities were asked whether the following were "key issues" related to housing affordability and choice:

- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, housing affordability in general?
- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, housing affordability for specific groups (e.g. youth, singles, low-income families, single parents, special needs, seniors, others)?
- Poor quality and condition of some housing?

**Table 3: What are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues"?**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected <sup>(i)</sup>	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected <sup>(i)</sup>
"NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	68	Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	10
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	32	Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	10
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	26	Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	9
Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses)	22	Inefficient approval processes	7
Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	20	Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	7
Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	17	<sup>(i)</sup> Note: Each of the 110 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)	
High development cost charges	16	Sum of Responses	
Excessive land development standards (i.e. setbacks, lot sizes, parking)	13	257	
		No response	
		73	
		Total	
		330	

Most municipalities (68% of those surveyed) reported a lack of housing affordability and choice for specific groups is the key issue related to housing affordability. When asked which groups needed more choice and affordability, the responses (in descending order of frequency) were low-income families, single parents, households with special needs, singles, seniors and in some cases, young families. Thirty-eight municipalities (35% of those surveyed) said the poor quality and condition of some housing was a key issue, and 31 respondents said a key issue was the lack of, or inadequate choice of, housing affordability in general.

When asked which of these three "key issues" has been most difficult, the "lack of housing affordability for specific groups" was cited by most municipalities. In particular, this problem of housing affordability for various groups provided the greatest difficulty for more than one-half of the surveyed municipalities in mid- and large-sized urban regions. This issue has persisted in most municipalities for many years and respondents report that it is not becoming any less difficult.

Municipalities were asked to name the "top three" regulatory issues that they encounter, and were prompted with 13 issues considered to be likely possibilities. The response is reported in Table 3, which contains the total number of times each issue was identified, regardless of whether the issue was ranked first, second or third. Sixty-eight municipalities said that NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) was one of their top three issues.

NIMBY refers to the general opposition of citizens to change in their neighbourhoods. It received 55 votes as the top regulatory issue, which was more than all the other first choices put together, and was identified as the top regulatory issue by cities of all sizes.

Barriers to accessory apartments, primarily secondary suites but also garden suites, were seen as the second most important regulatory issue. Secondary suites make a vital contribution to housing affordability as they help meet low-cost rental unit demand at a time when new construction of this kind is limited. This option was selected 32 times as the first, second or third most important issue, and there was a broad distribution of these selections across city sizes and regions.

**Table 4: Do Regulations Act as Barriers to the Supply and Choice of Affordable Housing?**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses					No. of Cities Surveyed
	"No"	"Only Somewhat"	"Yes"	No Response		
Under 50,000	22	11	1			34
50,000 - 99,999	11	3	1			15
100,000 - 299,999	11	8				19
300,000 - 999,999	16	7	2	1		26
Over 1 million	10	4	2			16
Totals - as numbers	<b>70</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>110</b>
- as % of all responses	64%	30%	5%	1%		100%

The next most frequent response was to mention an “other issue” which had not been suggested in the questionnaire prompts. Among these 26 “other” responses, most were non-regulatory matters, including political and economic issues, like lack of economic growth.

“Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses)” was selected 22 times as a top-three issue, and was also broadly distributed among cities of all sizes. A need for regulations which encourage infill and conversion was selected 20 times.

Municipalities were asked “Do you think that planning and building regulations and development approval processes act as barriers to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing?”

As seen in Table 4, there were clear views about this, since only one city didn’t answer. Nearly two-thirds said regulations are not barriers, and another 30 per cent said they are “only somewhat” a barrier. There was no particular pattern of city sizes in this response.

### Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning Measures

Municipalities were asked about their utilization of 10 land-use planning and zoning measures which are often said, in the literature, to contribute to more housing choices and affordability. Responses are summarized in Table 5, grouped to illustrate three broad patterns in municipalities’ use of these reforms.

### Widely Adopted

Some measures are used by over 80% of municipalities, and might be considered standard practices. These include zoning which allows: mixing housing types and lot sizes; mixing commercial and residential uses and allowing conversions; and creating zones for innovative housing forms like co-housing. Instead of creating these latter types of zones, some places allow these uses “as of right” in all residential zones.

**Table 5: Municipal Use of Land-Use Planning Measures**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure							Total
		Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
<b>Widely Adopted Measures</b>								
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	102	4	1	3	0	0	0	110
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	100	4	0	6	0	0	0	110
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, collaborative housing and group homes	88	5	0	15	1	1	1	110
<b>Usage of Measures Mixed</b>								
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	80	3	4	22	1	0	0	110
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	61	8	4	34	0	3	3	110
Zoning allows accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites) in neighbourhoods that are predominantly detached housing	54	11	29	13	2	1	1	110
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	52	12	7	33	2	4	4	110
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	46	9	6	40	4	5	5	110
<b>Less Frequently Used Measures</b>								
Zoning allows for convertible housing	28	9	4	57	6	6	6	110
Replot schemes, special development districts	22	15	6	55	4	8	8	110

### Usage Mixed

There are mixed views about some measures, with 40-75 per cent of municipalities having adopted them, but also with significant numbers of cities rejecting them:

- 73% (80 municipalities) designate or pre-zone land to supply sites for multi-family housing, but 22 places indicated this measure is irrelevant;
- 55% (61 cities) reduce parking standards to minimize costs for affordable owner-occupied, special needs and rental housing. While eight other municipalities are

considering this measure, 38 places either consider it is irrelevant or have rejected it. Places opposing this measure are often smaller and lower density cities with relatively low land values, where a diminished parking requirement would have little impact on the total housing cost;

- 49% (54 municipalities) allow accessory apartments in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods, and another 11 are considering this policy. On the other hand, 29 places have rejected this measure. Six places mentioned specifically that they also allow garden suites

in single family zones, and while other cities may have similar measures, the accommodation of garden suites is much less common than measures directed to encourage secondary suites. Many respondents reported strong neighbourhood opposition in public hearings when secondary suites are discussed, including at Council and formal Committee meetings. They suggest that the successful implementation of this reform requires a conjunction of willing owners, commitment in the political offices of the city government, and cooperation among all relevant municipal departments (planning, building inspection and fire);

- 47% (52 municipalities) allow reduced lot sizes and road widths, and 12 other cities are considering these reforms. They were rejected or considered irrelevant by 40 cities. Once again this negative response was usually from smaller municipalities with lower land costs;
- 42% (46 municipalities) will reduce property line setbacks to allow for affordable ownership, special needs and rental housing, and while nine others are considering this measure, it has been rejected or is

considered irrelevant by 46 cities. There was no particular city size pattern observed in the divergent views about this measure.

### **Less Frequently Used Measures**

Two land-related measures are only used by a minority of municipalities (20-55%), while much greater proportions did not support such measures:

- 25% (28 municipalities) employ zoning which permits convertible housing, and nine others are considering it. However, four cities had rejected the idea and 57 considered it irrelevant. This measure is primarily used by larger cities;
- 20% (22 municipalities) have created special development districts or have designated areas for replot schemes, in order to facilitate low-cost housing. Fifteen other cities are considering these measures, although they had been rejected by six and were considered irrelevant by 55. Development districts were mainly in metropolitan areas, while replotting is employed in various Prairie cities.

**Table 6: Municipal Use of Measures Associated with the Approvals Process**

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>					<b>Total</b>
		<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Considered but Rejected</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	<b>No Response</b>	
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	78	8	1	21	0	2	110
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	73	15	2	18	0	2	110
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	69	5	6	18	1	11	110
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	32	6	8	60	2	2	110
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	26	11	4	59	5	5	110
Fast tracking for certified builders	16	7	5	70	5	7	110
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	6	2	8	85	4	5	110
Other	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

### **Reforms Associated with the Approvals Process**

Table 6 summarizes responses concerning eight measures associated with streamlining development or building approval processes. As these reforms involve cutting red tape and making the process more efficient, they can help reduce costs and lead to more affordability and choice.

#### **Measures used by 60-70% of cities:**

- 71% (78 municipalities) have streamlined their approvals process with standardized applications, and co-ordinated or one-stop approvals structures. Another eight places are considering such measures. Smaller places with low growth rates often said these measures are irrelevant because they already process applications within a matter of days;

- 66% (73 municipalities) had recently improved computerization in the processing of development applications, and another 15 places were considering this type of improvement;
- 63% (69 municipalities) employ some form of dispute resolution process. Although the descriptions of these measures varied, and many were vague, most involved municipal planners (or their contractors) holding informational or problem-solving workshops in the neighbourhood where a rezoning or other development is proposed, before the application is considered by the Council.

#### **Measures used by a minority of municipalities**

- 29% (32 municipalities) assign priority to the processing of projects which will produce affordable homes, and

while six others indicated they were considering this measure, 60 said it was irrelevant. Those using it were fast-growing, larger cities where acceleration in a complex and lengthy approvals process can provide a real benefit. A few observed that special treatment of any application would be unfair;

- 24% (26 municipalities) employ special measures to process brownfield redevelopment applications, and while 11 others are considering it, 59 said the idea is irrelevant. As redevelopment of industrial and other polluted sites becomes a more common means of urban intensification, more of this complicated processing will be required. The larger cities, particularly in central Canada, are becoming familiar with this requirement now, while smaller places are just beginning to see brownfield issues as normal parts of their activities;
- 14% (16 municipalities) will fast-track development applications from certified builders, and while seven are considering it, 70 said it is irrelevant. There were different degrees of formality in the designation of “certified builders”, with some smaller places applying this term to “good” experienced builders, while most places limited the designation to builders who had undergone formal qualification (such as R-2000 builders and “green” builders);

- 5% (6 municipalities) said they lower the processing priority of proposals that would reduce the net amount of affordable homes. Eight had rejected this concept and 85 said it is irrelevant. There was some concern that this measure would be counter-productive, and might not be allowed under most provincial legislation.

### Reforms Associated with the Building Codes and Regulations

Table 7 summarizes the responses concerning three measures related to building codes and regulations:

- 50% (55 municipalities) have a by-law on property maintenance (sometimes called “standards of maintenance”, “safe housing standards”, “minimum maintenance and occupancy”, or “property standards”), and while three others are considering this, six have rejected it and 34 said it is not relevant. These by-laws are usually central to a city’s substantive policy encouraging or discouraging affordable secondary suites. No city size pattern was observed in these responses;

Table 7: Reforms Associated with Building Codes, Regulations

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
"Standard of maintenance" by-law (or equivalent)	55	3	6	34	2	10	110
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. for secondary suites)	39	7	9	41	4	10	110
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	34	9	4	49	5	9	110
Other	6	0	0	0	0	0	6

- 35% (39 municipalities) have created special building code equivalents to encourage cost-effective renovation (e.g. for secondary suites and rooming houses), and this measure is under consideration in seven other places. Many respondents mentioned special efforts being undertaken in their cities to encourage these and other forms of existing low-cost housing, by being flexible in the application of codes. Several cities in the Atlantic and Quebec regions, and in southern Ontario, mentioned that they had, or needed, equivalencies to encourage improvements to heritage buildings;
- 31% (34 municipalities) have authorized equivalents for various building materials, systems and procedures to encourage housing affordability and choice, and 9 others are considering such measures. Fifty-three cities have either rejected this idea or consider it irrelevant, and 14 cities either had not considered it or did not respond to this question.

Many respondents observed that building codes can make it difficult to encourage more affordable forms of housing like secondary suites, collective housing, or small or older very basic rental units. Municipal authorities have difficulty when they try to ease regulations in favour of lower-cost housing, as they must also maintain the health and safety attributes defined by provincially-legislated building codes.

### Other Measures

The survey asked about six additional measures that did not fit the foregoing categories. The responses have been totalled in Table 8, and are summarized as:

- Forty-seven municipalities perform research on housing needs and their solutions. While eight others are considering it, 47 considered it irrelevant. The places which are doing housing research are primarily the largest municipal and regional governments;

**Table 8: Municipal Use of Other Measures to Improve Housing Affordability and Choice**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Research into housing needs and their solutions	47	8	1	47	2	5	110
Educational information (print materials, videos, Websites) to assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing	42	7	0	53	3	5	110
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	39	6	2	52	5	6	110
Demonstration projects undertaken -- innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	33	11	2	52	5	7	110
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	32	2	2	66	4	4	110
Levying development cost charges on an area basis	18	6	3	66	8	9	110

- Forty-two municipalities mentioned that they had prepared educational materials, such as brochures, videos and television programs to help inform the public about housing issues and encourage choice and affordability. Both large and small municipalities are engaged in educational programming, and it seems particularly notable that small places are making use of community cable channels to inform people about planning and housing issues. Seven cities are considering such measures, and 53 felt it is irrelevant;
- Thirty-nine cities employ advisory committees to consider and network on housing affordability and choice matters, and six others are considering this measure. Notably, eight cities in British Columbia have such committees, where they are supported by a provincial program;
- Thirty-three municipalities have undertaken demonstration projects to explore and promote innovation in land development, housing or building materials, and 11 others are considering such activities, while 52 said it is irrelevant. No city size patterns were observed in these responses;
- Thirty-two cities assign staff to work primarily on housing, and two others are considering this. Most of these housing specialists were located in the larger cities;
- Eighteen municipalities levy development cost charges on an area basis to remove a disproportionate cost which impedes smaller houses and lots. Six others are considering this measure, which has been widely advocated by the Pacific Chapter of the Urban Development Institute and the BC Ministry of Housing.

## Concluding Observations

Affordability issues are clearly important to Canadian municipalities, particularly the affordability problems of groups like single parents, low-income families, special needs, youth, seniors and singles. According to the survey, the single largest affordability issue is NIMBY, the forces opposing neighbourhood change.

Canadian municipalities are using a wide variety of measures to encourage housing affordability and choice. The survey found that seven of them are employed by over two-thirds of municipalities: zoning that allows for housing type and lot size mix; residential/commercial mix; zoning for innovative housing; rezoning land for multiples; coordinating/standardizing the approvals process; dispute resolution processes and computerization of approvals.

Six more of the measures discussed in this highlight are already adopted or being considered by over half of the municipalities surveyed including: three alternative development standards measures (reduced parking standards, reduced property line setbacks, as well as smaller lot sizes and road widths); zoning that allows accessory apartments; standard of maintenance bylaws; and conducting research. These findings demonstrate that municipalities are committing resources and energy to address regulatory and approval process problems associated with housing affordability and choice.

However, many surveyed municipalities were not convinced about some measures. Thirteen of the measures were rejected or were deemed "not relevant" by over one-half of the municipalities that responded. Among these were: fast tracking for certified builders; building code equivalencies that enable cost-effective renovation; and equivalencies that enable non-standard materials, systems and procedures. Many respondents commented that building code-related reforms are beyond their sphere of influence. Also, many said that these measures were irrelevant to their current market situation, or to cities of their size.

The survey showed that municipalities are engaged in and knowledgeable about issues of housing affordability. Many are improving their processes and regulations concerning development. However, respondents often expressed the view that planning and building regulations had only a limited role to play in increasing the supply of affordable housing. While these measures could be facilitative, they do not expect these measures, in and of themselves, to substantially affect housing affordability and choice.

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#### **Housing Research at CMHC**

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## SONDAGE AUPRÈS DE MUNICIPALITÉS CANADIENNES : MESURES DE RÉGLEMENTATION FAVORISANT L'ABORDABILITÉ ET LES CHOIX DE LOGEMENTS

### Introduction

Ce document présente les résultats d'un sondage réalisé auprès de certaines municipalités canadiennes au cours de l'été de l'an 2000. Le sondage portait sur diverses problématiques et activités liées aux règlements d'urbanisme et de construction ainsi qu'aux processus d'approbation, et leur effet sur l'offre et le choix de logements abordables.

### Objectifs et méthode

Il importe de mieux connaître l'expérience vécue par les municipalités canadiennes quant aux réformes de type réglementaire et le lien entre celles-ci et l'amélioration de l'abordabilité et du choix de logements dans les municipalités canadiennes. La Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL), en collaboration avec la Fédération canadienne des municipalités (FCM), a entrepris de mieux comprendre cette problématique en réalisant une vaste enquête auprès des municipalités, au moyen d'un sondage, de façon à ce que toutes les parties en cause puissent disposer de données valables au sujet des mesures qui ont déjà été mises en œuvre et de celles qu'elles envisagent d'adopter.

Ce sondage avait pour but de recueillir des renseignements à ce sujet en posant des questions portant sur divers aspects liés à la réglementation, aux processus d'approbation et à l'abordabilité et du choix de logements, et en obtenant des réponses auprès d'une vaste sélection de municipalités partout au pays. Cent dix municipalités ont ainsi participé au sondage, et elles étaient représentatives d'agglomérations de diverses tailles dans chaque région du pays. Le sondage fut réalisé durant l'été 2000, à l'échelle nationale, par une équipe de sondeurs professionnels dont les membres étaient situés à l'intérieur de la région sondée, sinon à proximité.

Dans chacune des municipalités sélectionnées, le processus du sondage commençait par l'établissement d'un premier contact par le sondeur avec un fonctionnaire cadre travaillant auprès du service d'urbanisme de la municipalité (règle générale, il s'agissait du directeur ou de la directrice du service, sinon d'un ou d'une commissaire à l'urbanisme), puis en lui transmettant ensuite un exemplaire du questionnaire utilisé pour le sondage. Le questionnaire abordait six problématiques principales en matière d'abordabilité et de choix de logements :

- les problèmes principaux constatés à l'échelle locale;
- les liens avec les principales mesures de réglementation;
- les réformes liées à la réglementation en matière d'urbanisme;
- les réformes liées à la réglementation visant les bâtiments;
- les réformes liées aux processus d'approbation; et
- les autres mesures.

Selon le vœu exprimé par le répondant, le sondage était administré soit au téléphone (ce fut le cas pour environ 80 sondages), soit complété dans la municipalité sondée, par le personnel que la municipalité estimait être le plus apte à y répondre, en retournant ensuite au sondeur le questionnaire dûment complété. Lorsque cette dernière méthode était employée, il fallait généralement effectuer un suivi au téléphone afin de clarifier certaines réponses.



AU COEUR DE L'HABITATION  
Canada

**Tableau I : Municipalités sondées, selon la population**

<b>Moins de 50 000 (I)</b>		<b>50 000 – 99 999 (I)</b>	<b>100 000 – 299 999 (I)</b>	<b>300 000 – 999 999 (I)</b>		<b>Plus de 1 000 000 (I)</b>
Moose Jaw	Wetaskiwin	Shawinigan	Regina	Winnipeg	Niagara Falls	Châteauguay
Chibougamau	Fernie	Drummondville	Sydney N.É.	Morinville	Cambridge	Brossard
Thompson	Brandon	Fredericton	Chicoutimi	Sainte-Foy	London	Laval
North Battleford	Lloydminster	Cornwall	Trois-Rivières	Québec	Kitchener	Saint-Jérôme
Gaspé	Rouyn-Noranda	Sault Ste. Marie	Saskatoon	Springfield	Grimsby	Ajax
Portage	Yarmouth	Medicine Hat	Saint John	Sillery	Burlington	Verdun
Yorkton	Timmins	Lethbridge	Gatineau	Strathcona Co.	Hamilton	Oakville
Thetford Mines	Camrose	Charlottetown	Moncton	Gloucester	Ottawa	Montréal
Elliot Lake	Cowansville	Red Deer	Sherbrooke	Welland	Stoney Creek	Mississauga
New Glasgow	Yellowknife	Prince George	St John's	Edmonton	Halifax-Dartmouth	Toronto
Fort St John	Whitehorse	Chatham-Kent	Hull	Calgary	St Catharines	York
Baie-Comeau	Salmon Arm	North Bay	Windsor	Nepean	Victoria	Markham
Woodstock	Sechelt	Belleville	Thunder Bay			Maple Ridge
Loyalist Township	Whistler	Nanaimo	Sudbury	Municipalité régionale de Hamilton-Wentworth		Vaughan
Port Alberni	Bracebridge	Chilliwack	Barrie			Surrey
Owen Sound	Orillia		Whitby	Municipalité régionale d'Ottawa-Carleton		Vancouver
Cobourg	Iqaluit		Guelph			
			Kelowna			
			Abbotsford			

- I. L'établissement de ces groupes suivant la taille des municipalités a été réalisé à partir des données de 1996 relatives au territoire de recensement urbain dans laquelle la municipalité en cause est située.

**Tableau 2 : L'abordabilité du logement constitue-t-elle un problème important?**

<b>Groupes selon la taille des villes (Recensement de 1996)</b>	<b>Répartition réponses, par municipalité</b>				<b>Nombre de villes sondées</b>
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Seulement un peu</b>	<b>Non</b>	<b>Aucune réponse</b>	
Moins de 50 000	15	14	5	0	34
50 000 - 99 999	6	5	4	0	15
100 000 - 299 999	10	8	1	0	19
300 000 - 999 999	12	10	3	1	26
Plus de 1 million	10	4	2	0	16
<b>Totaux - en chiffres</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
- en pourcentage de l'ensemble des réponses	48 %	37 %	14 %	1 %	100 %

Au Tableau 1 figure la liste des 110 municipalités sélectionnées pour le sondage et représentant toutes les villes et régions du Canada. Elles y sont regroupées en cinq catégories en fonction de leur taille, selon la population en 1996 du territoire urbain de recensement dont elles font partie (une région métropolitaine de recensement, une agglomération de recensement, etc.). Il pouvait s'agir d'une très petite localité, comme Iqaluit, une agglomération de 4 220 habitants d'après les chiffres de population du recensement de 1996, ou encore de villes très vastes situées à l'intérieur des plus importantes zones métropolitaines, dont la Ville de Toronto comptant quelque 2 400 000 habitants.

### Questions prioritaires relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix de logements

L'abordabilité des logements est un problème important dans les municipalités partout au Canada. À la question « L'abordabilité du logement constitue-t-elle un problème important dans votre municipalité? », 85 % (94 des 110

municipalités sondées) ont répondu « oui » et « seulement un peu » (Tableau 2). La plupart des 16 municipalités ayant répondu « non » à cette question étaient surtout des localités de petite taille ou de taille moyenne, situées dans la région du centre du Canada, les répondants précisant que le prix des logements y étaient relativement bas et le taux de vacance très élevé, les problèmes d'abordabilité s'en trouvant ainsi diminués. Par contre, l'abordabilité des logements était considéré comme étant un problème important dans la plupart des grandes villes.

On a demandé aux municipalités d'indiquer si les problèmes suivants étaient des « problèmes importants » en termes de choix de logements et d'abordabilité :

- Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général?
- Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers (âînés, jeunes, personnes seules, familles à faible revenu, besoins spéciaux, autres)?
- Qualité médiocre ou mauvais état de certains logements?

**Tableau 3 : Quels sont les trois principaux problèmes de réglementation**

Problèmes suggérés dans le questionnaire	Nombre de fois choisi <sup>(1)</sup>	Problèmes suggérés dans le questionnaire	Nombre de fois choisi <sup>(1)</sup>
Syndrome « pas dans ma cour » - opposition aux logements à coût modique (par exemple, l'aménagement d'appartements secondaires)	68	Obstacles aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels (par ex., habitations communautaires)	10
Obstacles à l'aménagement d'appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins)	32	Obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables	10
Tous les autres problèmes cités (y compris ceux qui ne relèvent pas de la réglementation)	26	Absence de normes de rénovation efficientes	9
Obstacles aux logements pour les personnes dont les revenus sont les plus faibles (par exemple, les maisons de chambres)	22	Processus d'approbation inefficaces	7
Nécessité d'une réglementation favorisant la construction intercalaire et la conversion	20	Résistance aux primes de densité et aux programmes de compensation	7
Obstacles au réaménagement de quartiers du centre-ville en état de délabrement ou des sites contaminés	17	<sup>(1)</sup> Remarque : Chacun des 110 répondants était invité à donner de une à trois réponses, ou répondre en mentionnant des mesures « autres »	
Droits d'aménagement élevés	16	Total des réponses	257
Normes d'aménagement foncier excessives (concernant, par exemple, les marges de recul, la taille des terrains, le stationnement)	13	Aucune réponse	73
		Total	330

La plupart des municipalités (68 %) ont signalé que la pénurie ou le choix de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers constituait le principal problème en termes d'abordabilité des logements (Tableau 3). Lorsqu'on leur a demandé d'indiquer quels groupes avaient besoin d'un plus haut degré de choix et d'abordabilité, elles ont répondu (en ordre décroissant de fréquence) les familles à faible revenu, les familles monoparentales, les personnes ayant des besoins spéciaux, les personnes seules, les aînés et, dans certains cas, les jeunes familles. Trente-huit municipalités (soit 35 %) ont indiqué que la qualité médiocre et le mauvais état de certains logements était l'un des principaux problèmes, et 31 répondants ont déclaré que l'un des principaux problèmes était la pénurie ou le choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général.

À la question leur demandant d'indiquer, parmi les trois principaux problèmes mentionnés, celui qui était le plus difficile à traiter, la plupart des municipalités ont répondu « la pénurie ou le choix insuffisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers ». Fait à signaler, ce problème de logements à prix abordables pour des groupes particuliers était considéré comme étant le plus difficile à traiter par plus de la moitié des municipalités sondées dans les régions urbaines de taille moyenne et de grande taille. Ce problème a sévi pendant plusieurs années dans la plupart des municipalités et les répondants ont indiqué que le problème ne devient pas moins difficile à traiter.

Les municipalités ont été invitées à indiquer quels étaient les « trois principaux » problèmes de réglementation, à partir d'une liste de 13 problèmes potentiels qu'ils pouvaient rencontrer dans ce domaine. Les réponses figurent au Tableau 3, lequel indique le nombre de fois que chacun des problèmes a été indiqué comme tel, peu importe le degré d'importance du problème (1<sup>er</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> ou 3<sup>e</sup> rang). Soixante-huit municipalités ont par ailleurs indiqué que le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » figurait parmi l'un de leurs trois principaux problèmes à cet égard.

Le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » s'entend de l'opposition manifestée en général par des citoyens à tout changement affectant leur propre quartier. Cet élément a obtenu 55 mentions à titre de problème principal sur le plan de la réglementation, soit plus que le nombre total cumulé de tous les autres premiers choix, et il a été signalé comme constituant le principal problème de réglementation par les villes quelle que soit leur taille.

L'élément « obstacles à l'aménagement d'appartements accessoires », surtout les appartements secondaires mais également les pavillons-jardins, fut considéré comme étant le deuxième problème de réglementation en importance. Les appartements secondaires contribuent de manière importante à favoriser l'abordabilité des logements, permettant d'aider à répondre à la demande de logements locatifs à faible coût dans un contexte où il y a peu de nouvelles constructions de logements de ce type. Cet élément a été choisi à 32 reprises à titre de 1<sup>er</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> ou 3<sup>e</sup> problème en importance sur le plan de la réglementation, un choix d'ailleurs largement partagé par l'ensemble des villes et dans l'ensemble des régions, peu importe leur taille.

Tableau 4 : La réglementation constitue-t-elle un obstacle à l'offre et au choix de logements abordables ?

Groupes selon la taille des villes (Recensement de 1996)	Réponses				
	« Non »	« Seulement un peu »	« Oui »	Aucune réponse	Total
Moins de 50 000	22	11	1		34
50 000 - 99 999	11	3	1		15
100 000 - 299 999	11	8			19
300 000 - 999 999	16	7	2	1	26
Plus de 1 million	10	4	2		16
Totaux - en chiffres	<b>70</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
- en pourcentage de l'ensemble des réponses	64 %	30 %	5 %	1 %	100 %

La réponse la plus fréquente après celles-ci fut la mention d'un « autre problème » ne faisant pas partie des choix proposés dans le questionnaire. Parmi ces 26 « autres » problèmes mentionnés, il s'agissait pour la plupart de questions de nature non réglementaire, par exemple des problèmes de nature économique ou politique, comme l'absence de croissance économique.

L'élément « obstacles à la production de logements pour les personnes dont les revenus sont les plus faibles (par exemple, les maisons de chambre) » a été choisi 22 fois à titre d'un des trois principaux problèmes, là encore une réponse largement partagée par les villes et peu importe leur taille. La nécessité d'adopter de la réglementation pour encourager la construction intercalaire et la conversion fut choisie à 20 reprises comme constituant un problème important sur le plan de la réglementation.

Les municipalités ont en outre été invitées à répondre à la question suivante : « Croyez-vous que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction et les processus d'approbation des demandes d'aménagement constituent des obstacles à l'augmentation de l'offre et des choix de logements abordables? »

Tel qu'on le constate au Tableau 4, l'opinion à ce sujet est claire, alors qu'une seule des municipalités n'a pas répondu à cette question. Près des deux tiers des répondants ont indiqué que ces éléments ne constituaient pas un obstacle, alors que 30 pour cent ont indiqué qu'ils constituaient « seulement un peu » un obstacle. L'on n'a pas décelé de variation particulière quant à la taille des villes ayant fourni ces réponses.

### Réformes associées aux mesures de réglementation en matière d'urbanisme

Les municipalités ont été questionnées sur l'utilisation de 10 mesures de réglementation en matière d'urbanisme et de zonage dont il a souvent été dit, dans la documentation à ce sujet du moins, qu'elles pouvaient servir à faciliter l'offre et le choix de logements abordables. Les réponses ont été répertoriées au Tableau 5, et regroupées de manière à faire ressortir les trois principaux modèles adoptés par les municipalités quant à l'utilisation de telles mesures.

### Les mesures les plus largement adoptées

Certaines de ces mesures ont déjà cours dans plus de 80 % des municipalités sondées, si bien qu'elles peuvent être considérées comme étant la norme. Il s'agit notamment du zonage, permettant la combinaison de divers types de logements et tailles de terrains, la combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux et les conversions, et la création de zones pouvant accueillir des formes de logement novatrices tel les habitations communautaires et les foyers de groupe. Certaines localités permettent de plein droit ces types d'utilisation dans toutes les zones résidentielles, au lieu de créer des zones particulières à cet effet.

**Tableau 5 : Utilisation par les municipalités de mesures de réglementation en matière d'urbanisme**

<b>Description des mesures</b>	<b>Degré d'utilisation des mesures</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Déjà adoptées</b>	<b>Envisagées</b>	<b>Envisagées, puis rejetées</b>	<b>Non applicables</b>	<b>Pas envisagées</b>	<b>Aucune réponse</b>	
<b>Mesures largement adoptées</b>							
Le zonage permet la combinaison de divers types de logements et tailles de terrains dans certaines parties de la collectivité	102	4	1	3	0	0	110
Le zonage permet la combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux, les conversions	100	4	0	6	0	0	110
Le zonage permet les formes de logement novatrices comme l'habitation communautaire et les foyers de groupe	88	5	0	15	1	1	110
<b>Utilisation de mesures combinées</b>							
Les terrains sont préalablement zonés pour les collectifs	80	3	4	22	1	0	110
La réduction des exigences relatives aux places de stationnement pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location)	61	8	4	34	0	3	110
Le zonage permet les appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins) dans des quartiers où l'on retrouve principalement des maisons unifamiliales détachées	54	11	29	13	2	1	110
La réduction de la taille des terrains ou de la largeur des voies publiques	52	12	7	33	2	4	110
La réduction des marges de recul pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location)	46	9	6	40	4	5	110
<b>Mesures utilisées moins fréquemment</b>							
Le zonage permet des logements de type convertible	28	9	4	57	6	6	110
Révision des plans de lotissement, districts d'aménagements spéciaux	22	15	6	55	4	8	110

## Les mesures dont l'utilisation est partagée

Les opinions sont partagées quant à l'utilisation de certaines mesures, 40 à 75 pour cent des municipalités les ayant adoptées alors qu'un nombre important de villes les ont rejetées à titre de mesures de réglementation souhaitables. Ainsi :

- 73 % (80 municipalités) désignent ou procèdent au zonage préalable de terrains afin de fournir des sites permettant d'accueillir des habitations plurifamiliales, mais 22 localités ont indiqué qu'il ne s'agissait pas là d'une mesure pertinente;
- 55 % (61 villes) ont dit réduire les exigences relatives aux places de stationnement afin de diminuer les coûts à la construction de logements spéciaux, de logements locatifs ou de logements abordables pour des propriétaires-occupants.

Alors que huit autres municipalités envisagent une telle mesure, 38 municipalités estiment par ailleurs qu'une telle mesure n'est pas pertinente ou l'ont tout simplement rejetée. Les endroits s'opposant à une mesure de ce type sont généralement des villes de petite taille ou présentant une faible densité de population et dont la valeur des terrains est relativement plus basse, et où le fait de diminuer les exigences quant aux places de stationnement n'aurait qu'une incidence négligeable sur l'ensemble du coût des logements;

- 49 % (54 municipalités) permettent les appartements accessoires surtout dans les quartiers de maisons unifamiliales, alors que 11 municipalités envisagent l'adoption d'une telle pratique. Par contre, 29 municipalités ont rejeté l'adoption d'une telle mesure. Six localités ont précisé qu'elles permettaient les pavillons-jardins dans des quartiers dont le zonage

permet des maisons unifamiliales, alors que certaines villes peuvent s'être dotées d'une réglementation semblable, mais les mesures permettant d'accommoder la présence de pavillons-jardins sont sensiblement moins courantes que celles visant à favoriser des appartements secondaires.

Plusieurs répondants ont signalé la manifestation d'une forte opposition du voisinage à l'occasion d'assemblées publiques portant sur l'implantation d'appartements secondaires, notamment dans le cadre des réunions du conseil municipal et des comités appelés à débattre de ces questions, et elles indiquent que le succès de l'implantation de réformes de cette nature est tributaire de la convergence de la volonté des propriétaires visés, d'une volonté politique claire au sein des gouvernements municipaux intéressés par de telles mesures, et de la collaboration entre les divers services municipaux impliqués (urbanisme, inspection, incendie);

- 47 % (52 municipalités) permettent la réduction de la dimension des terrains et de la largeur des voies publiques, alors que 12 autres municipalités envisagent l'adoption de réformes à cet égard. Par ailleurs, 40 municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles n'estimaient pas pertinente ou rejetaient carrément l'adoption de telles mesures. Encore une fois, les réponses négatives à ce sujet émanaient essentiellement de municipalités de petite taille où les coûts des terrains sont plus bas;
- 42 % (46 municipalités) sont disposées à réduire les marges de recul des terrains afin de favoriser l'implantation de logements pour des besoins spéciaux, des logements locatifs ou de logements pour des propriétaires-occupants, alors que neuf municipalités envisageaient l'adoption d'une telle mesure, pendant que 46 autres municipalités l'avaient rejetée

ou ont estimé qu'elle n'était pas pertinente. L'on n'a relevé aucune variation particulière quant à la taille des municipalités pouvant être liée à la divergence d'opinions au sujet de cette mesure.

## Les mesures les moins utilisées

Deux mesures relatives à l'utilisation de terrains n'ont été adoptées que par une minorité de municipalités (20 à 55 %), alors qu'une proportion beaucoup plus grande n'appuyait pas ces mesures. Ainsi :

- 25 % (28 municipalités) ont recours à des règlements de zonage afin de permettre les habitations polyvalentes, alors que neuf autres envisagent l'adoption de mesures semblables. Par contre, quatre villes ont carrément rejeté une telle mesure et 57 municipalités estiment qu'elle n'est pas pertinente. Ce moyen est principalement utilisé par des villes de grande taille;
- 20 % (22 municipalités) ont prévu l'implantation de districts d'aménagements spéciaux ou de zones désignées permettant d'y réaménager le lotissement des terrains, afin de favoriser l'implantation de logements à prix modique. Quinze autres municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient l'adoption de telles mesures, alors que six autres les ont rejetées et 55 les jugent non pertinentes (ayant coché la case « non applicable » dans le questionnaire). Les districts d'aménagements spéciaux étaient surtout implantés dans des régions métropolitaines, alors que les mesures en matière de réaménagement du lotissement étaient principalement utilisées dans diverses villes situées dans les Prairies.

**Tableau 6 : Utilisation des mesures de réglementation par les municipalités liées au processus d'approbation**

Description des mesures	Degré d'utilisation des mesures						Total
	Déjà adoptées	Envisionnées	Envisagées, puis rejetées	Non applicables	Pas envisagées	Aucune réponse	
Coordination, normalisation des demandes, guichet unique pour les approbations	78	8	1	21	0	2	110
Amélioration générale de l'informatisation du processus d'émission des permis d'aménagement et de construction	73	15	2	18	0	2	110
Recours à des processus de résolution des conflits dans les cas où les modifications de zonage sont source de litige avec les voisins et la collectivité	69	5	6	18	1	11	110
Traitements prioritaires des demandes pour favoriser les logements abordables (traitement accéléré, diminution des frais exigés) (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location)	32	6	8	60	2	2	110
Traitements pertinents pour les sites contaminés	26	11	4	59	5	5	110
Traitements accélérés des demandes pour les constructeurs accrédités	16	7	5	70	5	7	110
Diminution de la priorité du traitement des propositions d'aménagement donnant lieu à une réduction nette du nombre de logements abordables	6	2	8	85	4	5	110
Autres	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

### Réformes associées au processus d'approbation

Le Tableau 6 fait état des réponses au sujet de huit mesures visant à simplifier les processus d'approbation des permis d'aménagement et de construction. Puisque ces réformes visent à réduire les obstacles de nature bureaucratique et à améliorer l'efficacité des processus en place, elles sont susceptibles de favoriser la diminution des coûts et de résulter en l'aménagement de logements abordables et d'accroître le choix des logements.

### Mesures utilisées par 60 à 70 % des municipalités :

- 71 % (78 municipalités) ont simplifié leurs mécanismes d'approbation grâce à la normalisation des demandes et à la mise en place de formalités d'approbation coordonnées ou à guichet unique. Huit autres municipalités envisagent l'implantation de mesures de cette nature. Souvent, les

municipalités de taille plus petite et affichant un faible taux de croissance ont indiqué que de telles mesures n'étaient pas pertinentes dans leur cas, puisqu'elles traitent déjà les demandes dans les jours qui suivent leur dépôt;

- 66 % (73 municipalités) ont indiqué qu'elles avaient récemment mis à niveau l'informatisation du traitement des demandes de permis d'aménagement, alors que 15 autres ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient ce type d'amélioration à leurs processus;
- 63 % (69 municipalités) font appel à une forme ou une autre de mécanisme de résolution des conflits. Bien que la description de ces mesures diffère souvent, et que souvent elles étaient plutôt vagues, la plupart des municipalités indiquaient que leurs urbanistes (sinon les entrepreneurs eux-mêmes) tenaient des séances d'information ou des consultations visant à résoudre les problèmes dans les quartiers où l'on se proposait de modifier le zonage ou de revoir l'aménagement du quartier, avant la présentation de la demande au conseil municipal en vue de son approbation.

## Mesures utilisées par une minorité de municipalités

- 29 % (32 municipalités) donnent priorité au traitement de projets visant à produire des logements abordables, alors que six municipalités indiquaient par ailleurs qu'elles envisageaient l'adoption d'une telle mesure et que 60 mentionnaient qu'elle n'était pas pertinente dans leur cas. Les municipalités ayant recours à une telle mesure étaient principalement situées dans des grands centres urbains connaissant un essor rapide, où l'accélération d'un processus d'approbation déjà complexe et laborieux pouvait certainement s'avérer avantageux. Certains répondants ont toutefois observé que le fait d'accorder un traitement de faveur à l'égard de certaines demandes ne leur semblait pas équitable;
- 24 % (26 municipalités) utilisent des mesures particulières pour traiter les demandes visant le réaménagement de sites contaminés, alors que 11 autres ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient l'adoption de telles mesures, 59 municipalités estimant par ailleurs que de telles mesures n'étaient pas pertinentes dans leur cas. Dans un contexte où le réaménagement de sites industriels et de sites contaminés devient de plus en plus fréquent dans le cadre de l'intensification du développement en milieu urbain, il sera sans doute nécessaire de traiter un nombre croissant de demandes aussi complexes. Les grandes agglomérations urbaines, en particulier dans la région située dans le centre du Canada, sont de plus en plus sensibilisées à l'émergence d'exigences de cette nature, alors que les problèmes liés à la présence de sites contaminés ne font que commencer à faire partie des activités normales traitées par de telles municipalités;

- 14 % (16 municipalités) offrent le traitement accéléré des demandes provenant de constructeurs accrédités, et bien que sept envisagent l'adoption d'une telle mesure, 70 municipalités estiment qu'elle n'est pas pertinente dans leur cas. L'on a relevé des variantes quant aux formalités visant la désignation d'un constructeur comme étant celle d'un « constructeur accrédité », alors que certaines plus petites localités attribuant cette appellation à des « bons » constructeurs d'expérience, la plupart des autres municipalités restreignant par contre cette appellation aux seuls constructeurs possédant une certification reconnue officiellement (par exemple, certifié R-2000, écosympathique, etc.);
- 5 % (6 municipalités) ont indiqué qu'elles diminuaient la priorité de traitement des propositions d'aménagement qui donnent lieu à une réduction nette du nombre de logements abordables. Huit ont toutefois indiqué avoir rejeté ce concept, alors que 85 ont indiqué qu'il n'était pas pertinent dans leur cas. Certains ont évoqué le fait qu'une telle mesure ne soit pas nécessairement utile, et qu'elle soit possiblement illégale en vertu des lois adoptées en matière d'urbanisme dans la plupart des provinces.

### Réformes associées aux codes du bâtiment et aux autres règlements

Le Tableau 7 dresse le bilan des réponses visant trois mesures liées aux codes du bâtiment et aux autres règlements applicables en la matière :

- 50 % (55 municipalités) ont adopté des règlements visant les normes d'entretien des immeubles (parfois connus sous diverses appellations, dont « normes d'entretien », « normes favorisant la sécurité des logements », « normes d'entretien minimales », ou « normes des biens-fonds »), et alors que

Tableau 7 : Réformes liées aux codes et à la réglementation en matière de construction des bâtiments

Description des mesures	Degré d'utilisation des mesures						Total
	Déjà adoptées	Envisagées	Envisagées, puis rejetées	Non applicables	Pas envisagées	Aucune réponse	
Règlement visant les normes d'entretien (ou l'utilisation d'équivalents)	55	3	6	34	2	10	110
Normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment permettant les rénovations efficientes (par ex., appartements accessoires)	39	7	9	41	4	10	110
Équivalents permettant l'utilisation de matériaux, de systèmes et de méthodes de construction non traditionnels	34	9	4	49	5	9	110
Autres	6	0	0	0	0	0	6

trois autres municipalités envisageaient l'adoption de telles normes, six avaient rejeté une telle initiative et 34 autres indiquaient qu'une telle mesure n'était pas pertinente dans leur cas. La réglementation de cette nature est souvent associée à une politique d'urbanisme visant soit à favoriser, soit à ne pas favoriser l'aménagement d'appartements secondaires abordables. L'on n'a pas décelé de variation particulière quant à la taille des villes ayant fourni ces réponses;

- 35 % (39 municipalités) ont instauré des normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment afin de favoriser les rénovations efficientes (par exemple, les appartements accessoires ou maisons de chambres), et sept autres municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient l'adoption d'une telle mesure. Plusieurs répondants ont par ailleurs mentionné que des efforts particuliers étaient consacrés par leurs administrations municipales afin d'encourager l'aménagement de logements à prix modique de ce type et aussi d'autres formes existantes de constructions de ce type, notamment en faisant preuve de souplesse dans l'application des codes régissant la construction des bâtiments. Plusieurs villes de la région de l'Atlantique, du Québec et du sud de l'Ontario ont d'ailleurs signalé qu'elles avaient déjà en place ou manifestaient le besoin de mettre en place des normes équivalentes afin de favoriser la remise en état de bâtiments historiques;

- 31 % (34 municipalités) ont autorisé des équivalents permettant ainsi le recours à divers matériaux, systèmes et méthodes favorisant l'aménagement et le choix de logements abordables, alors que neuf municipalités envisageaient l'adoption d'une telle mesure. Par contre, 53 municipalités ont soit rejeté ce concept ou jugé qu'il n'était pas pertinent dans leur cas, et 14 municipalités n'y avaient pas songé ou n'avaient pas répondu à la question posée à cet égard.

Plusieurs répondants ont signalé que les normes en matière de construction d'habitations peuvent rendre plus laborieuse la tâche d'inciter la construction de logements plus abordables, qu'il s'agisse d'appartements secondaires, de logements en coopérative, ou encore de logements locatifs de petite taille ou de type plus ancien, n'offrant que les éléments de base. Les administrations municipales trouvent qu'il est difficile de concéder des accommodements à la réglementation au profit de la construction de logements à prix modique, alors qu'elles sont également tenues de veiller au respect des normes en matière de salubrité et de sécurité prescrites dans les codes et règlements adoptés par les gouvernements provinciaux régissant la construction des bâtiments.

**Tableau 8 : Utilisation d'autres mesures par les municipalités pour améliorer l'abordabilité et l'offre de logements abordables**

Description des mesures	Degré d'utilisation des mesures						Total
	Déjà adoptées	Envisagées	Envisagées, puis rejetées	Non applicables	Pas envisagées	Aucune réponse	
Recherches sur les besoins en matière de logement et les solutions possibles	47	8	1	47	2	5	110
Information (imprimés, vidéos, sites web) aidant à la planification et à la production de logements spéciaux, de logements locatifs et de logements abordables de type propriétaire-occupant	42	7	0	53	3	5	110
Le comité consultatif examine les questions relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix de logements et entretient à cet égard des liens avec d'autres organismes	39	6	2	52	5	6	110
Des projets de démonstration ont été entrepris - logements novateurs, normes d'aménagement foncier, matériaux de construction	33	11	2	52	5	7	110
Des membres du personnel sont précisément affectés aux dossiers en matière de logement	32	2	2	66	4	4	110
Prélèvement de droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs	18	6	3	66	8	9	110

## Autres mesures

Les répondants ont également été invités à commenter six autres mesures qui ne relevaient pas d'un type prévu dans la classification qui précède. Les réponses ont été colligées et figurent au Tableau 8. En voici le résumé :

- 47 municipalités réalisent des études portant sur les besoins en matière de logement et les solutions pouvant être proposées à cet égard. Huit municipalités envisagent de réaliser des études à ce sujet, alors que 47 municipalités estiment que cela n'est pertinent dans leur cas. Les études en matière de logement sont principalement l'apanage des gouvernements municipaux et régionaux de plus grande taille;
- 42 municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles avaient produit des trousseaux d'information (brochures, vidéos, émissions télévisées) afin de sensibiliser le public au sujet des problèmes en matière de logement et de favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix de logements. Tant les municipalités de petite taille que celles de taille plus imposante ont mis sur pied des initiatives visant l'éducation du public à ce sujet, et il importe de signaler que des petites municipalités ont recours à la télé communautaire afin de sensibiliser la population aux diverses problématiques en matière d'urbanisme et de logement. Sept municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient l'adoption de mesures semblables, alors que 53 ont estimé qu'elles n'étaient pas pertinentes dans leur cas.
- 39 municipalités ont implanté un comité consultatif chargé d'examiner les questions relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix de logements et d'entretenir à cet égard des liens avec d'autres organismes, alors que six municipalités envisagent l'adoption d'une telle mesure. Soulignons que huit municipalités situées en Colombie-Britannique ont établi des comités à cet effet, le gouvernement provincial ayant mis en place un programme soutenant de telles initiatives;
- 33 municipalités ont instauré des projets de démonstration, dont l'objet est d'étudier et de promouvoir l'innovation en matière d'aménagement du territoire, de logement et de matériaux de construction, 11 autres municipalités ayant manifesté leur intérêt à l'égard d'activités de ce genre, alors que 52 ont indiqué que cela ne serait pas pertinent dans leur cas. L'on n'a pas décelé de variation particulière quant à la taille des villes ayant fourni ces réponses;
- 32 municipalités affectent des membres de leur personnel précisément aux dossiers en matière de logement, alors que deux autres envisagent une telle mesure. La plupart des experts en matière de logement travaillent pour le compte de villes de taille importante;
- 18 municipalités prélevent des droits d'aménagement par secteur de manière à neutraliser les coûts disproportionnés qui peuvent nuire à la l'aménagement de maisons plus petites sur des terrains plus petits. Six autres municipalités envisagent l'adoption d'une telle mesure, préconisée notamment par la section du Pacifique de l'Institut de développement urbain du Canada ainsi que par le ministère du Logement de la Colombie-Britannique.

## Conclusions

Les municipalités canadiennes sont de toute évidence très sensibles au problème de l'offre de logements abordables, notamment à la problématique de logements abordables touchant des groupes particuliers, comme les familles monoparentales, les familles à faible revenu, les personnes ayant des besoins spéciaux, les jeunes, les personnes âgées et les personnes seules. Il ressort du sondage que l'obstacle le plus important à surmonter est celui du syndrome pas dans ma cour, mettant en jeu les forces réfractaires aux changements au sein d'un quartier.

Les municipalités canadiennes ont recours à un vaste éventail de mesures visant à favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix des logements. Le sondage révèle notamment que les deux tiers des municipalités ont d'ailleurs déployé sept mesures spécifiques à cet effet : zonage permettant la combinaison de divers types de logements et tailles de terrains; zonage permettant la combinaison d'immeubles commerciaux et résidentiels; zonage permettant la construction de logements de type novateur; le zonage préalable de terrains pour y permettre l'aménagement d'immeubles à logements multiples; la coordination et la normalisation des processus d'approbation; la mise en place de mécanismes de résolution des conflits; l'informatisation des processus d'approbation.

Six autres mesures parmi celles abordées ci-dessus ont déjà été adoptées, sinon leur adoption est envisagée, dans plus de la moitié des municipalités sondées. Il s'agit notamment de trois mesures alternatives d'aménagement (la réduction des exigences relatives aux places de stationnement, la réduction des marges de recul, ainsi que la réduction de la dimension prescrite des lots et de la largeur des voies publiques), de règlements de zonage permettant les appartements accessoires, de règlements relatifs aux normes d'entretien des logements, et de la réalisation de recherches dans ce domaine. Le sondage a donc permis de constater que les municipalités consacrent effectivement des ressources et de l'énergie afin de contrer les problèmes découlant de la réglementation et des mécanismes d'approbation dans le domaine de l'abordabilité et du choix des logements.

Il convient toutefois de signaler que plusieurs municipalités ont manifesté leur scepticisme quant à la pertinence de certaines des mesures étudiées. Ainsi, treize de ces mesures ont soit été carrément rejetées ou jugées non pertinentes ou « non applicables » à leur cas par plus de la moitié des municipalités sondées. Il s'agissait notamment de mesures visant le traitement accéléré des demandes présentées par des constructeurs accrédités, l'instauration d'équivalences permettant les rénovations financièrement efficientes et d'équivalences permettant le recours à des matériaux, des méthodes et des systèmes non traditionnels. Plusieurs répondants ont par ailleurs observé que l'adoption de réformes touchant à la réglementation en matière de construction des bâtiments ne relevait pas de leur champ de compétence. Un bon nombre ont aussi signalé que de telles mesures n'étaient pas pertinentes à leur cas en raison du marché actuel du logement dans leur localité ou à des municipalités de leur taille.

Le sondage a notamment permis de constater que les municipalités sont en général sensibles aux problèmes en matière d'abordabilité et de choix de logements abordables, et qu'elles saisissent les divers éléments de cette problématique. Plusieurs d'entre elles sont présentement en voie d'améliorer les mécanismes et la réglementation dont elles disposent en matière d'aménagement. Toutefois, nombreux sont les répondants qui ont indiqué qu'à leur avis, la réglementation en matière d'urbanisme et de construction domiciliaire avait une incidence limitée dans l'augmentation de l'offre de logements abordables. Bien qu'ils estiment que des mesures spécifiques en ce sens pourraient faciliter une telle tendance, ils ne s'attendent pas à ce que des mesures de cette nature puissent, en soi et à l'exclusion d'autres initiatives, avoir un impact significatif sur l'abordabilité et le choix de logements comme tel.

**Directeur de projet :** Susan Fisher

**Consultants de recherche :** Spurr Research Associates  
Avec l'aide de  
CitySpaces Consulting Limited  
Luba Serge et Associés  
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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This study describes the findings of a survey of Canadian municipalities, conducted during the summer of 2000. The survey explored issues and activities associated with the reform of planning and building regulations as well as other measures that affect housing affordability and choice.

### **Survey Objectives and Organisation of the Report**

There is a need for an improved understanding of the experience of Canadian municipalities with regulatory reform in relation to improving affordability and choice in housing. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), in collaboration with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), set out to improve this understanding through a broad survey of municipalities, so that the parties involved have good information about measures that have been tried and those that are under consideration.

The aim of the survey was to elicit this information by asking questions about many aspects of regulation and approvals processes in relation to housing affordability, and by securing responses from the wide variety of municipalities across Canada. Some non-regulatory measures related to housing affordability were also included on the survey. One hundred and ten municipalities were surveyed, representing all sizes of cities in each region of the country <sup>1</sup>. The survey was carried out early in the summer of 2000 by a national team of professionals, located in or near their respective study regions. In most cases the survey was administered as an interview on the telephone, and it usually involved discussions with senior officials in municipal planning departments.

In order to cover the entire response from the 110 surveyed municipalities and provide an analysis of patterns seen in the responses, this report is organised into three chapters of national overview (an introduction, the survey results on background issues, and the survey results on regulatory reforms) and five chapters of regional summaries.

### **Background - Regulatory Issues and Housing Affordability and Choice**

Since 1990 there has been a national program which explicitly encourages municipalities and the private and non-profit housing sectors to work together to develop, demonstrate and promote innovation in local planning and building regulation, and foster the improvement of housing affordability and choice. This is the Affordability and Choice Today Program, a partnership between Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) and the Canadian Home Builders' Association (CHBA). Funded by CMHC and administered by FCM on behalf of the

partners, since its inception in 1990 this internationally-recognised program has provided grants of up to \$20,000 to over 163 projects across Canada to study and test improved approaches to overcoming regulatory barriers that can impede choice and affordability in housing. Information about each of these projects is available, online, at: <http://www.actprogram.com>.

The ACT program has established a network for disseminating the results of these projects to encourage wider replication of the ideas. However the degree of replication is unknown. A recent assessment of the program revealed that survey participants were generally unable to quantify the impact of ACT initiatives on affordable housing supply and whether there had been replication of ACT solutions. Some ACT projects with considerable potential to improve housing affordability may not result in permanent change in the subject municipality.

Parallel studies by CMHC and others during this period such as *Regulatory Obstacles to Innovative Housing, Municipal Initiatives for Affordable Housing, and Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing*, have shown that municipalities vary considerably in the extent of their awareness of regulatory reform options and in their implementation of reforms.

Another set of regulatory issues related to the development and construction of sustainable housing and communities have also been identified through recent CMHC research *Barriers to Sustainable Community Development*. This study points to the slow pace of reform, the hindrance to innovation, and the need for wider dissemination of information on cost-saving regulatory initiatives that could be implemented by municipalities.

To encourage replication of effective regulatory reform solutions, such as those that emerge from ACT projects, it is important to understand what reforms have been made by municipalities across Canada and what key potential regulatory issues may be anticipated. Consequently, CMHC and its partners in the ACT program initiated the present research project to develop this understanding of the range and extent of implemented reforms.

## **Methodology**

This research project was designed around three main methodological elements: the stratified sample of the municipalities of urban Canada; the survey questionnaire; and the process used to administer the survey. A national team of researchers with strong experience in housing and urban planning was established to undertake the work, with individual members concentrating on particular regions. Led by Spurr Research Associates (covering the Prairie and North regions and the national summaries), the

team included: Luba Serge et Associés (Atlantic and Québec); Fuller Information (Ontario); and CitySpaces Consulting Limited (British Columbia and data processing).

### **Municipalities Surveyed**

In order to represent cities of all sizes in the various regions of Canada, the survey selected municipalities or local governments through a two-step process. Firstly, cities were selected to represent a stratified sample of the municipalities in each major region: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies (including the three northern Territories), and British Columbia. The selection criteria used in producing a cross-section of each region's communities included population size, location within the region, housing factors and municipal government structures. Secondly, the list of municipalities who had received

**Table 1.0 - Distribution of Canadian Municipalities in Survey, by Region and City Size**

City Size Group (1996 Census population)	Region						Canada Total
	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	North	B.C.	
Under 50,000	2	6	8	9	3	6	34
50,000 to 99,999	2	2	5	3		3	15
100,000 to 299,999	4	5	6	2		2	19
300,000 to 999,999	1	3	15	6		1	26
Over 1,000,000		6	7			3	16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>110</b>

Note. The assignment of a municipality to a "City Size Group" is based on the Census population of the urban region in which the surveyed municipality is located

grants under the ACT program was consulted, and the sample was adjusted to include representation of ACT recipients in each region.

The population size dimension used in selecting municipalities was the 1996 population of the Census Metropolitan area or Census Agglomeration in which the municipality is located. Census municipalities were grouped in five size categories. Table 1.0 summarises these "city size" assignments in the survey, by region and nationally.

In total, the surveyed cities comprised about one-half of Canada's 1996 population. The survey included communities of all sizes, with nearly one-third of the municipalities having populations under 50,000, and 16 municipalities located within the largest urban conurbations, including Greater Montreal, the Greater Toronto Area and the Lower Mainland of British Columbia.

Table 1.1 is the detailed list of the 110 municipalities in the survey. They range from quite small places like Iqaluit, with a 1996 Census population of 4,220, to huge cities in the largest metropolitan areas like the City of Toronto, with a population of 2,400,000 <sup>2</sup>.

## Survey of Canadian Municipalities: Regulatory Measures for Housing Affordability and Choice

**Table 1.1: Municipalities Surveyed by Population**

Under 50,000 (1)		50,000 - 99,999 (1)	100,000 - 299,999 (1)	300,000 - 999,999 (1)		Over 1 Million (1)
Moose Jaw	Wetaskiwin	Shawinigan	Regina	Winnipeg	Niagara Falls	Châteauguay
Chibougamau	Fernie	Drummondville	Sydney N S	Morinville	Cambridge	Brossard
Thompson	Brandon	Fredericton	Chicoutimi	Sainte-Foy	London	Laval
North Battleford	Lloydminster	Cornwall	Trois-Rivières	Québec	Kitchener	Saint-Jérôme
Gaspé	Rouyn-Noranda	Sault Ste Marie	Saskatoon	Springfield	Grimsby	Ajax
Portage	Yarmouth	Medicine Hat	Saint John	Sillery	Burlington	Verdun
Yorkton	Timmins	Lethbridge	Gatineau	Strathcona Co	Hamilton	Oakville
Thetford Mines	Camrose	Charlottetown	Moncton	Gloucester	Ottawa	Montréal
Elliot Lake	Cowansville	Red Deer	Sherbrooke	Welland	Stoney Creek	Mississauga
New Glasgow	Yellowknife	Prince George	St. John's	Edmonton	Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton	Toronto
Fort St John	Whitehorse	Chatham-Kent	Hull	Calgary	Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth	York
Baie-Comeau	Iqaluit	North Bay	Windsor	Nepean		Markham
Woodstock		Belleville	Thunder Bay	Halifax-Dartmouth		Maple Ridge
Loyalist Township		Nanaimo	Sudbury	St. Catherines		Vaughan
Port Alberni		Chilliwack	Barrie	Victoria		Surrey
Owen Sound			Whitby			Vancouver
Cobourg			Guelph			
Bracebridge			Kelowna			
Orillia			Abbotsford			
Salmon Arm						
Sechelt						
Whistler						

1. These city-size groups are based on the 1996 population of the Census Urban Area in which the municipality is located.

### The Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was developed around two major elements. Respondants were asked about:

- a) background issues, for example, the extent and nature of housing affordability and choice problems in their municipalities; and
- b) their municipality's experience with a series of specific measures identified by the research team from the ACT literature and other recent research, and which were placed in the survey as specific questions, or prompts. Some non-regulatory measures aimed at housing affordability were also included in the questions. This section explores six main theme areas: reforms associated with land-use planning; reforms associated with the approvals process; reforms associated with building codes and regulations;

measures from the 1999 CMHC study on municipal planning for affordable housing; other reform measures; and other factors.

The survey questionnaire/interview guide is included as Appendix A<sup>3</sup>.

### **Survey Administration Process**

Once the sample of municipalities was determined, the next step was to identify and contact appropriate survey respondents in each municipality. Prospective contacts were found in such lists such as: the membership of the Canadian Institute of Planners and of the Corporation of Urban Planners in Quebec; the directory produced by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities; and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' internet links to member municipalities. Likely contacts, many of whom were Planning Directors, were telephoned and once the survey was introduced to them, it was determined who would be the best person in that municipality to complete the survey. When that person was had been identified, they were sent a copy of a letter of introduction provided by FCM and a copy of the survey questionnaire to allow the municipality to examine the questions involved. Then the respondent was telephoned to set up a time for the survey interview.

Table 1.2 summarises the municipal staff positions that were initially contacted, and the survey respondents. In most municipalities the person who was contacted initially was the one who responded to the survey. In a few cases, a commissioner, director or manager of planning was contacted, who then elected to delegate the task of completing the survey to a senior planner. In some of the largest municipalities, parts of the survey were completed by several members of the municipal staff in accordance with their area of expertise, coordinated by one overall respondent.

In most cases, (83 of 110) the surveys were administered as telephone interviews, while 27 municipalities elected to complete the questionnaire themselves and return it by fax or e-mail. The surveyors were required to follow-up many of the latter returns by telephone, in order to obtain clarifications. These two-way exchanges of information provided added details about municipal experiences with some reforms.

Ninety per cent of the questionnaires were completed between May 24 and June 16, 2000, and the entire survey was completed by August 18, 2000.

**Table 1.2: Administration of Survey - National**

Municipal Officials Involved	Role in Survey	
	Initial Contact	Respondent
Chief Administrative Officer	4	1
GM/Commissioner of Planning	5	3
Director of Planning	54	40
Chief or City Planner or Engineer	16	13
Planning or Development Manager	10	8
Senior Planner	15	37
Other Departmental Staff	3	2
Building Inspector	3	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>

## **Chapter One Endnotes**

1. The target for the survey was 100 municipalities, but in anticipating that it would be necessary to over-sample in order to secure the desired response, the survey team approached about 120 cities. The project was fortunate in that 110 of these municipalities agreed to participate.
2. The population of the new City of Toronto, following the amalgamation of seven municipalities that made up the former Metro Toronto, is now 2.4 Million.
3. The reporting of the responses to the survey questions appears in a different sequence to the order of the questions in the actual survey.

## **Chapitre 1 - Introduction**

Le présent document contient les résultats d'une enquête menée au cours de l'été 2000 auprès des municipalités du Canada au sujet des questions et des activités associées à la réforme des règlements d'urbanisme et de construction ainsi qu'à d'autres mesures qui influent sur l'abordabilité et le choix du logement.

### **Objectifs de l'enquête et organisation du rapport**

Il importe d'en savoir davantage sur ce qui se passe dans les municipalités du Canada en ce qui concerne la réforme de la réglementation et l'amélioration de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement. C'est pour combler ce besoin que la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL), de pair avec la Fédération canadienne des municipalités, a décidé qu'il fallait mener une vaste enquête destinée à recueillir une information précise concernant les mesures aussi bien mises à l'essai qu'envisagées par les municipalités dans le domaine visé.

L'objectif de l'enquête était d'obtenir cette information en posant des questions à un large éventail de municipalités, dans toutes les régions du Canada, au sujet de nombreux aspects de la réglementation et des processus d'approbation liés à l'abordabilité du logement. L'enquête comportait aussi certaines questions concernant les mesures autres que réglementaires liées à l'abordabilité du logement. L'enquête a été menée dans cent dix villes, représentant toutes les tailles de municipalités dans chaque région du pays.<sup>1</sup> Elle a été effectuée au début de l'été 2000 par une équipe nationale de spécialistes installés dans leurs régions d'étude respectives ou à proximité. Dans la plupart des cas, l'enquête a pris la forme d'entretiens téléphoniques avec des hauts responsables de services d'urbanisme.

Les réponses des cent dix municipalités qui ont participé à l'enquête de même que l'analyse des tendances qui s'en dégagent sont présentées dans le présent document, dans trois chapitres donnant un aperçu de la situation à l'échelle nationale (une introduction, les résultats de l'enquête en ce qui touche aux questions générales et les résultats de l'enquête concernant les réformes réglementaires) et dans cinq autres chapitres traitant de façon sommaire de la situation dans les régions.

### **Contexte - Réglementation et abordabilité et choix du logement**

Il existe depuis 1990 un programme qui vise explicitement à encourager les municipalités, le secteur privé de l'habitation et les organismes sans but lucratif oeuvrant dans le domaine du logement à conjuguer leurs efforts pour favoriser de toutes les façons l'innovation en matière de planification locale et de règlements de construction ainsi que pour améliorer la situation au chapitre de l'abordabilité et du

choix du logement. Ce programme, qu'on appelle Abordabilité et choix toujours (ACT), est le fruit d'une association entre la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL), la Fédération canadienne des municipalités (FCM), l'Association canadienne d'habitation et de rénovation urbaine (ACHRU) et l'Association canadienne des constructeurs d'habitats (ACCH). Depuis le lancement, en 1990, de ce programme reconnu à l'échelle internationale, financé par la SCHL et administré par la FCM pour l'ensemble des partenaires, on a subventionné, jusqu'à un montant pouvant atteindre 20 000 \$, la réalisation, partout au Canada, de plus de 163 projets visant à étudier et à mettre à l'essai des méthodes destinées à éliminer les obstacles réglementaires au choix et à l'abordabilité du logement. On peut obtenir des renseignements sur chacun de ces projets au site Web suivant : <http://www.programmeact.com>.

On a établi un réseau de diffusion des résultats des projets réalisés grâce au programme ACT, afin de faire en sorte que les solutions mises à l'essai avec succès soient appliquées dans d'autres municipalités. On ne sait toutefois pas dans quelle mesure cet objectif est atteint. Dans le cadre d'une évaluation récente du programme, la plupart des personnes interrogées ont en effet été incapables aussi bien de chiffrer les effets des projets ACT sur l'offre de logements abordables que de dire si les solutions trouvées par certaines municipalités avaient été appliquées ailleurs. Dans certains cas, les projets les plus prometteurs en ce qui touche l'amélioration de l'abordabilité du logement dans une municipalité ne se traduisent pas par un changement permanent dans cette municipalité.

Il ressort de différentes études réalisées par la SCHL et d'autres organisations durant la période visée (*Obstacles réglementaires à l'innovation en habitation*, *Les initiatives municipales dans le domaine du logement abordable*, *La planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement etc.*) qu'il existe des différences considérables entre les municipalités quant au degré de compréhension des options envisageables au chapitre de la réforme de la réglementation de même qu'à la façon dont ces options sont mises en oeuvre.

Une étude récente de la SCHL, dont les résultats sont exposés dans le document intitulé *Développement de collectivités durables : élaboration du rôle du gouvernement fédéral pour le 21<sup>e</sup> siècle* (*Implementing Sustainable Community: Charting a Federal Role for the 21st Century*), fait ressortir d'autres aspects du dossier de la réglementation et de l'aménagement et de la construction de logements abordables dans un contexte de développement durable. On y signale la lenteur de la réforme, les obstacles à l'innovation de même que la nécessité d'assurer une plus large diffusion de l'information sur les mesures réglementaires permettant de réduire les coûts qui pourraient être appliquées par les municipalités.

Afin d'encourager les municipalités à adopter les solutions les plus efficaces - par exemple celles qui ont été mises à l'essai dans le cadre de projets ACT - , il importe de savoir quelles réformes ont été apportées par les municipalités dans les différentes régions du Canada et de comprendre les principaux enjeux qu'on peut prévoir sur le

plan de la réglementation. C'est pour mieux connaître la nature et l'étendue des réformes mises en oeuvre dans différentes municipalités que la SCHL et ses partenaires du programme ACT ont décidé de réaliser l'enquête dont les résultats sont exposés dans le présent document.

## **Méthodologie**

La conception de l'enquête comprenait trois principaux éléments méthodologiques : l'échantillon stratifié de municipalités urbaines du Canada; le questionnaire d'enquête; et la méthode utilisée pour réaliser l'enquête. Le travail a été confié à une équipe nationale de chercheurs possédant beaucoup d'expérience dans les domaines du logement et de l'urbanisme, chacun devant se concentrer sur une région particulière du pays. L'équipe, dirigée par Spurr Research Associates (qui s'occupait des régions des Prairies et du Nord de même que de l'établissement des exposés récapitulatifs nationaux), comprenait Luba Serge et Associés (Atlantique et Québec), Fuller Information (Ontario) et CitySpaces Consulting Limited (Colombie-Britannique et traitement des données).

## **Municipalités visées par l'enquête**

Afin d'assurer une représentation appropriée des villes de toutes tailles des différentes régions du Canada, on a utilisé un processus de sélection des municipalités ou des administrations locales en deux étapes. Dans un premier temps, on a établi un échantillon stratifié représentatif des municipalités de chacune des grandes régions du pays, à savoir l'Atlantique, le Québec, l'Ontario, les Prairies (y compris les trois territoires du Nord) et la Colombie-Britannique. Les critères de sélection appliqués pour obtenir un échantillon représentatif des collectivités de chaque région englobaient la population, l'emplacement dans la région, des facteurs relatifs au logement et les structures d'administration municipales. À la deuxième étape, on a consulté la liste des municipalités qui avaient reçu des subventions dans le cadre du programme ACT, puis on a rajusté l'échantillon de manière à assurer une représentation appropriée de ces municipalités, dans chaque région.

La population qu'on a utilisée pour choisir les municipalités est la population, en 1996, de la région métropolitaine de recensement ou de l'agglomération de recensement dans laquelle se trouve chaque municipalité. Les municipalités ont ensuite été réparties en cinq catégories, selon leur population. Les résultats de cette répartition, par région et à l'échelle nationale, sont présentés au tableau 1.0.

**Tableau 1.0 Répartition des municipalités visées par l'enquête, selon la région et la population**

Population (au recensement de 1996)	Régions	Atlantique	Québec	Ontario	Prairies	Nord	C.-B.	Canada (Total)
Moins de 50 000		2	6	8	9	3	6	34
50 000 à 99 999		2	2	5	3		3	15
100 000 à 299 999		4	5	6	2		2	19
300 000 à 999 999		1	3	15	6		1	26
1 000 000 et plus			6	7			3	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>110</b>

Observation : la population des municipalités utilisée aux fins de l'enquête correspond au recensement de la population de la région urbaine dans laquelle se trouvent ces municipalités.

La population des municipalités visées par l'enquête représentait à peu près la moitié de la population du Canada en 1996. Il s'agissait de municipalités de toutes les tailles, dont près du tiers avaient une population de moins de 50 000 habitants; seize municipalités faisaient partie de grandes conurbations, notamment l'agglomération montréalaise, la zone métropolitaine de Toronto et la vallée du bas Fraser de la Colombie-Britannique.

La liste détaillée des 110 municipalités visées par l'enquête est présentée au tableau 1.1. On y trouve aussi bien des villes assez petites, comme Iqaluit, où la population atteignait 4 220 habitants au recensement de 1996, que de grandes agglomérations urbaines, comme celle de Toronto, avec une population de 2 400 000 habitants.<sup>2</sup>

**Tableau 1.1 Municipalités visées par l'enquête selon la population**

<b>Moins de 50 000 (1)</b>	<b>50 000 à 99 999 (1)</b>	<b>100 000 à 299 999 (1)</b>		<b>300 000 à 999 999 (1)</b>		<b>1 000 000 et plus (1)</b>
Moose Jaw	Wetaskiwin	Shawinigan	Regina	Winnipeg	Niagara Falls	Châteauguay
Chibougamau	Fernie	Drummondville	Sydney N S	Morinville	Cambridge	Brossard
Thompson	Brandon	Fredericton	Chicoutimi	Sainte-Foy	London	Laval
North Battleford	Lloydminster	Cornwall	Trois-Rivières	Québec	Kitchener	Saint-Jérôme
Gaspé	Rouyn-Noranda	Sault Ste Marie	Saskatoon	Springfield	Grimsby	Ajax
Portage	Yarmouth	Medicine Hat	Saint John	Sillery	Burlington	Verdun
Yorkton	Timmins	Lethbridge	Gatineau	Strathcona Co	Hamilton	Oakville
Thetford Mines	Camrose	Charlottetown	Moncton	Gloucester	Ottawa	Montréal
Elliot Lake	Cowansville	Red Deer	Sherbrooke	Welland	Stoney Creek	Mississauga
New Glasgow	Yellowknife	Prince George	St John's	Edmonton	Municipalité régionale d'Ottawa-Carleton	Toronto
Fort St John	Whitehorse	Chatham-Kent	Hull	Calgary	Municipalité régionale de Hamilton-Wentworth	York
Baie-Comeau	Iqaluit	North Bay		Nepean		Markham
Woodstock		Belleville	Windsor	Halifax-Dartmouth		Maple Ridge
Loyalist Township		Nanaimo	Thunder Bay	St Catharines		Vaughan
Port Alberni		Chilliwack	Sudbury	Victoria		Surrey
Owen Sound			Barrie			Vancouver
Cobourg			Whitby			
Bracebridge			Guelph			
Orillia			Kelowna			
Salmon Arm			Abbotsford			
Sechelt						
Whistler						

1. La population utilisée est la population, en 1996, de la région ou l'agglomération de recensement dans laquelle se trouve chaque municipalité.

## Le questionnaire d'enquête

Le questionnaire d'enquête comprenait des questions se rattachant à deux thèmes principaux, à savoir :

- a) la situation générale dans la municipalité (étendue et nature des problèmes liés à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement);Page 13 de 7
- b) la situation dans la municipalité concernant l'application de mesures déterminées répertoriées par l'équipe de recherche dans la documentation relative à l'ACT et dans d'autres rapports récents et qui, dans le questionnaire, faisaient l'objet de

questions précises. Le questionnaire comprenait également des questions sur certaines mesures visant à favoriser l'abordabilité du logement par des moyens autres que la réglementation. Ce volet de l'enquête aborde six thèmes principaux : les réformes relatives à l'aménagement du territoire; les réformes relatives au processus d'approbation; les réformes relatives aux normes et aux règlements de construction; les mesures découlant de l'étude de 1999 de la SCHL sur la planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement; les autres mesures de réforme; et les autres facteurs.

Le questionnaire d'enquête et le guide d'entretien sont présentés à l'annexe A.<sup>3</sup>

### **Processus de réalisation de l'enquête**

Une fois l'échantillon de municipalités établi, il fallait trouver les personnes susceptibles de répondre aux questions de l'enquête dans chaque municipalité et communiquer avec elles. Pour ce faire, on a notamment consulté la liste des membres de l'Institut canadien des urbanistes et de l'Association des urbanistes et des aménagistes municipaux du Québec, le répertoire publié par l'Union of British Columbia Municipalities ainsi que des liens du site Internet de la FCM vers les municipalités membres de la Fédération. On a ensuite téléphoné aux personnes ainsi trouvées (il s'agissait souvent de directeurs de services d'urbanisme) pour leur demander, après leur avoir présenté l'enquête qui serait réalisée, quelle était la personne la mieux placée dans leur municipalité pour répondre à nos questions. Après quoi on a envoyé à ces personnes un exemplaire de la lettre de recommandation de la FCM et du questionnaire, afin de permettre aux responsables de la municipalité d'examiner les questions. Puis on a téléphoné aux personnes choisies pour répondre à nos questions afin de fixer le moment de l'entrevue.

Les postes occupés par les fonctionnaires municipaux avec lesquels on a initialement communiqué de même que par ceux qui ont ensuite répondu aux questions de l'enquête sont indiqués au tableau 1.2. Dans la plupart des municipalités, la personne avec laquelle nous sommes initialement entrés en contact est aussi celle qui a répondu à nos questions. Dans quelques cas, on a communiqué initialement avec un directeur général, un directeur ou un cadre des services d'urbanisme, qui a désigné un urbaniste principal pour répondre à nos questions. Dans certaines des plus grandes villes, plusieurs fonctionnaires différents ont répondu aux questions, chacun dans leur secteur de compétence, sous la coordination d'un responsable général de l'enquête.

Pour 83 des 110 municipalités visées, les questions ont été posées par téléphone. Dans les 27 autres cas, les municipalités ont choisi de remplir elles-mêmes le questionnaire et de nous le renvoyer par télécopieur ou par courriel. Les agents d'enquête ont dû téléphoner aux responsables de bon nombre de ces dernières municipalités pour obtenir des éclaircissements sur les réponses fournies dans les questionnaires. Les discussions auxquelles ces demandes ont donné lieu ont permis

d'en apprendre davantage sur ce qui s'était fait dans les municipalités à l'égard de certaines réformes.

Quatre-vingt-dix pour cent des questionnaires ont été remplis entre le 24 mai et le 16 juin 2000. L'enquête complète s'est terminée le 18 août 2000.

## **Chapitre 1 Notes en fin de chapitre**

1. L'objectif était de mener l'enquête dans cent municipalités, mais l'équipe a sollicité la participation d'environ cent vingt municipalités, afin de s'assurer d'un nombre suffisant de répondants. Nous avons eu la chance d'obtenir une réponse positive de la part de cent dix de ces cent vingt municipalités.
2. La population de la nouvelle ville de Toronto, après la fusion de sept des municipalités qui componaient autrefois la zone métropolitaine de Toronto, atteint aujourd'hui 2,4 millions d'habitants.
3. Les réponses aux questions de l'enquête sont présentées dans un ordre différent de celui dans lequel les questions ont été posées pendant l'enquête.

<b>Tableau 1.2 Réalisation de l'enquête (échelle nationale)</b>		
<b>Fonctionnaires municipaux concernés</b>	<b>Rôle dans l'enquête</b>	
	<b>Contact initial</b>	<b>Répondant</b>
Directeur général	4	1
DG ou commissaire de la planification	5	3
Directeur de la planification	54	40
Urbaniste en chef ou urbaniste ou ingénieur municipal	16	13
Cadre des services de planification ou d'aménagement	10	8
Planificateur principal	15	37
Fonctionnaire d'autres services	3	2
Inspecteur des bâtiments	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>110</b>

## **Chapter 2: National Overview of Survey Results: Background Issues**

This chapter examines national patterns in Canadian municipalities' awareness of issues of housing affordability and choice. Part 1 of this chapter examines the extent and nature of housing affordability and choice problems. Part 2 examines recent reviews of regulatory instruments.

### **PART 1**

#### **Is Housing Affordability an Important Issue ?**

The affordability of housing is an important issue for municipalities all over Canada. When asked "Is housing affordability an important issue (in your city)?", 85 percent (94 of the 110 municipalities surveyed) responded that affordability is "important" or "somewhat important" (see Table 2.0).

All municipalities in the British Columbia and Atlantic regions shared this view, and so did 22 of the 23 cities surveyed in the Prairie and North Regions. The 15 municipalities that indicated housing affordability was "not important", were small to midsize places in

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses by Municipality				No. of Cities Surveyed
	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Response	
Under 50,000	15	14	5	0	34
50,000 - 99,999	6	5	4	0	15
100,000 - 299,999	10	8	1	0	19
300,000 - 999,999	12	10	3	1	26
Over 1million	10	4	2	0	16
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>1%</b>	

Ontario and Quebec where the respondents explained that housing prices are relatively low and the vacancy rate is quite high, thereby reducing concerns about affordability. On the other hand, almost all of the large places that were surveyed considered housing affordability to be an important issue.

#### **What Are the Key Issues ?**

In order to obtain a sharper focus on the importance of this issue, the survey asked each municipality whether the following were "key issues" related to housing affordability and choice:

- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing in general?
- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing for specific groups (e.g. youth, singles, low income families, single parents, special needs, seniors, others)?
- Poor quality and condition of some housing?

These suggested issues received a strong response, with most municipalities reporting that "lack of housing for specific groups" is a key issue related to housing affordability. (see Table 2.1). Inadequate housing for specific groups was chosen as a key issue by 75 municipalities (68 percent of those surveyed and 47 percent of all responses to this question). This was the predominant response in all five regions as well as all city sizes, except for medium-sized cities (population 100,000 - 299,999). In these cities, fifteen of the 23 responses in this city-size category chose this option.

**Table 2.1: Which of the Following are Key Issues Related to Housing Affordability and Choice ?**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Key Issues Selected				Total Responses	No Responses (1)	No. of Cities Surveyed
	Lack of, or inadequate choice of, housing affordability in general	Lacking housing affordability for specific groups	Poor Quality and Condition of Some Housing	Other			
<b>Under 50,000</b>	11	20	14	3	48	2	34
<b>50,000 - 99,999</b>	4	12	6	5	27	0	15
<b>100,000 - 299,999</b>	1	15	7	0	23	1	19
<b>300,000 - 999,999</b>	11	17	8	4	40	1	26
<b>Over 1million</b>	4	11	3	4	22	0	16
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>110</b>
- as % of all responses	19%	47%	24%	10%	100%		

(1) Note: Each respondent could indicate 1-3 or more responses

When asked which groups needed more choice and affordability in housing, the most frequent responses were, in descending order of frequency: low income families, single parents, households with special needs, singles, seniors and in some cases, young families. Other groups were mentioned in individual cities, and are reported in the regional chapters.

Thirty-eight municipalities (35% of those surveyed and 24 percent of all responses to this question) said "poor quality and condition of some housing" was a key issue. There was some geographic pattern in this response. Disproportionately more of the smallest places selected this issue, and several of these respondents were in declining, resource-based communities across Canada. Only three of the 16 municipalities in the largest metropolitan areas saw it as an issue, while otherwise the pattern of responses matched the national distribution of cities by size group. This difference between the biggest and the smaller places in the prominence they assigned to pockets of poor housing may be significant, although it remains to be seen whether more frequently identifying this issue implies that the small-to-medium sized places address it better.

Thirty-one respondents said a key issue was "lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing in general". This issue was selected by 11 of the 26 cities located in the larger cities, (the 300,000 to 999,999 size group), but it was only chosen by one of the 19 cities in the 100,000 to 299,999 size group. Otherwise the respondents choosing this issue matched the distribution of cities, by size group.

Sixteen additional issues were identified by respondents when they were invited to identify, without prompts, other most difficult key issues. Only a few of these responses were common to more than one municipality. Several cities said the decline in senior government funding for new social housing was their most difficult issue for housing affordability. Several others said the most difficult issue was that developers were not building affordable housing.

### **Which Housing Affordability Issues are Most Difficult for Municipalities?**

The survey asked which of these three "key issues" has been most difficult for the municipality. Again, the "lack of affordable housing for specific groups" was cited most frequently, which accounted for over half of the responses in all but the smallest urban regions (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: Which "Key Issue" Has Been Most Difficult for Municipalities ?**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Key Issue Considered "Most Difficult"				Total Response	No Response	No. of Cities Surveyed
Lack of, or inadequate choice of, housing affordability in general							
Under 50,000	7	8	10	2	27	8	35
50,000 - 99,999	2	7	1	2	12	3	15
100,000 - 299,999	1	11	5	1	18	1	18
300,000 - 999,999	7	12	1	2	22	4	26
Over 1 million	2	7	1	1	11	5	16
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>110</b>
- as % of all responses	21%	50%	20%	9%	100%		

The municipalities were quite varied in the extent they reported the other two issues as being difficult. Municipalities under 50,000 indicated they found the difficulty similar for each of the three issues. Nearly one-third of Quebec municipalities (7 of 22) declined answering this question.

These three "key issues" are not new concerns. Table 2.3 summarises the responses

to the question "How many years has this (most difficult issue) been an issue?"

**Table 2.3: How Many Years has This (Most Difficult Issue) Been an Issue ?**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Duration of Issue									Sum of Responses	No Response	Total
	0-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16 years & more	"many years"	"some years"	"no certainty"	"don't know"			
Under 50,000	0	8	3	4	2	5	3	1	0	26	8	34
50,000 - 99,999	0	1	2	1	5	3	0	0	1	13	2	15
100,000 - 299,999	0	1	6	2	3	5	0	0	0	17	2	19
300,000 - 999,999	0	6	3	5	2	6	0	0	0	22	4	26
Over 1million	1	0	2	3	1	4	0	0	0	11	5	16
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>			

One-half of the municipalities that responded to the question said their most difficult issue of housing affordability or choice had been with them for over five years, and another 26% said it had been an issue for "many" years. The smallest municipalities reported a slightly better situation, with 9 of 26 (35%) indicating they had the issue for over five years and another 19% saying it had been around for "many" years.

Twenty-one of the 110 municipalities did not respond to this question, including 8 of the 22 cities surveyed in Quebec.

The last question in this series asked whether the most difficult affordable housing issue was becoming more, or less difficult to deal with, or whether it remained about the same. The response, seen in Table 2.4, further demonstrates that municipalities aren't making progress with affordability issues. Eighty percent of those responding to the question said the issue was becoming "more difficult" or "about the same", while only 15% said it "less difficult". In the biggest metropolitan areas the predominant response was "about the same". The next largest urban regions, those between 300,000 and 999,999, primarily said the issue was becoming "more difficult". The medium-sized places between 50,000 and 299,999 were split equally between "more difficult", "less difficult", and "about the same", and the smallest cities primarily responded "about the same". It is also notable that a large proportion of municipalities (17 of 110) did not respond to this question, particularly the smallest cities, many of which were in Quebec.

**Table 2.4: Is the Issue Becoming More or Less Difficult to deal With ?**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Issue more difficult	Issue less difficult	Issue about the same	Uncertain, Total issue growing, or other	Total Response	No Response	No. of Cities Surveyed
Under 50,000	8	2	13	3	26	8	35
50,000 - 99,999	6	5	1		12	3	15
100,000 - 299,999	4	5	8	2	19	0	18
300,000 - 999,999	16	1	5		22	4	26
Over 1 million	3	1	10		14	2	16
Totals - as numbers	37	14	37	5	93	17	110
- as % of all responses	40%	15%	40%	5%	100%		

## The Most Important Regulatory Issues

Municipalities were asked to name the "top three" regulatory issues that they encounter. A "prompt list" of 12 likely issues was provided to stimulate responses. This prompt list is provided in Table 2.5 below, along with the total number of times each issue was identified by a municipality, regardless of whether the issue was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>. Out of the 257 responses given by municipalities, 68 (25%) were selections of NIMBY as one of the top regulatory issues.

**Table 2.5: What Are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues"?**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
"NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	68	High development cost charges	16
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	32	Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	13
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	26	Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	10
Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses)	22	Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	10
Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	20	Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	9
Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	17	Inefficient approval processes	7
		Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	7
(1) Note: Each of the 110 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)			
Sum of responses	257		
No response	73		
Total	330		

## NIMBY – The Dominant Issue

"NIMBY" stands out as the issue most municipalities see as the top concern impeding regulatory improvement. The acronym NIMBY, (not in my back yard), refers to the general opposition of citizens to change in their neighbourhoods (1). The planning officials who responded to this survey selected NIMBY as the top regulatory issue 55 times, which exceeded all other first choices put together.

As seen in Table 2.6, the 68 choices of NIMBY as a "Top 3" regulatory issue was made by cities of all sizes, in

proportions which generally matched their shares of the total sample of municipalities. The municipalities in the Atlantic, Prairie and B.C. regions were slightly less likely to select NIMBY, and the cities in the 50,000 to 99,999 size-group were slightly more likely to do so.

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Municipalities Selecting NIMBY				No. of Cities Surveyed
	As 1st choice	As 2nd choice	As 3rd choice	Subtotal	
Under 50,000	16	1	2	19	35
50,000 - 99,999	10	1	1	12	15
100,000 - 299,999	8	2	2	12	18
300,000 - 999,999	14	1	1	16	26
Over 1 million	7	2		9	16
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>110</b>

## Other "Top 3" Regulatory Issues in Table 2.5

Accessory apartments, primarily secondary suites but also garden suites, were the second most frequent choice as a "top three" regulatory issue. Secondary suites make a vital contribution to housing affordability as it is estimated that they provide up to 12 percent of the urban housing stock<sup>2</sup>. This option was selected 32 times as the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> most important issue, and the municipalities making these responses were broadly distributed across city-sizes and regions.

Some small and medium-sized cities, particularly on the Prairies and in Ontario, as well as larger places in British Columbia, observed that there is strong, vocal opposition to secondary suites, even in neighbourhoods where they are already plentiful. Many municipalities mentioned special measures they undertake to encourage secondary suites as a needed housing form and to supervise them from the perspective of health and safety.

The next most frequent response was to mention an "other issue" which had not been suggested in the questionnaire prompts. Among these 26 "other" responses, most were non-regulatory matters, including political and economic issues. A number of the smaller municipalities mentioned the lack of economic growth was a top issue. As an

"other issue", several municipalities in the Atlantic region referred to the lack of infrastructure (referring to sewer, water and road services). Respondents from Quebec often referred to income problems as important issues, as well as the condition of some of the rental stock, while on the Prairies it was observed that there was an overall resistance to anything that would increase density. The most common "other issue" was the decline in funding by senior governments for new social housing, illustrated in the following observation:

"All of the issues above may play a small role. However, there are no new proposals for affordable housing so they really are not in play. Affordable housing will not be built without some form of subsidy. It's not economic otherwise"

"Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses)" was selected 22 times as a top-three issue, and it also was broadly distributed among city-sizes and locations. The smallest and the largest municipalities in Quebec were particularly aware of this issue.

Several issues were selected 10-20 times as "top three" issues, but there was no pattern in these choices because they were so widely dispersed among city-sizes and regions. These included: need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion; barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites; barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing); and barriers to flexible, adaptable housing.

Sixteen municipalities said that "high development cost charges" were an important regulatory issue, and nine of them considered high development cost charges to be their most important regulatory issue. The municipalities that cited this issue were in all regions except Quebec, and were quite varied in size.

Thirteen municipalities identified "excessive land development standards (i.e. setbacks, lot sizes, parking)", as important, although only one of them felt this was their most important issue. These municipalities were also widely distributed among city-sizes and locations, although it was notable that in Ontario it was cities in the larger metropolitan areas that chose this issue. Several Prairie respondents noted that they were in larger markets where they had to be attentive to their standards relative to those in nearby municipalities, in order to maintain their competitiveness.

Respondents from the North selected three issues more frequently than occurred elsewhere. These were: development cost charges; regulations to encourage infill and conversion; and barriers to flexible, adaptable housing. Other issues that were identified, each by less than 10 municipalities, included: lack of cost-effective renovation standards; inefficient approval processes; and resistance to density bonussing or linkage programs.

### **Are Housing Regulations Barriers to Housing Affordability and Choice?**

To complete this background exploration of municipal awareness of issues in housing

affordability and choice, Part One asked a quite different question, which is reported in Table 2.7. Municipalities were asked "Do planning and building regulations and development approval processes act as barriers to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing?". There were clear views on this question, as only one of the 110 municipalities surveyed did not answer this question.

About two-thirds of respondents (64%) said planning and building regulations don't impede housing affordability and choice , and of the remainder, almost all said they are "only somewhat" an impediment. There was no particular pattern of city-sizes in this response.

Four of the 41 respondents from municipalities in the largest urban regions (populations over 300,000), felt that regulations were constraining affordability and choice of housing , while 11 others indicated that they were constraining this somewhat.

Some of the observations made by municipalities in the course of replying to this question, illustrate the sense of these responses. A respondent from the Prairies noted that the greatest barrier to the supply of affordable housing is:

"...finding developers that want to do it".

This view was also expressed by respondents from British Columbia and Quebec. Another Prairie respondent provided the following observation:

"...there are many, many factors that act as barriers, not just our regulations".

He further explained that factors such as community resistance, softening

markets, difficulties in obtaining financing, and low-cost competition can be strong impediments to development, while regulations merely raise costs or increase the time required to start a project.

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses				
	"No"	"Only Somewhat"	"Yes"	No Response	No. of cities surveyed
Under 50,000	22	11	1		34
50,000 - 99,999	11	3	1		15
100,000 - 299,999	11	8			19
300,000 - 999,999	16	7	2	1	26
Over 1million	10	4	2		16
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>		64%	30%	5%	1%

## **PART 2      Recent Reviews of Regulatory Activity, and Regulatory Reform**

In Part Two municipalities were asked whether, during the last five years, they had undertaken reviews of five major elements of municipal regulatory activity that identified

impediments and constraints to housing affordability and choice . The major activities that were cited in this question were:

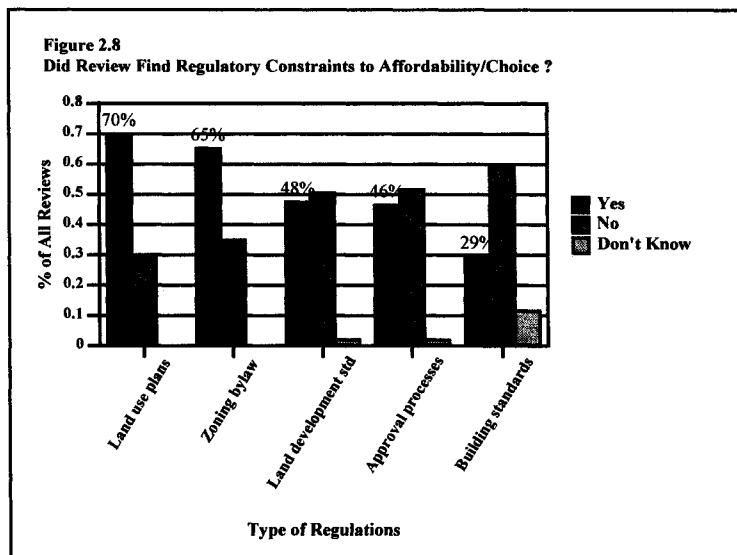
- Land Use Plans (Official Community Plan, area plans);
- Zoning By-law;
- Land Development Standards/Guidelines;
- Approval Processes;
- Building Standards.

These responses are illustrated in the following chart, Figure 2.8.

Of the 100 municipalities that responded, 70 found constraints affecting housing affordability in their land use plans (variously known as Official Plans, Community Plans, Development Plans, Growth Strategies). Sixty-seven of 103 responding cities found constraints in their zoning by-laws (65%). Nearly one-half of municipalities found constraints in land development standards or guidelines, or in the approval process (48% and 46% respectively).

Many respondents indicated that building standards were not the same kind of regulation as the others, and many remarked that provincial governments are responsible for legislating the building codes, and municipalities merely enforce what the province has created. There was a large non-response (15 municipalities) to the question and of the respondents, 12% said they didn't know whether these regulations impeded affordability and choice. Another 59% of these respondents said they had identified constraints on, and impediments to, housing affordability in building regulations. There were no particular patterns in the sizes of cities making these responses.

It is also notable that significant numbers of municipalities did not find constraints to housing affordability and choice. More municipalities said they didn't find constraints in their approvals process and land development standards than those who did. About one-third of municipalities reviewed their land use plans and zoning by-laws and didn't find impediments to affordability. Paralleling those respondents who had found constraints, there was no particular city-size pattern in these responses.



There is a notable difference between these responses and the responses to the question reported earlier in Table 2.7, which asked whether regulations impede the supply and choice of affordable housing. The earlier question required the respondent to make an overall assessment of whether the supply was being impeded by regulations, and that generally received an answer of "no". In the latter questions, when respondents were prompted about whether they had found any impediments during the review of specific major planning instruments, more respondents said "yes". This may be explained because the kinds of impediments that were addressed during these reviews tend to be longer term and indirect influences on affordable housing, rather than factors that have the immediate, direct effect of impeding the supply.

Table 2.9 reports on a follow-up question "If you answered 'yes' to any parts of the previous question, have actions been taken as a direct outcome of these reviews to improve housing affordability and choice?".

Instruments Reviewed	Municipalities Which Responded "Yes" in Figure 2.8 (review had indicated constraints)	Were Actions Taken to Improve Housing Affordability and Choice ?				Percentage of Municipalities Which Found Constraints and Took Action to Improve Affordability and Choice
		Yes	No	Don't Know	No response	
Land use plans	70	47	19	1	3	67%
Zoning bylaw	67	46	12	0	9	69%
Land development standards, guidelines	48	32	9	1	6	67%
Approval processes	46	31	5	1	9	67%
Building standards	28	17	6	2	3	61%

The responses were quite uniform. About two-thirds of the cities that had identified constraints to any of the instruments took actions to improve them. There were more non-responses in relation to the approvals process (9 non-responses among 46 municipalities which had identified approvals constraints), and zoning by-laws (9 non-responses among 67).

### **Summary Observations**

The overall pattern of responses to Part One of the questionnaire showed that problems of housing affordability and choice exist to a significant degree in cities of all sizes across Canada. The problems have existed for many years. The greatest concern is the adequacy of housing for particular groups such as low income families, single parent households, households with special needs, and some singles, seniors and young families. The smaller places also identified the poor condition of some housing as an important issue. When asked what was the most important regulatory issue,

municipalities of all sizes and in all parts of Canada responded that it was "NIMBY", and also identified regulatory barriers to the following: secondary suites; low-income housing; redevelopment of declining downtowns and brownfields; adaptable housing and alternative forms of tenure.

Most municipalities surveyed felt that their planning and building regulations do not act as barriers to housing affordability and choice. They often noted that other factors played a more significant role, such as lack of senior government funding for new social housing. Most responded that they have reviewed their major regulatory instruments in the last five years and identified constraints and two-thirds of them said they took action to improve choice and affordability.

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## **Chapter 2 Endnotes**

1. While NIMBY was the term used in the questionnaire to represent the issue of citizens' reactive opposition to change in their neighbourhoods, some respondents also mentioned other terms with similar meanings. These were "BANANA" (Build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything), and "LULU" (Locally unacceptable land use). BANANA is probably more descriptive than NIMBY of the strong resistance to any density that was mentioned by several Prairie respondents. The more general, technician's term, LULU, may be more aptly used to represent the opposition to secondary suites in individual neighbourhoods. However, as there are only slight differences between the meaning of these acronyms, this report only uses the term NIMBY.
2. This estimate was cited in "[Preserving Existing Housing Stock - Secondary Suites](#)", a paper delivered by Rosemary Zelinka, Senior Planner, Municipality of Delta at the GVRD Conference on Affordable Housing, Holiday Inn, Burnaby, April 23, 1999.



## Chapitre 2 Aperçu des résultats de l'enquête à l'échelle nationale : questions générales

Dans le présent chapitre, nous examinons, à l'échelle nationale, la perception qu'ont les municipalités du Canada de la question de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement, d'abord sous l'angle de l'étendue et de la nature des problèmes observés à cet égard, puis sous celui des examens récents de la réglementation.

### 1<sup>re</sup> PARTIE

#### L'abordabilité du logement est-elle une question importante?

L'abordabilité du logement est considérée comme une question importante par les municipalités dans

toutes les régions du Canada. À la question « L'abordabilité du logement constitue-t-elle un problème important (dans votre ville)? », 85 % des répondants (94 des 110 municipalités visées par l'enquête) ont indiqué que c'était soit « important », soit « un peu important » (voir le tableau 2.0).

(Recensement de 1996) Groupe selon la taille des villes	Réponses des municipalités				Nombre de villes sondées
	Important	Un peu important	Pas important	Pas de réponse	
Moins de 50 000	15	14	5	0	34
50 000 à 99 999	6	5	4	0	15
100 000 à 299 999	10	8	1	0	19
300 000 à 999 999	12	10	3	1	26
1 000 000 et plus	10	4	2	0	16
Totaux - en chiffres	53	41	15	1	110
- en pourcentage de l'ensemble des réponses	48%	37%	14%	1%	

Toutes les municipalités des régions de la Colombie-Britannique et de l'Atlantique de même que 22 des 23 municipalités interrogées des régions des Prairies et du Nord ont indiqué que la question de l'abordabilité du logement était importante. Les 15 municipalités qui ont exprimé l'opinion contraire sont de petites et de moyennes municipalités de l'Ontario et du Québec où, comme les répondants l'ont expliqué, les prix du logement sont relativement bas et où les taux d'inoccupation sont assez élevés et où, par conséquent, la question de l'abordabilité du logement n'est pas une grande source de préoccupations. En revanche, cette question était jugée importante dans presque toutes les grandes villes visées par l'enquête.

## Quels sont les principaux problèmes?

Afin de mieux cerner la question de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement, on a demandé aux répondants de chaque municipalité si les problèmes mentionnés ci-dessous étaient des problèmes importants sur leur territoire.

- Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général.
- Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers (les jeunes, les personnes vivant seules, les familles à faible revenu, les familles monoparentales, les personnes aux besoins spéciaux, les personnes âgées, etc.).
- Qualité médiocre ou mauvais état de certains logements.

Beaucoup de municipalités ont répondu à cette question, la plupart d'entre elles mentionnant la pénurie de logements pour des groupes particuliers comme étant un des principaux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité du logement (voir le tableau 2.1). De fait, 75 municipalités (68 % des municipalités visées par l'enquête et 47 % de toutes les réponses à cette question) étaient de cet avis. C'est la réponse qui a été donnée le plus souvent dans les cinq régions et dans les villes de toutes les tailles. Dans les villes moyennes (population de 100 000 à 299 999 habitants), 15 des 23 réponses obtenues allaient dans ce même sens.

**Tableau 2.1 Lesquels, parmi les suivants, sont les principaux problèmes en termes de choix de logements et d'abordabilité?**

Groupes selon la taille des villes (Recensement de 1996)	Principaux problèmes choisis				Total de réponses	Pas de réponse (1)	Nombre de villes sondées
	Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général	Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers	Qualité médiocre ou mauvais état de certains logements	Autres			
Moins de 50 000	11	20	14	3	48	2	34
50 000 à 99 999	4	12	6	5	27	0	15
100 000 à 299 999	1	15	7	0	23	1	19
300 000 à 999 999	11	17	8	4	40	1	26
1 000 000 et plus	4	11	3	4	22	0	16
<b>Total : en chiffre</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>: en % des réponses</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>100%</b>		

(1) Observation. Les répondants pouvaient choisir jusqu'à trois réponses et plus.

## **Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

Les réponses les plus fréquentes qu'on a obtenues à la question à savoir quels étaient les groupes qui avaient besoin d'un plus grand choix de logements et de logements plus abordables ont été, dans l'ordre décroissant de fréquence, les familles à faible revenu, les familles monoparentales, les ménages qui ont des besoins spéciaux, les personnes vivant seules, les personnes âgées et, dans certains cas, les jeunes familles. Certains répondants ont mentionné d'autres groupes, qui sont signalés dans les chapitres consacrés aux régions.

Trente-huit municipalités (35 % des municipalités interrogées et 24 % de toutes les réponses à la question) ont indiqué que « la qualité médiocre ou le mauvais état de certains logements » était un problème important. Proportionnellement, davantage des plus petites municipalités ont donné cette réponse, dont plusieurs municipalités tributaires d'une industrie primaire en déclin. En revanche, seulement trois des 16 municipalités situées dans les plus grandes zones métropolitaines ont choisi cette réponse. À part ces deux exceptions, les réponses obtenues correspondent à la répartition nationale des villes selon leur population. L'écart entre les plus grandes et les plus petites villes quant au degré de priorité accordé au problème des logements de mauvaise qualité ou en mauvais état peut être révélateur, bien qu'il reste à déterminer si le fait que les petites villes et les villes moyennes soient davantage conscientes du problème se traduit par des mesures concrètes pour le corriger.

Par ailleurs, 31 répondants ont indiqué que « la pénurie ou le choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général » était un des principaux problèmes dans leur municipalité. Cette réponse a été donnée par 11 des 26 villes dont la population se situe entre 100 000 et 299 999 habitants, mais par une seule des 19 villes ayant une population entre 100 000 et 299 999 habitants. Pour le reste, les réponses obtenues correspondent à la répartition des villes selon leur population.

Les répondants ont en outre mentionné 16 autres problèmes - non suggérés - considérés comme faisant partie des problèmes les plus difficiles auxquels font face leur municipalité. Seuls quelques-uns de ces problèmes ont été mentionnés par plus d'une municipalité. Ainsi, plusieurs répondants ont indiqué que la réduction du financement de nouveaux logements sociaux par les ordres supérieurs de gouvernement représentait le problème le plus difficile auquel faisait face leur municipalité au chapitre de l'abordabilité du logement. Pour plusieurs autres, le principal problème était que les promoteurs ne construisent pas de logements à prix abordable.

### **Quels sont les problèmes liés à l'abordabilité du logement auxquels les municipalités ont le plus de difficulté à faire face?**

On a demandé aux participants quels étaient, parmi les trois principaux problèmes suggérés, ceux auxquels leur municipalité avait le plus de difficulté à faire face.

## **Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

À nouveau, la pénurie de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers est la réponse qu'ils ont donnée le plus souvent, soit dans plus de la moitié des cas dans toutes les villes, à l'exception des plus petites (voir le tableau 2.2)

**Tableau 2.2 Problèmes principaux les plus difficiles à traiter pour les municipalités**

Population (1996)	Problèmes principaux considérés les plus difficiles				Total de réponses	Pas de réponse	Nombre de villes interrogées
	Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables en général	Pénurie ou choix insuffisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers	Qualité médiocre ou mauvais état de certains logements	Autres			
Moins de 50 000	7	8	10	2	27	8	35
50 000 à 99 999	2	7	1	2	12	3	15
100 000 à 299 999	1	11	5	1	18	1	18
300 000 à 999 999	7	12	1	2	22	4	26
1 000 000 et plus	2	7	1	1	11	5	16
<b>Total : en nombre</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>: en % des réponses</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>100%</b>		

En ce qui concerne les deux autres choix de réponse proposés, les résultats varient assez largement selon la taille des municipalités. Dans les villes de moins de 50 000 habitants, les réponses se répartissent à peu près également entre les trois choix. Près du tiers des municipalités du Québec (sept sur 22) n'ont pas répondu à cette question.

**Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

Ces trois problèmes principaux ne sont pas nouveaux. Les réponses à la question à savoir depuis combien d'années le problème mentionné (le problème le plus difficile à traiter) existait sont présentées au tableau 2.3.

Population (1996)	Temps										Total des réponses	Pas de réponse	Total
	0 à 2 ans	3 à 5 ans	6 à 10 ans	11 à 15 ans	16 ans ou plus	Nombreuses années	Quelques années	Pas certain	Ne sais pas				
Moins de 50 000	0	8	3	4	2	5	3	1	0	26	8	34	
50 000 à 99 999	0	1	2	1	5	3	0	0	1	13	2	15	
100 000 à 299 999	0	1	6	2	3	5	0	0	0	17	2	19	
300 000 à 999 999	0	6	3	5	2	6	0	0	0	22	4	26	
1 000 000 et plus	1	0	2	3	1	4	0	0	0	11	5	16	
<b>Total : en nombre</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>110</b>	
<b>: en % des réponses</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>			

La moitié des municipalités qui ont répondu à la question ont indiqué qu'elles faisaient face à leur plus difficile problème lié à l'abordabilité ou au choix du logement depuis plus de cinq ans, et un autre 26 p. 100 des municipalités interrogées ont dit qu'elles y faisaient face depuis de nombreuses années. La situation à cet égard est un peu meilleure dans les plus petites villes : 35 p. 100 d'entre elles (neuf sur 26) ont indiqué que le problème existait depuis plus de cinq ans et 19 p. 100 de plus, depuis de nombreuses années. Vingt et une des 110 municipalités visées par l'enquête, dont huit des 22 municipalités du Québec, n'ont pas répondu à la question.

**Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

Population (1996)	Le problème devient-il plus difficile ou moins difficile à traiter?					Nombre de réponses	Nombre de villes interrogées
	Plus difficile	Moins difficile	Ni plus ni moins difficile	Pas certain, problème s'aggrave, autre	Total des réponses		
Moins de 50 000	8	2	13	3	26	8	35
50 000 à 99 999	6	5	1		12	3	15
100 000 à 299 999	4	5	8	2	19	0	18
300 000 à 999 999	16	1	5		22	4	26
1 000 000 et plus	3	1	10		14	2	16
<b>Total : en nombre</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>: en % de réponses</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100%</b>		

Comme dernière question de ce volet de l'enquête, on a demandé aux répondants s'il devenait plus difficile, moins difficile ou ni plus ni moins difficile de faire face au principal problème lié à l'abordabilité du logement dans leur municipalité. Les réponses obtenues, présentées au tableau 2.4, confirment que la situation à ce chapitre ne s'améliore pas dans les municipalités. Quatre-vingt pour cent des personnes qui ont répondu à la question ont indiqué qu'il devenait plus difficile ou ni plus ni moins difficile de faire face au problème, contre seulement 15 % qui estimaient que cela devenait moins difficile. Dans les plus grands centres urbains, une majorité de répondants ont indiqué que ce n'était ni plus ni moins difficile de faire face au problème, tandis que la plupart des répondants des villes dont la population se situe entre 300 000 et 999 999 habitants ont affirmé que cela devenait plus difficile. En ce qui concerne les villes moyennes (entre 50 000 et 299 999 habitants), les réponses obtenues se répartissent assez également entre les trois principaux choix proposés, tandis que dans les plus petites villes, la réponse qu'on a le plus souvent obtenue a été « ni plus ni moins difficile ». Il convient de signaler qu'un assez grand nombre de municipalités (17 sur 110) n'ont pas répondu à la question; il s'agit surtout de petites villes, dont beaucoup se trouvent au Québec.

## **Les plus importants problèmes liés à la réglementation**

On a demandé aux répondants d'indiquer quels étaient les trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation auxquels ils faisaient face dans leur municipalité, en leur proposant une liste de 12 problèmes possibles, pour les aider à répondre. Ces réponses proposées sont présentées au tableau 2.5 ci-dessous, suivies du nombre de fois où elles ont été choisies par un répondant, sans tenir compte du rang dans lequel elles l'ont été (1<sup>er</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> ou 3<sup>e</sup> choix). Dans plus du quart des cas (68 des 257 réponses données), le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » était considéré comme un des trois plus importants problèmes liés à la réglementation.

<b>Tableau 2.5 - Quels sont les trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation</b>			
<b>Réponses suggérées dans le questionnaire</b>	<b>Nombre de fois choisies (1)</b>	<b>Réponses suggérées dans le questionnaire</b>	<b>Nombre de fois choisies (1)</b>
Pas dans ma cour (opposition aux logements à coût modique comme les appartements secondaires).	68	Droits d'aménagement élevés	16
Obstacles à l'aménagement d'appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins).	32	Normes d'aménagement foncier excessives (les marges de recul, la taille des terrains, places de stationnement, etc.).	13
Autres problèmes signalés (y compris ceux qui ne sont pas liés à la réglementation).	26	Obstacles aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels (habitation communautaire).	10
Obstacles aux logements pour les personnes dont les revenus sont les plus faibles (comme les maisons de chambres).	22	Obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables.	10
Nécessité d'adopter de la réglementation favorisant la construction intercalaire et la conversion.	20	Absence de normes de rénovation efficientes.	9
Obstacles au réaménagement de quartiers du centre-ville en état de délabrement et des sites contaminés.	17	Processus d'approbation inefficaces	7
		Résistance aux primes de densité et aux programmes de compensation.	7
<b>(1) Observation. Chacun des 110 répondants pouvait choisir jusqu'à trois des réponses proposées ou donner une ou plusieurs « autres » réponses.</b>			
Total des réponses	257		
Pas de réponse	73		
Total	330		

### Le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » : le principal problème

Le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » est considéré par le plus grand nombre de municipalités comme le principal obstacle à l'amélioration de la réglementation. On appelle syndrome « pas dans ma cour » l'opposition générale des citoyens aux changements dans leur quartier.<sup>1</sup> Cinquante-cinq répondants ont indiqué qu'il s'agissait du plus important problème lié à la réglementation dans leur municipalité. Ce qui est davantage que

toutes les autres réponses mises ensemble.

Comme on le voit au tableau 2.6, les 68 répondants qui ont indiqué que le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » était un des trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation provenaient de villes de toutes les tailles,

dans des proportions qui correspondent à peu près à leur représentation dans l'échantillon total de municipalités. Les villes des régions de l'Atlantique, des Prairies et de la Colombie-Britannique ont été un peu moins nombreuses à donner cette réponse, alors que celles dont la population se situe entre 50 000 et 99 999 ont été légèrement plus nombreuses que les autres à le faire.

Tableau 2.6 - Municipalités qui considèrent le syndrome « pas dans ma cour » comme le plus important problème lié à la réglementation, selon la population

(Recensement de 1996) Groupe selon la taille des villes	Municipalités qui ont choisi le syndrome « pas dans ma cour »			Total partiel	Nbre de villes sondées
	1er choix	2e choix	3e choix		
Moins de 50 000	16	1	2	19	35
50 000 à 99 999	10	1	1	12	15
100 000 à 299 999	8	2	2	12	18
300 000 à 999 999	14	1	1	16	26
1 000 000 et plus	7	2		9	16
Totaux	55	7	6	68	110

### Les autres « trois principaux » problèmes liés à la réglementation suivant le tableau 2.5

Les obstacles aux appartements accessoires, principalement les appartements secondaires, mais aussi les pavillons-jardins, viennent au deuxième rang dans le choix des trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation. Les appartements secondaires sont très importants pour assurer l'abordabilité du logement. On estime en effet qu'ils représentent jusqu'à 12 % du parc de logements urbain.<sup>2</sup> Ce facteur a été choisi à 32 reprises comme 1<sup>er</sup>, 2<sup>e</sup> ou 3<sup>e</sup> problème le plus important, et ce, par des municipalités de toutes tailles et de toutes les régions.

Les répondants de certaines villes de petite et de moyenne taille, notamment dans les Prairies et en Ontario, de même que de plus grandes villes de la Colombie-Britannique ont fait observer qu'on exprimait une vive opposition aux appartements secondaires,

même dans les quartiers où il y a déjà un grand nombre de ce genre de logements. Beaucoup de municipalités ont mentionné les mesures spéciales qu'elles prenaient pour favoriser cette forme de logement nécessaire que représentent les appartements secondaires, tout en l'encadrant sur le plan de la santé et de la sécurité.

Les « autres problèmes », c'est-à-dire les problèmes qui n'étaient pas suggérés dans le questionnaire, venaient au rang suivant dans les réponses données par les municipalités. La plupart de ces 26 « autres problèmes » n'étaient pas liés à la réglementation, mais notamment à des facteurs politiques et économiques. Un certain nombre des plus petites municipalités ont indiqué que la faible croissance économique était un des principaux problèmes. De même, plusieurs municipalités de la région de l'Atlantique ont mentionné le manque d'infrastructure (en l'occurrence les réseaux d'aqueduc et d'égout ainsi que les routes). Au Québec, beaucoup de répondants ont mentionné l'insuffisance des recettes et l'état d'une partie du parc de logements locatifs, tandis que les répondants des Prairies ont signalé l'opposition générale des gens à toute mesure susceptible d'entraîner une augmentation de la densité d'occupation. La réponse la plus souvent donnée dans la catégorie « autres problèmes » concernait la diminution du financement de nouveaux logements sociaux par les ordres supérieurs de gouvernement, préoccupation qu'illustre l'observation ci-dessous.

« Tous les facteurs mentionnés ci-dessus jouent un petit rôle. Cependant, en l'absence de nouveaux projets visant à offrir des logements à prix abordable, ils ne comptent pas vraiment. On ne construira pas de logements abordables sans une forme ou une autre de subventions. Sans subvention, il ne serait pas économiquement viable de le faire. »

Les « obstacles à la production de logements pour les économiquement faibles (p. ex., des maisons de chambres) » étaient considérés par 22 répondants comme faisant partie des trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation, et ce, dans des municipalités de toutes tailles et de toutes les régions. Cette réponse a été particulièrement fréquente dans les plus petites et dans les plus grandes villes du Québec.

Plusieurs autres facteurs ont été choisis entre 10 et 20 fois comme faisant partie des « trois principaux » problèmes, mais il ne se dégageait aucune tendance dans ces choix, observés dans des municipalités de toutes tailles et de toutes les régions. Ces facteurs étaient la nécessité d'adopter des règlements pour encourager la construction intercalaire et la conversion, les obstacles au réaménagement des quartiers centraux en état de délabrement et des sites contaminés, les obstacles aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels (p. ex., l'habitation communautaire) ainsi que les obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables.

Seize municipalités ont indiqué que les droits d'aménagement élevés étaient un important problème lié à la réglementation, et neuf d'entre elles considéraient qu'il s'agissait là de leur principal problème à cet égard. Cette réponse a été donnée par des

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municipalités de toutes les régions, à l'exception du Québec, et de toutes les tailles.

Treize municipalités ont indiqué que les normes d'aménagement foncier trop exigeantes (recul, dimension des terrains, places de stationnement, etc.) étaient un problème important, mais une seule d'entre elles estimait qu'il s'agissait du problème le plus important. Il s'agissait encore une fois de municipalités de tailles diverses situées dans différentes régions. En Ontario, toutefois, ce sont les villes des grandes zones métropolitaines qui ont choisi ce facteur. Dans les Prairies, plusieurs répondants ont fait observer qu'ils faisaient partie de « marchés » plus vastes et qu'ils devaient tenir compte des normes appliquées dans les municipalités voisines pour maintenir leur compétitivité.

Les répondants de la région du Nord ont été proportionnellement plus nombreux que ceux des autres régions à choisir trois facteurs, à savoir les droits d'aménagement élevés, le besoin de règlements pour encourager la construction intercalaire et la conversion ainsi que les obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables.

Les autres facteurs choisis - chacun par moins de 10 municipalités - sont notamment l'absence de normes de rénovation efficientes, le manque d'efficacité des processus d'approbation et la résistance aux primes à la densité et aux programmes de compensation.

### La réglementation en matière d'habitation nuit-elle à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement?

Pour terminer ce premier volet de l'enquête consacré à l'examen général de la perception qu'ont les municipalités des questions liées à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement, on leur a posé une question assez différente, dont les résultats sont présentés dans le tableau 2.7. Cette question

était la suivante : Croyez-vous que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction et les processus d'approbation des demandes d'aménagement constituent des obstacles à l'augmentation de l'offre et des choix de logements abordables? Toutes les municipalités sauf une ont répondu à la question, ce qui montre que les répondants avaient une opinion bien arrêtée à ce sujet.

**Tableau 2.7 - La réglementation constitue-t-elle un obstacle à l'offre et au choix de logements abordables?**

(Recensement de 1996) Groupe selon la taille des villes	Réponses				Total
	Non	Juste un peu	Oui	Pas de réponse	
<b>Moins de 50 000</b>	22	11	1		34
<b>50 000 à 99 999</b>	11	3	1		15
<b>100 000 à 299 999</b>	11	8			19
<b>300 000 à 999 999</b>	16	7	2	1	26
<b>1 000 000 et plus</b>	10	4	2		16
<b>Total - en chiffre - en pourcentage de l'ensemble des réponses</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>110</b>
	64%	30%	5%	1%	

Environ les deux tiers des répondants (64 %) étaient d'avis que les règlements visés n'avaient pas d'effets négatifs sur l'abordabilité et le choix du logement, tandis que presque tous les autres ont indiqué que ces effets existaient, mais qu'ils étaient limités. On n'observe pas de correspondance particulière entre les réponses et la taille des municipalités.

Quatre des 41 répondants des villes des plus grandes zones métropolitaines (population de 300 000 habitants et plus) ont indiqué que les règlements en cause nuisaient à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement, tandis que 11 autres répondants estimaient qu'ils n'y nuisaient qu'un peu.

Les observations qu'ont faites les personnes interrogées en répondant à la question mettent leurs réponses en perspective. Ainsi, pour un répondant des Prairies, la plus grande difficulté, lorsqu'on veut augmenter l'offre de logements à prix abordable, c'est :

« de trouver des promoteurs qui sont prêts à en construire. »

Le même genre de remarque a été formulé par des répondants de la Colombie-Britannique et du Québec. Un autre répondant des Prairies a fait l'observation suivante :

« (...) Beaucoup, vraiment beaucoup de facteurs sont des obstacles, à part nos règlements. »

Il a ensuite précisé que des facteurs comme l'opposition des citoyens, l'affaiblissement du marché, la difficulté d'obtenir des fonds et la concurrence à faible coût pouvaient faire grandement obstacle à la réalisation de projets, tandis que les effets des règlements se limitaient à faire augmenter les coûts ou à retarder la mise en branle des projets.

## **2<sup>e</sup> PARTIE**

### **Examens récents de la réglementation et réforme de la réglementation**

Pour le deuxième volet de l'enquête, on a demandé aux municipalités si elles avaient procédé, au cours des cinq dernières années, à des examens des cinq principaux éléments de la réglementation municipale qui avaient révélé des entraves et des contraintes à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement. Les cinq principaux éléments de réglementation mentionnés dans la question étaient les suivants :

- les plans d'occupation des sols (plans directeurs communaux, plans d'aménagement régionaux);
- le règlement de zonage;

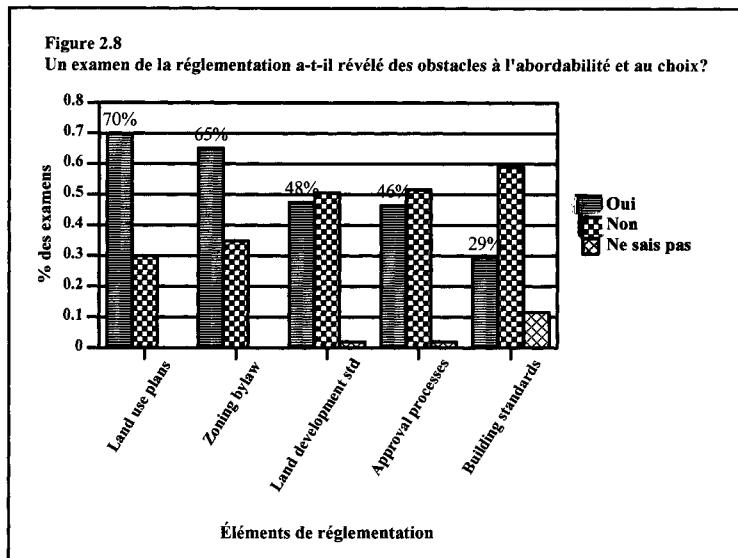
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- les normes et les directives d'aménagement foncier;
- les processus d'approbation;
- les normes du bâtiment.

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Les réponses à la question sont présentées schématiquement à la figure 2.8.

Soixante-dix des 100 municipalités qui ont répondu à la question ont indiqué qu'elles avaient trouvé des obstacles à l'abordabilité du logement dans leurs plans d'occupation des sols (aussi appelés, selon les endroits, plans directeurs, plans d'agglomération, plans d'aménagement, stratégie de planification de la croissance). Soixante-sept municipalités sur 103 (65 %) ont dit avoir trouvé de tels obstacles dans leur règlement de zonage. Près de la moitié des municipalités ont dit en avoir trouvé dans les normes d'aménagement foncier (48 %) ou dans les processus d'approbation (46 %).



1. Plans d'occupation des sols
2. Règlement de zonage
3. Normes d'aménagement foncier
4. Processus d'approbation
5. Normes du bâtiment

Bon nombre de répondants ont fait observer que les normes du bâtiment différaient des autres éléments de réglementation mentionnés, expliquant qu'à cet égard, les municipalités ne faisaient qu'assurer l'application des normes prescrites dans les codes adoptés par les provinces. Quinze municipalités n'ont d'ailleurs pas répondu à la question et 12 p. 100 de celles qui y ont répondu ont dit ne pas savoir si les normes de construction faisaient obstacle à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement, tandis que 59 p. 100 des répondants y voyaient quant à eux un tel obstacle. On n'observe pas de correspondance particulière entre les réponses et la taille des municipalités.

Il convient par ailleurs de signaler qu'un nombre important de municipalités ne pensaient pas que la réglementation nuisait à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement. Ainsi, les municipalités qui estimaient que les processus d'approbation et les normes d'aménagement du territoire ne constituaient pas un obstacle à cet égard étaient plus nombreuses que celles qui pensaient le contraire. À peu près le tiers des municipalités ont affirmé qu'elles avaient examiné leurs plans d'occupation des sols et leurs règlements de zonage, sans y trouver quoi que ce soit qui puisse nuire à l'abordabilité du logement. De même que dans le cas des répondants qui avaient trouvé des obstacles dans leur réglementation, on n'observe pas de correspondance particulière entre les réponses et la taille des municipalités.

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On observe une différence appréciable entre les réponses à la présente question et les réponses à la question dont les résultats sont présentés au tableau 2.7, où on demandait aux répondants si la réglementation nuisait à l'offre et au choix de logements abordables. Pour répondre à cette dernière question, les répondants devaient évaluer globalement si la réglementation avait un effet préjudiciable sur l'offre de logements et en venaient généralement à la conclusion que ce n'était pas le cas. Pour la présente question, où on demandait plus explicitement aux répondants s'ils avaient découverts des obstacles durant l'examen des principaux éléments de leur réglementation en matière d'urbanisme, ils ont été plus nombreux à répondre par l'affirmative. Cette différence tient peut-être au fait que le genre d'obstacles que ces examens ont permis de cerner ont généralement des effets à plus long terme et plus indirects sur l'abordabilité du logement, contrairement aux facteurs qui ont un effet nuisible direct et immédiat sur l'offre de logement.

Les réponses à la question complémentaire « Si vous avez répondu par l'affirmative au moins une fois à la question précédente, indiquez si des mesures ont été prises afin d'améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix de logements » sont présentées au tableau 2.9.

**Tableau 2.9 - Mesures prises par les municipalités à la suite d'examens ayant révélé des obstacles à l'abordabilité**

Éléments examinés	Municipalités qui ont répondu « oui » pour la figure 2.8 (un examen a révélé des obstacles)	Des mesures ont-elles été prises pour améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix du logement?				% de municipalités qui ont découvert des obstacles et pris des mesures pour améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix
		Oui	Non	Ne sais pas	Pas de réponse	
Plans d'occupation des sols	70	47	19	1	3	67%
Règlement de zonage	67	46	12	0	9	69%
Normes et directives d'aménagement foncier	48	32	9	1	6	67%
Processus d'approbation	46	31	5	1	9	67%
Normes du bâtiment	28	17	6	2	3	61%

Les réponses étaient assez uniformes. Environ les deux tiers des villes qui avaient découvert que l'un ou l'autre des éléments de leur réglementation constituait un obstacle avaient pris des mesures pour améliorer la situation. Un plus grand nombre de municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question concernant le processus d'approbation (neuf des 46 municipalités qui ont dit avoir découvert des obstacles liés à cet élément) et à celle concernant le règlement de zonage (neuf municipalités sur 67).

## **Observations sommaires**

L'ensemble des réponses données à la première partie du questionnaire montre qu'il existe des problèmes importants liés à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement dans les villes de toutes tailles et dans toutes les régions du Canada. De plus, ces problèmes existent depuis de nombreuses années. Le plus important de ces problèmes est la pénurie de logements appropriés pour des groupes particuliers, par exemple les familles à faible revenu, les familles monoparentales, les ménages aux besoins spéciaux ainsi que certaines personnes seules, personnes âgées et jeunes familles. Dans les petites villes, le mauvais état de certains logements était aussi considéré comme un problème important. À la question à savoir quel était le principal problème lié à la réglementation, les municipalités de toutes tailles et de toutes les régions du Canada ont en grande majorité répondu que c'était le syndrome « pas dans ma cour ». Ils ont aussi mentionné en assez grand nombre les obstacles aux appartements secondaires accessoires, à la production de logements pour les économiquement faibles, au réaménagement des quartiers centraux en état de délabrement et des sites contaminés ainsi qu'au logement adaptable et aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels.

Par ailleurs, la plupart des municipalités visées par l'enquête ne croyaient pas que leurs règlements d'urbanisme et de construction pouvaient nuire à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement. Beaucoup d'entre elles ont fait observer que d'autres facteurs, par exemple le manque de financement de nouveaux logements sociaux par les ordres supérieurs de gouvernement, constituaient à cet égard des obstacles plus importants. La plupart des municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles avaient examiné les principaux éléments de leur réglementation au cours des cinq dernières années, que ces examens leur avaient permis de découvrir des obstacles à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement, et que, pour les deux tiers d'entre elles, des mesures avaient été prises pour améliorer la situation.

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## **Chapitre 2 Notes en fin de chapitre**

1. L'expression « pas dans ma cour » est celle qui a été utilisée dans le questionnaire pour désigner la réaction d'opposition des citoyens aux changements envisagés dans leur voisinage. Certains répondants ont toutefois utilisé d'autres expressions pour parler de ce même phénomène, notamment les termes anglais « BANANA » (signifiant « ne construisez absolument rien nulle part, près de quoi que ce soit ») et « LULU » (signifiant « utilisation du terrain inacceptable dans le quartier »). Le premier de ces deux termes décrit probablement mieux que l'expression « pas dans ma cour » la farouche opposition à toute augmentation de la densité de la population dont ont parlé plusieurs répondants de la région des Prairies. Le second, à la fois plus général et plus technique, pourrait s'appliquer avec plus de justesse à l'opposition à l'aménagement d'appartements secondaires dans certains quartiers.

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Cependant, comme il n'y a pas de différence notable de sens entre ces expressions, seule l'expression « pas dans ma cour » est utilisée dans le présent rapport.

2. Cette estimation est mentionnée dans l'exposé ayant pour titre *Preserving Existing Housing Stock - Secondary Suites*, présenté par Rosemary Zelinka (urbaniste principale dans la municipalité de Delta), à la conférence du District général de Vancouver sur le logement à prix abordable, au Holiday Inn, à Burnaby, le 23 avril 1999.

### **Chapter 3: National Overview of Survey Results: Use of Regulatory Reforms**

Part 3 of the survey asked municipalities about their use of specific measures which are considered to assist housing choice and affordability. They potentially cut costs, increase efficiencies and make regulations more flexible and inclusive. While the focus of the survey was on regulatory reforms and approvals processes, participants were asked about some non-regulatory measures also aimed at encouraging affordability and choice. This section explored six broad subject areas:

- land-related measures;
- measures related to approvals processes;
- measures related to building codes;
- measures from CMHC's 1999 study *Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing*;
- other measures;
- other factors.

In each subject area, respondents were prompted with questions about measures that were expected to be well-known, and they were given the option to add others. The survey questionnaire asked whether each measure was:

- already adopted by the municipality;
- being considered;
- considered already and had been rejected; or
- not relevant

Throughout this Part respondents were also asked to report on influences the ACT program had on each measure.

#### **Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning Measures**

Municipalities were asked about their use of 10 measures in the area of land-use planning and zoning which were said, in the literature, to contribute to more housing choice and affordability. Their responses are summarised in Table 3.0, in which they have been grouped to illustrate three broad patterns in municipalities' use of these reforms.

**Three measures are in widespread use.** Over 80% of municipalities have already adopted these measures and others are considering them:

- over 90% of municipalities allow a mix of housing types and a variety of lot sizes in individual parts of the community, and allow a mix of commercial and residential uses in some areas, and permit conversions;
- over 80% allow innovative housing forms such as group homes, collaborative housing and co-housing, and another five municipalities are considering such measures. Many official plans allow groups homes in any residential zone,

providing that they meet performance standards. However, 15 respondents said these measures are not relevant;

Table 3.0: Municipal Use of Land-Related Regulatory Measures							
Description of Measure	Status of Measure						
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	Total
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	102	4	1	3	0	0	110
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	100	4	0	6	0	0	110
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, collaborative housing and group homes	88	5	0	15	1	1	110
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>							
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	80	3	4	22	1	0	110
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	61	8	4	34	0	3	110
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites or garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	54	11	29	13	2	1	110
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	52	12	7	33	2	4	110
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	46	9	6	40	4	5	110
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows for convertible housing	28	9	4	57	6	6	110
Replot schemes, special development districts	22	15	6	55	4	8	110

**There are mixed views about five measures.** Between 44% and 73% of municipalities have adopted them, and they are being considered by 8-12 others, but there are also significant numbers of cities that are rejecting them or considering them irrelevant:

- over 70% of respondents said they pre-zone land for multifamily housing, and three other municipalities are considering this measure, while four have already considered and rejected it, and a large number, 22, said they consider this measure is irrelevant. The difference may be explained by two approaches to the application of this measure. If a plentiful supply of multiple sites is designated or pre-zoned, an active land market is encouraged and land costs will be moderated. However, some cities may only designate or pre-zone a minimal number of sites, which constricts the supply. It would require additional research to determine whether one of these approaches is what is being considered irrelevant;

- 55% (61 cities) reduce parking standards to reduce costs for affordable owner-occupied, rental and special needs homes, and eight other municipalities are considering this measure. However, 38 places either consider this measure irrelevant or have rejected it, and three others hadn't considered it. The places that oppose this measure tend to be smaller, low-density cities where land values are relatively low, so a lowered parking requirement would have little impact on unit housing costs;
- 49% (54 municipalities) allow accessory apartments in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods, and another 11 are considering this policy. On the other hand, 29 places have rejected this measure, 13 consider it irrelevant and two others hadn't considered it. Six places mentioned specifically that they also allow garden suites in single family zones, and while other cities may have similar measures, the accommodation of garden suites is much less common than measures directed to encourage secondary suites.

During the interviews, survey respondents often spoke of difficulties encountered in public hearings (including Council and formal Committee meetings) in discussions of secondary suites. Strong opposition is often expressed, even in neighbourhoods which already contain significant numbers of suites. While the encouragement of suites can be a powerful tool for creating housing affordability and choice, bringing this reform into being requires a conjunction of willing owners with a commitment in the political offices of the city government, and cooperation among all the relevant municipal departments (planning, building inspection and fire department);

- 47% (52 municipalities) allow reduced lot sizes and road widths to accommodate lower cost homes, and 12 other cities are considering this measure. However these measures have been rejected or are considered irrelevant by 40 cities, and two others are not considering them while four places didn't respond. Like the reduced parking measure, those rejecting these measures tend to be smaller municipalities having lower land costs. Also, some municipalities, particularly on the Prairies and in Northern Ontario, said they require standard road widths for snow storage;
- 42% (46 municipalities) will reduce setbacks to accommodate lower cost homes, and nine indicated they are considering this measure. This has been rejected or is considered irrelevant by 46 cities, while four others aren't considering it and five didn't respond to this prompt. There was no particular pattern observed in the places interested in, or uninterested in, this measure.

**Two measures are used by a minority of municipalities.** Between 14% and 26% of cities have adopted them, and much greater proportions of the places surveyed did not support such measures:

- 25% (28 municipalities) employ zoning which permits convertible housing, and this measure is under consideration by nine others. However, four cities

had rejected the idea and 57 considered it irrelevant. This measure has primarily been used by larger places ;

- 20% (22 municipalities) have created special development districts or designate areas for replot schemes, in order to facilitate low-cost housing. There appears to be particular interest in these ideas, as 15 other cities are considering them. These measures had been rejected by six places, and were considered irrelevant by 55. Eight places didn't respond, in some cases because they were not familiar with these measures. Development districts were mainly in larger places, while replotting is employed in various places in the Prairies region;

There was little indication that municipalities had been influenced by the ACT program in any of these land-related measures. Of the 110 municipalities surveyed, only a few reported that their reform measures had been influenced by this program.

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

The survey asked about three measures related to building codes and regulations. Responses to these questions, as shown in Table 3.1, are summarised as:

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
"Standard of maintenance" bylaw (or equivalent)	55	3	6	34	2	10	110
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. for secondary suites)	39	7	9	41	4	10	110
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	34	9	4	49	5	9	110
Other	6	0	0	0	0	0	6

- 50% (55 municipalities) have "standards of maintenance" by-laws and three other cities are considering enacting one. By-laws of this type have many different names, including Property Standards Bylaws, Minimum Maintenance and Occupancy Bylaws, Property Maintenance Bylaws, Safe Housing Standards, or even Unsightly Premises Bylaws. Six places have rejected such measures, and 34 said the concept is not relevant. Ten municipalities had not considered the idea or didn't respond to this question. No geographic

pattern was observed in these responses.

The application of these bylaws, as well as health and safety regulations and building codes, are the central elements of the approach each city takes to encouraging or discouraging a stock of affordable housing. Several municipalities described task force approaches they had developed, involving building inspectors, planners and fire officials, to ensure that residential units (particularly boarding houses, SRO hotels and secondary suites) meet health and safety requirements even though they may not rigorously adhere to the  $n^{\text{th}}$  clause in each formal code. The following comment from a large city in the Prairie region illustrates this philosophy:

*"in secondary suites inspections, our priority is safety and health, not building codes";*

- 35% (39 municipalities) have created special building code equivalents to encourage cost-effective renovation, (e.g. for secondary suites, rooming houses) and this measure is under consideration in seven other places. Six of the places that employ it are in large urban regions of British Columbia. Many respondents mentioned special efforts being undertaken in their cities to encourage these and other forms of existing low-cost housing, by being flexible in the application of codes. Several cities in the Atlantic and Quebec regions, and in southern Ontario, mentioned that they had, or needed, equivalencies to encourage improvements to heritage buildings. Nine municipalities have rejected the idea of equivalencies, 41 felt it was not relevant, and 14 either hadn't considered it or didn't respond. Two cities mentioned that the ACT program had been instrumental in their involvement with this measure;
- 31% (34 municipalities) have authorised equivalents for various building materials, systems and procedures to encourage affordable housing affordability and choice, and nine others are considering such measures. Twenty percent of the municipalities who adopted or are interested in this measure are in British Columbia. Fifty-three cities have either rejected this idea or consider it irrelevant, and 14 cities either hadn't considered it or didn't respond to this question;
- six respondents mentioned "other" measures they employ that are associated with building codes. For example, as outdoor living is an important part of the use of a dwelling, one city has created special codes for decks and patios.

During the survey interviews many respondents conveyed the view that building codes make it very difficult to encourage more affordable forms of housing like secondary suites, collective housing, or small, very-basic rental units. Municipal authorities are placed in a difficult position when they try to ease regulations in favour of lower-cost housing, as they must also maintain the health and safety attributes of traditional building regulations defined by provincially-legislated building codes. It was clear that in this area, more detailed information about successful approaches that have balanced

these conflicting purposes, would be appreciated.

### Reforms Associated with the Approvals Process

Table 3.2 summarises the responses to questions concerning eight reform measures associated with streamlining the development or building approval processes. As these reforms involve cutting red tape and making the process more efficient they can help reduce costs and may lead to more affordability and choice.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	78	8	1	21	0	2	110
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	73	15	2	18	0	2	110
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	69	5	6	18	1	11	110
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	32	6	8	60	2	2	110
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	26	11	4	59	5	5	110
Fast tracking for certified builders	16	7	5	70	5	7	110
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	6	2	8	85	4	5	110
Other	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

Municipalities' views about these measures were more polar than the land-related measures, as each reform tends to be widely used or strongly rejected.

**Three measures are being used by 60-70% of municipalities to facilitate affordability through the approvals process:**

- 71% (78 municipalities) have generally streamlined their approvals process with standardised applications, coordinated approvals or created one-stop approvals structures. Another eight municipalities are considering such

measures, while 22 places feel such measures are irrelevant or have rejected them. Respondents frequently mentioned that their improved approvals management systems were helping to move applications through the process. Four municipalities indicated the information and support provided under the ACT program assisted them in implementing this measure. The municipalities which indicated this is irrelevant were smaller places with low growth rates, where the processing of an application to subdivide or rezone is relatively infrequent and therefore is probably handled expeditiously already. Approvals within days were mentioned;

- 66% (73 cities) had recently improved computerisation within their approval process, and another 15 places were considering improvements. The two places which had rejected this measure and the 18 which considered it irrelevant were all smaller places who did not deal with sufficient volumes to benefit from large scale computerisation measures;
- 63% (69 municipalities) employ some form of dispute resolution, and five others are considering such measures. Six cities said they had rejected this measure and 18 said it was irrelevant, while an unusually high 11 municipalities did not respond to this question. It is likely that this concept is not well understood and the production and publication of better information on the subject would be useful. Although the descriptions of these measures varied, and many were vague, most involved municipal planners (or their contractors) holding informational or problem-solving workshops in the neighbourhood where a rezoning or other development is proposed, before the application is considered by the Council.

**Four measures were used by a minority of municipalities.** Between 6-30% of cities had used them, and significantly large numbers of municipalities considered them irrelevant:

- 29% (32 municipalities) employ priority processing for projects which will produce affordable homes, and six others indicated they were considering this measure. Eight said they had rejected the idea and 60 said it was irrelevant. Four mentioned that the ACT program had been influential in this measure.

This is a relatively new concept, and is mainly used in fast-growing, larger cities where accelerated processing in a complex and lengthy approvals process can provide a real benefit to a developer who includes affordable homes in a project. Most places that opposed it were smaller municipalities whose respondents indicated approvals processing occurred at a standard pace and that assigning priority to particular applications would be meaningless. Many respondents mentioned that if there was a need to assign processing priorities, which happens infrequently, that projects with stronger job creation potential would be given priority. A few said they considered that special treatment of any application would be unfair;

- 24% (26 municipalities) said they employ special processing measures for brownfields projects. Another 11 places are considering such measures. Four said they had rejected this idea, and 59 said it is irrelevant. As urban intensification grows and the redevelopment of former industrial sites and other polluted lands becomes more common, the more complex environmental management activities associated with the approvals of such projects require special processing. The pattern of responses reveals that larger cities, particularly in central Canada, are becoming familiar with this requirement now. Smaller places which may be under less pressure to redevelop polluted sites are only beginning to see brownfields issue as a normal part of their activity, and tend to regard the environmental aspects of processing as "a provincial responsibility";
- 14% (16 municipalities) employ fast-tracking for certified builders, and another seven said they are considering it. Five said they had rejected this concept and 70 said it is irrelevant. There was no particular pattern in these responses, although it was apparent that there were different degrees of formality in the designation of "certified builders". Some smaller places applied this term to mean experienced builders in the town who they considered to be "good ", while in most places this designation referred to builders who had undergone a formal qualification relevant to the application which is to be "fast-tracked". Many respondents mentioned, with reference to "fast-tracking" that if a builder often builds essentially the same model of house, each application would not be subjected to the same level of technical review each time;
- 5% (6 municipalities) said they lower the processing priority when proposals would reduce the net amount of affordable housing, and two others said they are considering this measure. Eight said they had rejected this concept and 85 said it is irrelevant. The municipalities that had adopted it were mainly in large metropolitan areas in Ontario. The specifics of this measure were not well understood by most respondents.

The various reforms associated with approval processes elicited a stronger interest on the part of respondents than any of the other reform areas. Generally, municipalities felt they had made considerable improvements in their processing, although housing affordability and choice was not the primary focus of these improvements.

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 3.3 shows the municipalities' responses to questions concerning four measures that were included in the survey as a follow-up to research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing". Generally, these measures are not well established in Canadian municipalities:

**Table 3.3: Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	44	7	3	47	3	6	110
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	29	6	14	55	5	1	110
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	17	7	4	64	6	12	110
Dedication of land required for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental), or cash-in-lieu	15	3	13	69	6	4	110

- 44 cities partnered in creating affordable homes by leasing low-cost land, making cash donations, or providing in-kind contributions. Seven other cities are considering such partnership ideas, while three have rejected the notion and 47 consider it irrelevant. The cities adopting or considering this measure were located in each region. In small and medium-sized municipalities Habitat for Humanity was often mentioned as the partner organisation, while in the larger places in Ontario and B.C. these kind of arrangements are often made between the municipality and its own housing agencies. Two municipalities mentioned that the ACT program had assisted them with this measure. No city-size patterns were observed in these responses;
- 26% (29 municipalities) had adopted and six others were considering, density bonusing for affordable homes. This had been rejected by 14 cities and 55 considered it irrelevant, while five others hadn't considered it. Bonusing is mainly limited to British Columbia and to a few of the largest cities elsewhere. B.C. municipalities account for nearly half of its use and it has been promoted by the provincial government;
- 17 municipalities employ financial measures like municipal housing funds, linkage fees or impact fees to support housing affordability and choice, and while seven others are considering such measures, 64 said they are not relevant. Many of the latter places were small cities experiencing low growth, and which indicated concerns that these measure would increase the cost of building housing. The cities where such financial measures have been implemented successfully were usually growth markets;
- 14% (15 municipalities) require that projects dedicate some land for affordable or special needs housing, and three other cities are considering such measures. This is considered irrelevant by 69 municipalities and has

been rejected by 13 others. While this is not a well-known reform, it is taking place in a few cities across Canada, mainly in the B.C., Prairie and southern Ontario regions. Some mentioned that they have been involved in land dedications to Habitat for Humanity, others mentioned that the municipality provides cash in lieu of other dedications, and still others expressed doubts that a requirement to make a dedication would be legal. It would be useful to learn more about the capabilities of the measure, to allow a more widespread understanding of it.

There appears to be emerging interest in these four reform measures, particularly in partnerships for making affordable housing.

### **Other Measures**

The survey asked about their use of six other measures to improve housing affordability and choice that did not readily fit any of the foregoing categories. Their responses are provided in Table 3.4:

**Table 3.4: Municipal Use of Other Measures to Improve Housing Affordability and Choice**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure					Total	
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered		
Research into housing needs and their solutions	47	8	1	47	2	5	110
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites) to assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing	42	7	0	53	3	5	110
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	39	6	2	52	5	6	110
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	33	11	2	52	5	7	110
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	32	2	2	66	4	4	110
Levy development cost charges on an area basis	18	6	3	66	8	9	110

- 47 municipalities are performing research on housing needs and 8 others are considering doing so. One municipality had rejected this idea, 47 considered it irrelevant, 2 hadn't considered it and 5 didn't answer this question. The

places which are doing housing research are primarily bigger municipal and regional governments located in larger urban areas;

- 42 municipalities mentioned that they had prepared educational materials, such as brochures, videos, television programs, to help inform the public about housing issues and encourage choice and affordability. Both large and small municipalities are engaged in educational programming, and it seems particularly notable that small places are making use of community cable channels to inform people about planning and housing issues. Seven cities are considering such measures, and 53 felt it is irrelevant. Three municipalities indicated they had not considered undertaking educational activities, and 5 didn't answer this question. Four municipalities noted they had been helped by the ACT program in these activities;
- 39 cities employ advisory committees to consider and network on housing affordability and choice matters, and 6 others are considering this measure. Eight cities in British Columbia have such committees, where they are supported by a provincial program directed to advocate housing affordability and choice. Nationally, this measure was rejected by 2 municipalities, 5 had not considered it, 52 felt it is not relevant, and 6 did not respond to this question;
- 33 municipalities have undertaken demonstration projects to explore and promote innovation in land development, housing or building materials, and 11 others are considering such activities. Four municipalities mentioned the ACT program had been of assistance in these measures. Two municipalities said they had rejected a demonstration project idea, 5 hadn't considered it, and 52 said it is irrelevant. Seven municipalities didn't respond to this question. No patterns were observed in these responses;
- 32 cities assign staff to work primarily on housing, and 2 others are considering this. Two places have rejected this concept and 66 consider it irrelevant, while 4 hadn't considered it. Four municipalities didn't respond to this question. Most of the housing specialists were located in the larger cities;
- 18 municipalities are levying development cost charges on an area basis, and 6 other are considering this measure. This concept was rejected by 3 cities and 66 responded that it was "not relevant". Eight hadn't considered it and 9 didn't respond to this question. This measure has been widely advocated by the Pacific Chapter of the Urban Development Institute and the BC Ministry of Housing, and they completed an ACT project in 1997.

## **Other Factors**

The final area of investigation concerned the influences that local advocacy groups, and external sources including the ACT program, played in the consideration of regulatory reform. The survey included four questions on this subject, and the responses are summarised in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: Role of Other Factors in Regulatory Reform**

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	25	31	47	7	110
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	18	40	45	7	110
Information gained directly from the ACT program about reform undertaken somewhere else	5	38	61	6	110
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study your reform	6	21	76	7	110

Fifty-six respondents (54% of those who replied) indicated that local advocacy groups had an influence, large or small, in bringing about reforms, but 47 respondents said such groups have no role. There was no clear geographic particular pattern in these responses, although almost all British

Columbia municipalities reported these groups were influential. The "no role" responses often came from the smaller places that were less actively involved in measures to improve affordability.

Similarly, 58 municipalities indicated that information about reforms undertaken somewhere else was instrumental in their adoption of the reform. An Ontario city summarised the situation in saying:

*"There is a lot of exchange of experience between municipalities in sharing experiences, often pollinated by consultant visits or busmans' holidays";*

A slightly smaller number, 43 respondents, indicated that information from the ACT program about a reform influenced them, although they did not refer to specific initiatives. Once again an Ontario observation encapsulates the situation:

*"The municipality keeps track of the ACT material. This helps inform their own processes. For instance, some ACT materials were used in the focus groups around the changes to the Official Plan and are used in presentations to Council."*

Finally, 27 cities said that the financial support they received by means of a grant under the ACT program had a large or small influence on their reform, while 76 municipalities said it had no role.

### Concluding Observations

Canadian municipalities are using a large number and wide variety of measures to encourage housing affordability and choice. The survey asked about a series of specific measures, most of which involve regulations and approvals processes (measures that enhance efficiency, flexibility and inclusiveness), although some involved non-regulatory measures.

The survey found seven of them are used by over two-thirds of municipalities:

- zoning that allows for housing mix;
- residential/ commercial mix;
- zoning for innovative housing;
- prezoning land for multiples;
- coordinating/standardizing the approvals process;
- use of dispute resolution techniques; and
- the computerization of approvals.

Seven more of the measures are already adopted or being considered by over one-half of the cities surveyed:

- three alternative development standards measures:
  - reduced parking standards,
  - reduced property line setbacks, and
  - smaller lot sizes and road widths;
- zoning that allows accessory apartments;
- standard of maintenance bylaws;
- engaging in partnerships;
- conducting research.

These findings demonstrate that municipalities are committing resources and energy to address problems associated with housing affordability and choice.

However, many surveyed municipalities were not convinced about some measures. Sixteen of the measures were rejected or were deemed "not relevant" by over one-half of the municipalities. The measures that were not widely supported include:

- building code equivalencies that enable cost-effective renovation;
- equivalencies that enable non-standard materials, systems and procedures;
- fast-tracking certified builders;
- reducing processing priority for projects that would reduce net affordable housing;
- requiring land dedications for affordable housing; and
- levying development cost charges on an area basis.

Many respondents commented that building code-related reforms are beyond their sphere of influence. Also, many provided explanations that the measures which they had not supported were not relevant to their current market situation, or to cities of their size.

The survey showed that municipalities are engaged in and knowledgeable about issues of housing affordability. Many are improving their processes and regulations concerning development. However, respondents often expressed the view that planning and building regulations had a only a limited role to play in increasing the supply of affordable housing. While these measures could be facilitative, they do not expect these measures, in and of themselves, to substantially effect housing affordability and choice.

## **Chapitre 3 - Aperçu des résultats de l'enquête à l'échelle nationale - recours à des réformes de la réglementation**

Dans la troisième partie de l'enquête, nous avons posé aux municipalités des questions concernant leur recours à différentes mesures considérées comme pouvant améliorer la situation au chapitre du choix et de l'abordabilité du logement. Il pouvait s'agir de mesures destinées à abaisser les coûts ou à améliorer l'efficacité ou encore de l'adoption de règlements plus souples et mieux adaptés à des besoins particuliers. Même si l'enquête portait principalement sur les réformes de la réglementation et les processus d'approbation, on a posé aux participants des questions concernant certaines mesures non réglementaires aussi destinées à favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. Dans la présente partie, nous examinons six grands domaines :

- les mesures liées au terrain;
- les mesures liées aux processus d'approbation;
- les mesures liées aux codes du bâtiment;
- mesures découlant de l'étude réalisée par la SCHL en 1999 (étude intitulée *La planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement*);
- les autres mesures;
- les autres facteurs.

Dans chaque domaine, les répondants étaient invités à répondre aux questions concernant des mesures qu'ils devraient normalement bien connaître, tout en ayant la possibilité d'en ajouter d'autres. Dans chacun des cas, on leur demandait si la mesure :

- avait déjà été adoptée par la municipalité;
- était envisagée;
- avait déjà été envisagée, mais avait été écartée;
- était jugée non pertinente.

Dans toute cette partie, on a aussi posé des questions concernant les effets du programme ACT sur chaque mesure.

### **Réformes liées à l'aménagement du territoire**

On a posé aux municipalités des questions concernant leur utilisation de 10 mesures liées à l'aménagement du territoire et au zonage dont on dit, dans les publications traitant du sujet, qu'elles favorisent le choix et l'abordabilité du logement. Leurs réponses sont présentées dans le tableau 3.0, où elles ont été regroupées en trois catégories, selon les tendances observées dans les municipalités visées par l'enquête.

**Trois mesures sont largement utilisées.** Ces mesures avaient déjà été adoptées par plus de 80 % des municipalités interrogées et d'autres envisageaient de le faire.

**Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

**Tableau 3.0 Recours par les municipalités à des mesures de réglementation en matière d'urbanisme**

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure							Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse		
<b>MESURES LARGEMENT ADOPTÉES</b>								
Le zonage permet la combinaison de divers types de logements et tailles de terrains dans certains secteurs.	102	4	1	3	0	0	110	
Le zonage permet la combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux et les conversions.	100	4	0	6	0	0	110	
Le zonage permet les formes de logement novatrices comme l'habitation communautaire et les foyers de groupe.	88	5	0	15	1	1	110	
<b>UTILISATION DE MESURES COMBINÉES</b>								
Terrains préalablement zonés pour les collectifs.	80	3	4	22	1	0	110	
La réduction des exigences relatives aux places de stationnement pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location).	61	8	4	34	0	3	110	
Le zonage permet les appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins) dans les quartiers où l'on retrouve principalement des maisons unifamiliales détachées.	54	11	29	13	2	1	110	
Réduction de la taille des terrains et de la largeur des voies publiques.	52	12	7	33	2	4	110	
La réduction des marges de recul pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location).	46	9	6	40	4	5	110	
<b>MESURES MOINS FRÉQUEMMENT APPLIQUÉES</b>								
Le zonage permet des logements de type convertible.	28	9	4	57	6	6	110	
Révision des plans de lotissement, districts d'aménagement spéciaux.	22	15	6	55	4	8	110	

- Plus de 90 % des municipalités autorisent, dans leurs plans de zonage, divers types de logements et de dimensions de terrains dans certains secteurs, une combinaison d'immeubles commerciaux et résidentiels dans d'autres secteurs ainsi que la conversion.
- Plus de 80 % des municipalités autorisent les formes de logement novatrices comme les foyers de groupe et l'habitation communautaire et cinq autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Les plans d'aménagement de beaucoup de municipalités autorisent l'installation de foyers de groupe dans n'importe quelle zone résidentielle, à condition qu'ils satisfassent à certaines normes. Quinze répondants ont indiqué que ces mesures n'étaient pas pertinentes.

Cinq mesures sont inégalement appliquées. Ces mesures avaient été

## Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements

adoptées par entre 44 % et 73 % des municipalités, tandis que de huit à 12 autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Cependant, un nombre important d'autres municipalités les avaient écartées ou considéraient qu'elles n'étaient pas pertinentes.

- Plus de 70 % des municipalités réservaient, dans leur plan de zonage, des terrains pour le logement collectif et trois autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Quatre autres municipalités avaient déjà envisagé la mesure mais l'avaient rejetée, tandis qu'un nombre important de répondants (22) ont indiqué que la mesure n'était pas pertinente. La différence dans les réponses pourrait tenir au fait que la mesure en cause est appliquée de deux manières différentes. En désignant ou en réservant dans le plan de zonage un grand nombre d'emplacements pour le logement collectif, on stimule l'activité du marché foncier et les prix des terrains restent modérés. Cependant, les municipalités qui ne désignent ou ne réservent qu'un petit nombre d'emplacements réduisent l'offre. Il faudrait pousser la recherche si l'on veut déterminer si c'est l'une ou l'autre de ces façons de faire particulières qui est considérée comme non pertinente.
- Soixante et une (55 %) municipalités avaient réduit leurs exigences relatives aux places de stationnement de manière à abaisser les coûts des logements occupés par leur propriétaire, des logements locatifs et des logements adaptés à prix abordable et huit autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Cependant, 38 municipalités, soit considéraient que la mesure n'était pas pertinente, soit l'avaient écartée et trois autres municipalités ne l'avaient pas envisagée. L'opposition à cette mesure se concentrerait surtout dans les petites villes de faible densité, où les terrains se vendent assez bon marché et où, par conséquent, une réduction des exigences relatives au stationnement n'aurait pas une bien grande incidence sur le coût unitaire des logements.
- Cinquante-quatre (49 %) municipalités autorisaient les appartements dans les secteurs où les maisons individuelles isolées prédominent et onze autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Par ailleurs, 29 municipalités avaient écarté cette même mesure, 13 autres municipalités considéraient qu'elle n'était pas pertinente et deux municipalités ne l'avaient pas envisagée. Six répondants ont précisé que les pavillons-jardins étaient aussi autorisés dans les zones réservées aux maisons individuelles. Bien qu'il soit possible que cette forme d'habitation soit permise dans d'autres municipalités, les mesures relatives aux pavillons-jardins sont beaucoup plus rares que celles destinées à favoriser les appartements secondaires.

Durant les entrevues, beaucoup de répondants ont parlé des difficultés auxquelles ils se heurtent au cours des consultations publiques (y compris au cours des séances du conseil et des réunions régulières en comité), lorsque les discussions portent sur les appartements secondaires. Il faut alors faire face à une vive opposition, même dans les secteurs où il y a déjà beaucoup de tels

logements. L'aménagement d'appartements secondaires est un instrument précieux pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. Cependant, pour que cela soit possible, il faut à la fois l'accord des propriétaires, une volonté politique des administrations municipales et une collaboration entre tous les services municipaux concernés (urbanisme, inspection des bâtiments et services des incendies).

- Cinquante-deux (47 %) municipalités autorisent un allégement des exigences concernant la grandeur des terrains et la largeur des voies publiques pour favoriser l'aménagement de logements à prix plus abordable et 12 autres municipalités avaient envisagé de faire de même. La mesure avait toutefois été écartée ou jugée non pertinente par 40 municipalités. Deux municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé la mesure et quatre autres n'ont pas répondu à la question. Comme dans le cas de l'allégement des exigences relatives au stationnement, les municipalités qui ont écarté la mesure sont en majorité de petites localités, où les terrains ne sont pas très chers. Certaines municipalités, notamment dans les Prairies et le nord de l'Ontario, ont expliqué qu'il fallait que les routes aient une largeur uniforme pour le stockage de la neige.
- Quarante-six (42 %) municipalités acceptent de réduire les exigences relatives à la marge de recul pour favoriser l'aménagement de logements à prix plus abordable et neuf autres ont indiqué qu'elles envisageaient de faire de même. La mesure avait toutefois été écartée ou jugée non pertinente par 46 municipalités, tandis que quatre autres ne l'avaient pas envisagée et que cinq municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question. On n'observe pas de similitudes particulières entre les municipalités que la mesure intéresse ou n'intéresse pas.

**Deux mesures ne sont appliquées que par un petit nombre de municipalités.** Ces mesures avaient été adoptées par entre 14 % et 26 % des municipalités interrogées, tandis que la grande majorité des municipalités n'étaient pas en faveur des mesures en question.

- Vingt-huit (25 %) municipalités appliquent un zonage qui permet les habitations polyvalentes et neuf autres municipalités envisagent de faire de même. Cependant, quatre municipalités ont écarté la mesure, tandis que 57 autres la jugent non pertinente. Cette mesure est surtout appliquée dans les grandes villes.
- Vingt-deux (20 %) municipalités ont désigné des districts d'aménagement spéciaux ou révisé des plans d'emplacement pour des zones particulières, dans le but de favoriser le logement à prix modique. L'idée suscite apparemment un certain intérêt, étant envisagée par 15 autres municipalités. La mesure a toutefois été écartée par six municipalités et 55 autres la jugent non pertinente. Huit municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question, pour certaines parce que le répondant ne connaissait pas bien ce genre de mesures. L'établissement de districts d'aménagement spéciaux s'observait

surtout dans les grandes villes, tandis que la révision de plans d'emplacement est pratiquée dans des villes de différentes tailles, dans la région des Prairies.

Par ailleurs, il ne semble pas que le programme ACT ait eu une incidence sur l'application de l'une ou l'autre de toutes ces mesures d'aménagement du territoire par les municipalités interrogées. Seulement quelques-unes des 110 municipalités visées ont en effet indiqué que le programme avait compté dans les mesures qu'elles avaient prises.

### **Réformes liées aux codes et aux règlements en matière de construction des bâtiments**

On a posé aux municipalités des questions concernant trois mesures qui se rattachent aux codes et aux règlements de construction. Les réponses à ces questions sont présentées dans le tableau 3.1.

<b>Tableau 3.1 - Réformes concernant les codes et les règlements de construction</b>							
<b>Description de la mesure</b>	<b>Degré d'utilisation de la mesure</b>						
	<b>Déjà adoptée</b>	<b>Envisagée</b>	<b>Envisagée mais rejetée</b>	<b>Non pertinente</b>	<b>Pas envisagée</b>	<b>Pas de réponse</b>	<b>Total</b>
Règlement visant les normes d'entretien (ou l'utilisation d'équivalents).	55	3	6	34	2	10	110
Normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment permettant les rénovations efficientes (appartements accessoires).	39	7	9	41	4	10	110
Équivalents permettant l'utilisation de matériaux, de systèmes et de méthodes de construction non traditionnels.	34	9	4	49	5	9	110
Autres.	6	0	0	0	0	0	6

- Cinquante-cinq municipalités (50 %) avaient adopté un règlement sur les « normes d'entretien » et trois autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Ce genre de règlement est connu sous différents noms : règlement sur les normes de biens-fonds, règlement sur les normes minimales d'entretien et d'occupation, règlement sur l'entretien des biens immobiliers, normes de sécurité et de salubrité des habitations et même règlement sur les

constructions disgracieuses. Six municipalités avaient écarté l'idée, tandis que 34 autres avaient jugé qu'elle n'était pas pertinente. Dix municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé d'adopter un tel règlement ou n'ont pas répondu à la question. Les réponses ne correspondaient à aucune concentration géographique.

L'application de ce genre de règlement, de même que celle des règlements relatifs à la santé et à la sécurité et des codes de construction, joue un rôle de premier plan dans la stratégie de mise en oeuvre dans chaque municipalité pour favoriser ou empêcher la constitution d'un parc de logements à prix abordable. Plusieurs municipalités ont parlé des démarches de groupe (auxquelles participent des inspecteurs en bâtiment, des urbanistes et des responsables des services d'incendie) qu'elles avaient établies pour s'assurer que les logements (notamment les maisons de chambres, les hôtels à hébergement en chambre individuelle et les appartements secondaires) satisfont aux normes de santé et de sécurité, même lorsqu'elles ne respectent peut-être pas telle ou telle disposition de chaque code officiel. L'observation ci-dessous du répondant d'une grande ville de la région des Prairies illustre assez bien cette souplesse :

*« Lorsqu'on inspecte des appartements secondaires, notre principale préoccupation est la santé et la sécurité des gens et non pas les codes du bâtiment. »*

- Trente-neuf municipalités (35 %) avaient établi des normes équivalentes aux codes du bâtiment pour favoriser la rénovation économique (p. ex., des appartements secondaires ou des maisons de chambres) et sept autres envisageaient de faire de même. Six des municipalités qui ont adopté cette mesure se trouvent dans de grandes régions urbaines de la Colombie-Britannique. De nombreux répondants ont signalé les efforts particuliers que déployaient leurs municipalités pour favoriser les différents types de logement existants à prix modique grâce à une application souple des codes. Plusieurs villes des régions de l'Atlantique et du Québec ainsi que du sud de l'Ontario ont par ailleurs fait observer qu'elles appliquaient - ou qu'il faudrait qu'elles appliquent - des équivalents des codes de construction pour encourager l'amélioration des bâtiments à valeur patrimoniale. Neuf municipalités avaient écarté l'idée d'établir des « équivalences », 41 autres jugeaient l'idée non pertinente et 14 municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé l'idée ou n'ont pas répondu. Deux répondants ont indiqué que le programme ACT avait joué un rôle dans l'adoption de la mesure.
- Trente-quatre municipalités (31 %) permettaient l'utilisation de matériaux, de systèmes et de méthodes de construction équivalant à ceux décrits dans les codes officiels, dans le but de favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement et neuf autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Vingt pour cent de toutes ces municipalités se trouvent en Colombie-Britannique. Cinquante-trois villes ont soit écarté l'idée ou elles la jugent non pertinente. Quatorze municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé la mesure ou n'ont pas

répondu à la question.

- Six répondants ont fait mention d'« autres » mesures liées aux codes de construction qui étaient appliquées dans leurs municipalités. C'est ainsi que considérant que la vie à l'extérieur est un aspect important de l'utilisation d'une habitation, une municipalité a établi des codes spéciaux pour les terrasses et les patios.

Durant les entrevues, beaucoup de répondants ont fait observer que les codes de construction faisaient en sorte qu'il était très difficile de favoriser les formes de logement plus abordables comme les appartements secondaires, l'habitation collective ou les petits logements locatifs ne comportant que le strict nécessaire. Il est difficile pour les autorités municipales d'essayer d'alléger la réglementation pour favoriser l'habitation à prix modique, parce qu'elles doivent quand même appliquer les exigences relatives à la santé et à la sécurité prescrites dans les codes adoptés par les gouvernements provinciaux. Il est clairement ressorti à cet égard que les municipalités aimeraient avoir accès à une information détaillée concernant les démarches qui auraient permis de concilier efficacement ces deux responsabilités apparemment contradictoires.

### **Réformes liées aux processus d'approbation**

Les réponses aux questions concernant huit mesures destinées à simplifier les processus d'approbation en matière d'aménagement et de construction sont présentées au tableau 3.2. Comme ces mesures exigent qu'on écarte les obstacles bureaucratiques et qu'on rende les processus plus efficaces, elles peuvent aider à réduire les coûts et contribuer à améliorer la situation au chapitre de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement.

Les opinions des municipalités à l'égard de ces mesures étaient plus polarisées que leurs opinions concernant les mesures d'aménagement du territoire, chaque mesure étant en effet souvent, soit largement appliquée, soit vivement rejetée.

**Tableau 3.2 Utilisation des mesures de réglementation par les municipalités liées aux processus d'approbation**

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
Coordination, normalisation des demandes, guichets uniques pour les approbations.	78	8	1	21	0	2	110
Amélioration générale de l'informatisation du processus d'émission des permis d'aménagement et de construire.	73	15	2	18	0	2	110
Recours à des processus de résolution des conflits dans les cas où les modifications de zonage sont source de litige avec les voisins et la collectivité.	69	5	6	18	1	11	110
Traitements prioritaires des demandes (traitement accéléré, diminution des frais exigés) pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location)	32	6	8	60	2	2	110
Traitements pertinents pour les sites contaminés.	26	11	4	59	5	5	110
Traitements accélérés des demandes pour les constructeurs accrédités.	16	7	5	70	5	7	110
Diminution de la priorité du traitement des propositions d'aménagement qui donnent lieu à une réduction nette du nombre de logements abordables.	6	2	8	85	4	5	110
Autres.	1	2	0	0	0	0	3

**Trois mesures sont appliquées par entre 60 % et 70 % des municipalités** pour faire en sorte que les processus d'approbation favorisent l'abordabilité du logement.

- Soixante-dix-huit municipalités (71 %) ont simplifié leurs processus d'approbation en normalisant les demandes, en coordonnant les approbations ou en établissant des guichets uniques pour les approbations. Huit autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même, tandis que 22 municipalités jugeaient non pertinente ou avaient écarté une telle mesure.

- Beaucoup de répondants ont expliqué qu'ils avaient mis en place de meilleurs systèmes de gestion des approbations, qui accéléraient le traitement des demandes. Quatre municipalités ont indiqué que l'information et l'aide qu'elles avaient obtenues dans le cadre du programme ACT avaient facilité la mise en oeuvre de la mesure. Les municipalités qui considéraient la mesure non pertinente sont de petites municipalités où la croissance est limitée et où les demandes de lotissement ou de changements de zonage, assez peu fréquentes, sont probablement déjà traitées promptement. Des répondants ont indiqué à cet égard que c'était une question de jours.
- Soixante-treize municipalités (66 %) avaient récemment amélioré l'automatisation de leur processus d'approbation et 15 autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Les deux municipalités qui avaient écarté l'idée et les 18 autres qui la considéraient comme non pertinente sont de petites municipalités où le nombre de demandes traitées ne justifierait pas une grande automatisation des processus.
  - Soixante-neuf municipalités (63 %) appliquent un processus de règlement des différends et cinq autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Six municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles avaient écarté cette mesure et 18 autres qu'elle était non pertinente, tandis qu'un nombre étonnamment élevé de municipalités (11) n'ont pas répondu à la question. Il semble que l'idée d'un processus de règlement des différends ne soit pas bien comprise. Aussi serait-il utile de rassembler et de diffuser une meilleure information à ce sujet. Bien que les processus mis en place diffèrent d'une municipalité à l'autre et la description qu'en donnent les répondants était souvent imprécise, il s'agissait dans la plupart des cas d'ateliers d'information ou de recherche en commun de solutions présentés par des urbanistes (ou des entrepreneurs travaillant pour la municipalité) dans un secteur où un changement de zonage ou un autre projet d'aménagement est envisagé, avant que la demande relative au projet ne soit étudiée par le conseil.

**Quatre mesures sont appliquées par un nombre plus limité de municipalités.** Plus précisément, entre 6 % et 30 % des municipalités avaient adopté de telles mesures, tandis qu'un assez grand nombre d'autres municipalités les considéraient comme non pertinentes.

- Trente-deux municipalités (29 %) accordaient un traitement prioritaire aux projets destinés à offrir des logements à prix abordable et six autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Huit municipalités avaient écarté la mesure et 60 autres la considéraient comme non pertinente. Quatre municipalités ont indiqué que le programme ACT avait joué un rôle dans le fait qu'elles avaient adopté une telle mesure.

Il s'agit d'une idée assez nouvelle, qui est surtout appliquée dans les grandes villes en pleine expansion, où les processus d'approbation sont longs et

complexes et où, par conséquent, un traitement prioritaire de certains dossiers peut procurer un réel avantage aux promoteurs qui intègrent des logements à prix abordable dans leurs projets. La plupart des municipalités qui avaient écarté cette mesure ou qui la jugeaient non pertinente étaient de plus petites municipalités où, comme des répondants l'ont expliqué, toutes les demandes d'approbation sont traitées rondement et où il serait donc inutile d'accorder la priorité à telle ou telle demande. Beaucoup de ces répondants ont aussi fait observer que s'il fallait accorder un traitement prioritaire à certains projets - une situation par ailleurs peu fréquente -, la priorité serait accordée aux projets susceptibles de créer le plus grand nombre d'emplois. Quelques répondants ont exprimé l'avis qu'il serait peu équitable d'accorder un traitement spécial à un dossier plutôt qu'à un autre.

- Vingt-six municipalités (24 %) ont indiqué qu'elles accordaient un traitement particulier aux projets visant des sites contaminés et onze autres envisageaient de faire de même. Quatre municipalités avaient écarté une telle mesure et 59 municipalités la jugeaient non pertinente. Les villes grandissant, les projets de réaménagement d'anciens emplacements industriels et d'autres terrains pollués se multiplient. Or, en raison des activités de gestion de l'environnement complexes qui se rattachent à ce genre de projets, il faut leur accorder un traitement particulier. Les résultats de l'enquête montrent que les grandes villes - surtout celles du Canada central - sont aujourd'hui de plus en plus conscientes de cette exigence. Cependant, dans les villes plus petites, où on a peut-être moins de raisons de se lancer dans des projets de réaménagement de terrains pollués, on commence tout juste à considérer que la question des friches industrielles est de compétence municipale, estimant dans bien des cas que cette responsabilité, parce qu'elle touche à l'environnement, est du ressort des autorités provinciales.
- Seize municipalités (14 %) appliquent une procédure accélérée pour les constructeurs accrédités et sept autres envisagent de faire de même. Cinq municipalités avaient rejeté cette mesure et 70 autres municipalités la jugeaient non pertinente. Il n'y avait pas de constante particulière dans les réponses à cette question. L'interprétation de ce qu'est un « constructeur accrédité » différait selon les municipalités : pour certains répondants dans de petites municipalités, il s'agissait d'un entrepreneur expérimenté ayant une « bonne réputation » dans la localité, tandis que dans la plupart des municipalités, la désignation était réservée aux entrepreneurs dont on avait vérifié en bonne et due forme les compétences par rapport à la demande devant faire l'objet d'un traitement accéléré. Beaucoup de répondants ont fait observer que lorsque des entrepreneurs construisent souvent à peu près le même modèle de maisons, leurs demandes ne font pas chaque fois l'objet d'un examen technique aussi poussé.
- Six municipalités (5 %) ont indiqué qu'elles accordaient un traitement moins prioritaire aux propositions entraînant une réduction nette du parc de

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logements abordables et deux autres envisageaient de faire de même. Huit municipalités avaient écarté une telle mesure et 85 municipalités la considéraient comme non pertinente. La plupart des municipalités qui avaient adopté la mesure se trouvent dans de grandes zones urbaines de l'Ontario. La plupart des répondants n'ont pas bien compris les détails de cette mesure.

Les réformes concernant les processus d'approbation sont celles qui ont suscité le plus d'intérêt de la part des répondants. D'une manière générale, les municipalités estiment qu'elles ont amélioré considérablement leurs processus de traitement. Cependant, ces améliorations ne visaient pas spécialement à favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement.

### Mesures découlant de l'étude de 1999 de la SCHL sur la planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement

Les réponses des municipalités aux questions concernant quatre mesures intégrées dans l'enquête pour donner suite à la recherche réalisée en 1999 par la SCHL dans le cadre d'un projet portant sur la planification municipale et l'abordabilité du logement sont présentées dans le tableau 3.3. D'une manière générale, ces mesures ne sont pas bien établies dans les municipalités du Canada.

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
On participe à des partenariats publics-privés prenant la forme de location à bail de terrains, de dons en argent et de contributions en nature.	44	7	3	47	3	6	110
Primes ou mesures de zonage incitatives pour favoriser l'aménagement de logements abordables.	29	6	14	55	5	1	110
Autres mesures financières (taxe de dénaturation de l'environnement, droits de compensation, fonds municipaux destinés au logement).	17	7	4	64	6	12	110
Réserve de terrains pour des logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriété, location) ou compensation équivalente.	15	3	13	69	6	4	110

- Quarante-quatre municipalités participent à l'aménagement de logements abordables en louant des terrains à des prix peu élevés, en faisant des dons

en argent ou en offrant différentes formes d'appui non financier. Sept autres villes envisageaient d'adopter ce genre de mesures, tandis que trois municipalités avaient écarté cette possibilité et que 47 autres considéraient que ce type de participation n'était pas pertinente. Il y avait des municipalités qui avaient adopté ou qui envisageaient d'adopter ce genre de mesures dans toutes les régions. Dans les petites et moyennes municipalités, le partenaire était souvent Habitat for Humanity, tandis que dans les plus grandes villes de l'Ontario et de la Colombie-Britannique, ce genre d'accord était souvent conclu entre les municipalités et leurs propres offices du logement. Deux municipalités ont indiqué que le programme ACT les avait aidées à mettre en place les mesures visées. On n'observe pas de correspondance particulière entre les réponses et la taille des municipalités.

- Vingt-neuf municipalités (26 %) accordaient des « primes à la densité » pour l'aménagement de logements abordables et six municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Quatorze municipalités avaient écarté une telle mesure, 55 autres la jugeaient non pertinente et cinq autres encore ne l'avaient pas envisagée. La mesure était surtout appliquée en Colombie-Britannique et dans quelques grandes villes d'autres régions du pays. De fait, près de la moitié des municipalités qui accordaient des primes à la densité se trouvent en Colombie-Britannique, le gouvernement de cette province ayant préconisé une telle mesure.
- Dix-sept municipalités ont recours à des mesures financières comme les fonds municipaux destinés au logement, les droits de compensation ou les taxes de dénaturation de l'environnement pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement et sept autres municipalités envisagent de faire de même. Soixante-quatre municipalités ont indiqué que de telles mesures n'étaient pas pertinentes. Parmi celles-ci, il y a un bon nombre de petites municipalités où la croissance est faible, qui craignaient que des mesures de ce genre ne fassent augmenter les coûts de construction des habitations. Les municipalités qui avaient appliqué avec succès ces mesures étaient au contraire des villes en pleine croissance.
- Quinze municipalités (14 %) exigeaient, lorsqu'on exécute des projets, qu'on réserve des terrains pour les logements abordables ou adaptés et trois autres municipalités envisageaient d'imposer une exigence analogue. Cependant, 69 municipalités jugeaient une telle mesure non pertinente et treize autres municipalités l'avaient écartée. Même si la mesure est encore mal connue, elle est appliquée dans quelques villes, surtout dans les régions de la Colombie-Britannique, des Prairies et du sud de l'Ontario. Certains répondants ont indiqué que leurs municipalités avaient établi ce genre d'exigence pour l'organisme Habitat for Humanity ou qu'elles fournissaient du financement en remplacement de cette exigence, tandis que d'autres doutaient de la légalité d'imposer l'exigence en question. Il serait utile de mieux faire connaître les possibilités d'application de cette mesure, afin qu'elle soit mieux comprise par l'ensemble des intervenants municipaux.

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On commence apparemment à s'intéresser à ces quatre mesures découlant de l'étude de la SCHL et plus particulièrement à celle concernant les partenariats axés sur l'aménagement de logements abordables.

### Autres mesures

Les réponses des municipalités aux questions concernant six autres mesures destinées à favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement qui ne se rattachaient logiquement à aucune des catégories précédentes sont présentées dans le tableau 3.4.

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
Recherches sur les besoins en matière de logements et les solutions possibles.	47	8	1	47	2	5	110
Information (imprimés, vidéos, sites Web) aidant à la planification et à la production de logements spéciaux, de logements locatifs et de logements abordables pour propriétaires-occupants.	42	7	0	53	3	5	110
Un comité consultatif examine les questions relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix de logements et entretient à cet égard des liens avec d'autres organismes.	39	6	2	52	5	6	110
Des projets de démonstration ont été entrepris - logement novateur, normes d'aménagement foncier, matériaux de construction.	33	11	2	52	5	7	110
Des membres du personnel sont précisément affectés au logement.	32	2	2	66	4	4	110
On prélève des droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs.	18	6	3	66	8	9	110

- Quarante-sept municipalités faisaient des recherches sur les besoins en matière de logement et huit autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Une municipalité avait écarté la mesure, 47 municipalités la jugeaient non pertinente, deux municipalités ne l'avaient pas envisagée et cinq municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question. Ce sont surtout les grandes administrations municipales et régionales des importantes zones urbaines qui effectuent ce genre de recherches.

## Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements

- Quarante-deux municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles avaient établi des brochures, réalisé des vidéos et des émissions de télévision et ainsi de suite pour informer leurs citoyens des questions relatives au logement et favoriser le choix et l'abordabilité du logement. Cela se fait aussi bien dans les grandes villes que dans les petites et on a observé que les petites municipalités se servaient souvent des câblodiffuseurs locaux pour informer leur population des dossiers concernant l'urbanisme et l'habitation. Sept municipalités envisageaient d'adopter une telle mesure, tandis que 53 autres ont indiqué qu'elle n'était pas pertinente. Trois municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé la possibilité d'avoir recours aux moyens d'information considérés et cinq municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question. Quatre municipalités ont signalé que le programme ACT les avait aidées à établir leurs moyens d'information.
- Trente-neuf municipalités ont établi des comités consultatifs pour étudier les questions relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement ainsi que pour entretenir des liens avec d'autres organismes à cet égard et six autres municipalités envisagent de faire de même. Huit villes de la Colombie-Britannique ont mis sur pied de tels comités, qui bénéficient de l'appui d'un programme provincial destiné à favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. À l'échelle nationale, deux municipalités avaient écarté la mesure et cinq municipalités ne l'avaient pas envisagée. Cinquante deux municipalités la jugeaient non pertinente et six municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question.
- Trente-trois municipalités avaient réalisé des projets de démonstration pour examiner les nouveautés en matière d'aménagement des terrains, de logement et de matériaux de construction ainsi que pour favoriser l'innovation dans ces domaines et 11 autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Quatre municipalités ont indiqué que le programme ACT les avait aidées à mettre leurs projets en oeuvre. Deux municipalités avaient écarté l'idée d'entreprendre de tels projets, cinq autres ne l'avaient pas envisagée et pour 52 municipalités, l'idée n'était pas pertinente. Sept municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question. On n'observe aucune constante dans la répartition de ces réponses.
- Trente-deux municipalités avaient désigné des spécialistes du logement et deux autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. Deux municipalités avaient écarté cette mesure et 66 autres la jugeaient non pertinente, tandis que quatre municipalités ne l'avaient pas envisagée. Quatre municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question. La plupart des spécialistes du logement avaient été désignés par de grandes villes.
- Dix-huit municipalités prélevaient des droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs et six autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même. La mesure avait été écartée par trois municipalités et elle était jugée non pertinente par 66 autres municipalités. Huit municipalités n'avaient pas envisagé la mesure et neuf municipalités n'ont pas répondu à la question.

## Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements

L'adoption de la mesure a été largement recommandée par la section du Pacifique de l'Institut du développement urbain du Canada ainsi que par le ministère de la Colombie-Britannique responsable du logement, lesquels en ont fait l'objet d'un projet ACT en 1997.

### Autres facteurs

Le dernier volet de l'enquête concernait le rôle joué par les groupes locaux de revendication et les sources d'information externes comme le programme ACT dans la réforme des règlements. L'enquête comprenait quatre questions à ce sujet. Les réponses à ces questions sont présentées au tableau 3.5.

Tableau 3.5 - Rôle d'autres facteurs dans la réforme des règlements					
Facteur	Importance du rôle				Total
	Grand rôle	Petit rôle	Aucun rôle	Pas de réponse	
Pressions exercées par des groupes de la collectivité locale concernant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements.	25	31	47	7	110
Information au sujet d'une réforme entreprise ailleurs.	18	40	45	7	110
Information obtenue directement du programme ACT au sujet d'une réforme entreprise ailleurs.	5	38	61	6	110
Soutien financier fourni dans le cadre du programme ACT pour la préparation ou l'examen de votre réforme.	6	21	76	7	110

Cinquante-six municipalités (54 %) ont indiqué que les groupes locaux de revendication avaient joué un rôle (grand ou petit) dans la décision de procéder à des réformes, mais 47 municipalités ont répondu que ces groupes n'avaient joué aucun rôle à cet égard. On n'observe

pas de constante claire quant à la répartition géographique des réponses, sauf le fait que presque toutes les villes de la Colombie-Britannique ont indiqué que les groupes de revendication avaient joué un rôle. Beaucoup des municipalités qui ont répondu que ces groupes n'avaient joué aucun rôle sont de petites municipalités, où l'on s'est moins occupé d'adopter des mesures pour améliorer l'abordabilité du logement.

Cinquante-huit municipalités ont indiqué que de l'information au sujet de réformes réalisées ailleurs avait joué un rôle dans leur décision de procéder à des réformes. Un répondant a résumé ainsi la situation :

*« Il s'échange beaucoup d'information entre les municipalités au sujet des expériences menées un peu partout, notamment par l'intermédiaire des experts-conseils qui vont d'une ville à l'autre. »*

Un nombre légèrement moins élevé de municipalités, soit 43, ont indiqué que de l'information obtenue dans le cadre du programme ACT au sujet d'une réforme avait joué un rôle dans leur décision, mais sans mentionner d'initiatives précises. Un autre répondant de l'Ontario a résumé la situation à cet égard de la façon suivante :

## **Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

*« La municipalité conserve la documentation du programme ACT et elle s'en sert pour établir ses processus. Par exemple, on a utilisé de cette documentation pour les consultations au sujet des changements proposés au plan d'aménagement et on s'en sert régulièrement pour les présentations au conseil. »*

Enfin, 27 municipalités ont indiqué qu'une subvention reçue dans le cadre du programme ACT avait joué un rôle (grand ou petit) dans leur décision d'entreprendre une réforme, tandis que 76 municipalités ont répondu que ce facteur n'avait joué aucun rôle dans leur décision.

### **Observations sommaires**

Les municipalités du Canada appliquent un grand nombre et une grande variété de mesures pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. On a posé aux répondants des questions au sujet d'un certain nombre de mesures précises, se rattachant pour la plupart aux règlements et aux processus d'approbation (mesures propres à favoriser l'efficience, la souplesse et l'intégration), mais aussi à quelques autres aspects du dossier.

L'enquête a révélé que sept des mesures considérées étaient appliquées par plus des deux tiers des municipalités interrogées. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Zonage permettant la combinaison de divers types de logements.
- Combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux.
- Zonage favorable aux formes d'habitation innovatrices.
- Réserve de terrains pour du logement collectif dans le plan de zonage.
- Coordination/normalisation des processus d'approbation.
- Recours à des processus de règlement des différends.
- Automatisation des approbations.

Sept autres mesures ont été adoptées ou sont examinées en vue d'être éventuellement adoptées par plus de la moitié des municipalités interrogées. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Trois de ces mesures concernent les normes d'aménagement, à savoir :
  - ⇒ allégement des normes relatives aux places de stationnement;
  - ⇒ réduction des exigences concernant le recul;
  - ⇒ réduction des exigences concernant la grandeur des terrains et la largeur des voies publiques.
- Zonage permettant les appartements accessoires.
- Règlement sur les normes d'entretien.
- Partenariats.
- Recherche.

Ces résultats montrent que les municipalités déploient des ressources et des efforts pour s'attaquer aux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement.

Cependant, bon nombre des municipalités interrogées n'étaient pas convaincues de l'utilité de certaines mesures. C'est ainsi que 16 des mesures considérées avaient été écartées ou étaient jugées « non pertinentes » par plus de la moitié des municipalités. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment permettant les rénovations efficientes.
- « Équivalents » permettant l'utilisation de matériaux, de méthodes et de systèmes de construction non traditionnels.
- Traitement accéléré des demandes des constructeurs accrédités.
- Traitement moins prioritaire des projets entraînant une réduction nette du parc de logements abordables.
- Réserve de terrains pour des logements abordables.
- Prélèvement de droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs.

Beaucoup de répondants ont fait observer que les réformes en rapport avec les codes de construction débordaient de leur champ de compétence. Beaucoup d'autres ont en outre expliqué que les mesures qu'ils n'appuyaient pas étaient des mesures mal adaptées à la situation du marché dans leur municipalité ou des municipalités de la taille de la leur.

Il ressort de l'enquête que les municipalités connaissent bien les questions liées à l'abordabilité du logement et qu'elles s'en occupent. Beaucoup d'entre elles travaillent à améliorer leurs processus et leurs règlements. Cependant, beaucoup de répondants étaient d'avis que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction n'influaient que de façon limitée sur l'offre de logements à prix abordable. Bien qu'ils reconnaissent que les mesures axées sur ces règlements puissent être d'une certaine utilité, ils ne pensent pas qu'elles puissent, en soi, favoriser de façon notable l'abordabilité et le choix du logement.

**Chapter 4: Regional Summary - Atlantic**

In the Atlantic region, the survey included nine cities and towns which accounted for about one-third of the region's population. Table 4.0 lists these municipalities, including their 1996 populations and their placement in the survey's city-size group classifications. This selection of municipalities provides a good cross-section of the different sizes, locations, housing and governmental circumstances of communities in Atlantic Canada.

**Table 4.0: Municipalities Surveyed in Atlantic Region**

Urban Size Class (population of Census urban region in which the municipality is located)					
	<b>Under 50,000</b>	<b>50,000 - 99,999</b>	<b>100,000 - 299,999</b>	<b>300,000 - 999,999</b>	<b>Over 1 Million</b>
New Glasgow	9,812	Fredericton	46,507	Sydney N S	114,733
Yarmouth	7,568	Charlottetown	32,531	Saint John	72,494
			Moncton	59,313	
			St John's	101,936	
Atlantic totals	2	2	4	1	0

The subject of housing affordability, and this survey, were received with enthusiasm by municipalities in this region. There were very few non-responses to survey questions.

**Survey Administration**

The survey was completed in the Atlantic region between May 29 and June 1, 2000.

Once the survey team had decided upon the representative sample of municipalities to be studied in this region, the next step was to identify and secure appropriate respondents in each of these municipalities. Prospective respondents were found in the

list of Atlantic region members of the Canadian Institute of Planners, and through direct contact with municipal planning or building services departments. The survey questionnaire was faxed to this "contact person", and an introductory telephone call was placed to the person to describe the objective of the study, and jointly determine the most pertinent person to complete the survey. If that was another person, he or she was provided with a questionnaire, telephoned, the survey was introduced and a time for undertaking a survey interview was scheduled. Most of the respondents were planners in municipal planning departments. The participation in the survey is summarised in Table 4.1.

Two municipalities elected to complete the survey in-house and fax it back; while the remaining seven questionnaires were completed by the surveyor during prearranged telephone interviews with the respondents.

<b>Table 4.1: Administration of Survey - Atlantic Region</b>		
<b>Municipal Official</b>	<b>Role in Survey</b>	
	<b>Initial Contact</b>	<b>Respondent</b>
Chief Administrative Officer		
GM/Commissioner of Planning		
Director of Planning	5	3
Chief or City Planner or Engineer		
Planning or Development Manager	1	1
Senior Planner	3	5
Other Departmental Staff		
Building Inspector		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

### **Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice**

Housing affordability and choice are important issues in the municipalities of the Atlantic region. In Part 1 of the survey, all of the 9 municipalities responded that the issue of housing affordability is important or somewhat important (see Table 4.2).

<b>Table 4.2: Is Housing Affordability an Important Issue - Municipalities in Atlantic Region</b>					
<b>City-Size Groups (1996 Population)</b>	<b>Responses by Municipality</b>				<b>No. of Cities Surveyed</b>
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>No Response</b>	
Under 50,000	2				2
50,000 - 99,999	1	1			2
100,000 - 299,999	1	3			4
300,000 - 999,999	1				1
Over 1 million					
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>0%</b>		

All municipalities in Nova Scotia said it is "important", as did Moncton, New Brunswick, while in Fredericton, Saint John and Saint John's it was considered "only somewhat" important.

Five of the nine respondents considered that planning and building regulations and the development approval process were "somewhat" of a barrier to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing. These did not appear to be barriers to the other four respondents, and one noted that regulations and approvals processes could slow down the supply but that ultimately it was market driven.

When asked about key issues related to housing affordability, six out of nine municipalities selected "Poor quality and condition of some housing", and an equal number identified "the lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing for specific groups", including all four municipalities in the 100,000 to 299,999 population size-group. Only three cities identified specific groups that lacked affordable housing. Respondents in Sydney and Charlottetown both indicated that housing for single persons and for low-income families were issues, while Sydney indicated youth lacked housing. In Saint John the issue was seen as inadequate choice for middle and upper income groups, linked to the "industrial image" of the city and the production of more expensive housing outside city limits. In Saint John's low-income families as well as those with special needs were seen as having a lack or inadequate choice of affordable housing. Three respondents said the "lack or inadequate choice of affordable housing in general" was a key issue.

The most difficult of these issues was seen as "some poor housing conditions" by four municipalities, spanning all city-size groups from the largest to the two smallest. Three cities replied that it was "inadequate housing for specific groups", and these were all in the 100,000 to 299,999 city-size group. Only one place identified a "lack of affordable housing in general" as the most difficult issue. One respondent said the most difficult issue was the lack of funding for social housing, and that this had been an issue for eight years, alluding to the cuts in federal support for new social housing.

Issues of housing choice and affordability appear to be long-standing problems in the Atlantic region. All respondents indicated that these had been issues for at least six years, and four of them said the problem had persisted for over 16 years. Two municipalities said these issues were becoming more difficult to deal with, while three others indicated the issues were "about the same", and two said they are becoming less difficult. This was one of the few questions which received some non-responses in this region, as two municipalities did not reply to this question. One respondent noted that the situation was very cyclical, as when local industry is going well many people become employed and housing demand increases. Another respondent noted changes that had affected several issues, as while the exterior quality of housing had improved the interiors had not, which has worsened the situation for low-income groups and former psychiatric patients.

When asked to name their "top three" regulatory issues, the responses clearly show that municipalities in the Atlantic region find NIMBY is a powerful force. Table 4.3 summarises the responses.

**Table 4.3: What are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues" - Atlantic Municipalities**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	7	Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	1
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	6	Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	1
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	4	Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	1
Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	3	Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	
High development cost charges	2	Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	
Barriers to housing for the lowest income	2	Inefficient approval processes	
		Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	

(1) Note: Each of the 9 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)

NIMBY was chosen most often as one of the top three issues, being selected by seven cities of all sizes, while the next most common selection, barriers to accessory apartments, was chosen by four of the smallest cities. Five respondents chose NIMBY as the number one issue, and no other issue received more than one selection as the first choice issue.

Barriers to accessory apartments, which is possibly a variant of NIMBY, was the top issue in one municipality. Another variant was seen by a respondent who described a problematic issue facing older municipalities, when affordable row housing or rooming houses are accepted in mature parts of the city but not in new areas.

Excessive land development standards was selected as an issue by Halifax-Dartmouth, Moncton and Saint John, although it was not the top issue anywhere, and one respondent noted that it was primarily an issue from the perspective of developers. Another respondent said the most important problem impeding affordability is the inflexibility of the National Building Code for older homes.

While other issues affecting housing affordability and choice were identified by Atlantic region municipalities, most were not related to regulatory measures. These included a the lack of municipal services (sewers and water), the impact of the Harmonized Sales Tax and ensuing price increases, and the cost of development in general. An interesting issue which was mentioned only in the Atlantic but probably applies in most urban regions is characterized as "the attractiveness of 'wide-open' areas in bordering municipalities". One respondent illustrated this 'wide-open' problem, saying in his

municipality the zoning doesn't not allow for affordable housing, while beyond the city limits affordable "mini-homes" were being built.

## **Recent Reviews**

Part 2 of the survey asked municipalities whether they had identified impediments or constraints to housing affordability and choice during the course of recent reviews of major regulatory instruments. A further question asked whether actions have been taken as a direct outcome of these reviews. The responses showed that most municipalities in the Atlantic region have been reviewing their major instruments and taking action to address constraints that have been identified.

Seven of the nine Atlantic municipalities had found constraints through undertaking reviews of land use plans, zoning bylaws and land development standards/guidelines during the last five years. In all seven this review had lead to action to improve affordability and choice in the zoning bylaws, while in six review of the land use plans had led to changes. In five municipalities review of the land development standards/guidelines led to action to improve affordability and choice. Five of the nine had found constraints through their reviews of building standards while four had found problems in their approval processes. In both of the later categories, all but one municipality that had undertaken the review followed up with action to improve choice and affordability.

Five of the surveyed Atlantic municipalities had not found impediments through their review of approval processes, and four hadn't found problems in building standards.

## **Regulatory Measures**

The central questions of regulatory reform are explored in Part 3 of the survey, which asked whether certain key tools are used (or not used) to facilitate housing choice and affordability. This Part is divided into six sections, dealing respectively with land-related measures, measures related to building codes, approvals processing measures, certain other measures noted in recent CMHC research, a catchall category of other measures, and some other factors. In these categories the survey questionnaire asked, as prompts, about the municipalities' use of 30 measures which the survey team had identified in the literature as being contemporary methods of improving housing affordability and choice. Municipalities were also invited to describe other measures that they employed for this purpose.

### **Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning**

A set of 10 questions asked about land-related measures that municipalities may have adopted that could have affected the supply and choice of affordable housing.

Table 4.4 summarises the responses.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	9	0	0	0	0	0	9
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	8	0	1	0	0	0	9
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing	7	0	0	2	0	0	9
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites, garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	6	1	2	0	0	0	9
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>							
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (ownership, special needs, rental)	5	0	1	3	0	0	9
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	5	2	0	2	0	0	9
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (ownership, special needs, rental)	5	1	1	2	0	0	9
Zoning allows for convertible housing	4	0	0	4	0	1	9
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED</b>							
Replot schemes, special development districts	2	1	0	5	1	0	9

All nine municipalities had zoning that allowed a mix of housing types and lot sizes and mixed commercial/housing. Most (eight cities) had designated or pre-zoned sites for multifamily housing, while another had considered this measure but it was rejected. Seven Atlantic municipalities have zoning which allows innovative forms of housing. In six, there is zoning which allows secondary suites in neighbourhoods that are predominantly detached housing, but none mentioned that they allow garden suites without rezoning or approving a variance. Another city in the Atlantic region is considering secondary suites, while in two others the measure had been considered and rejected. Measures reducing parking standards, property line setbacks, and lot sizes and road widths had been adopted in five municipalities while four had measures that allowed convertible housing.

The success of these measures was mixed. Zoning that allows for accessory

apartments in neighbourhoods that are predominantly single-family housing was cited as successful in three municipalities and two respondents noted that this is also a measure that makes the housing more affordable for owners. One municipality also noted that basement apartments were more desirable than those in apartment buildings, and they provided a needed supply when no new apartments are being built and vacancy rates are high. Another municipality described the key to the success of accessory apartments, including both secondary suites and garden suites, is having qualified inspectors who can ensure safety and functionality without making renovation costs exorbitant.

Two municipalities noted that reduced lot sizes and variants in the set-backs were successful in producing more affordable homes. One respondent indicated that such units in one part of the town were almost half the price as those elsewhere. Two municipalities mentioned that the ACT program had influenced their decision to try reducing lot sizes and road widths, while other places mentioned ACT had influenced their reforms concerning convertible housing, accessory apartments, and the use of zoning mix.

Municipalities cautioned that the market plays an important role in the success of the affordability measures. In one municipality an innovative housing project with smaller lots and homes was never finalised because of lack of demand. In another municipality, the respondent noted that developers were building affordable homes (\$85,000) in response to demand, not because of planning reforms.

Some measures that have been adopted were not related to housing affordability. In one municipality mixed commercial/housing and conversions were permitted as a response to demand for higher-end apartments such as downtown lofts.

Finally, in this region as in others, terms used for convertible housing such as SPROUT, flex-house and made-to-convert housing were not always understood.

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

Table 4.5 summarizes the responses concerning three measures related to building codes, that were included in the survey.

The measure related to building codes that is the most widespread in the Atlantic provinces is a “standard of maintenance” bylaw. In six of the nine cities this type of measure had been adopted and in one it was being considered. Building code equivalents and equivalents for non-standard materials had been adopted in only three and two municipalities respectively, and weren’t being considered in any others.

Some respondents noted that while “standard of maintenance” bylaws were quite successful, they did have complicated effects from the perspective of housing

**Table 4.5: Municipal Use of Measures Related to Building Code in the Atlantic Region**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
"Standard of maintenance" bylaw (or equivalent)	6	1	0	2	0	0	9
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)	3	0	0	5	0	1	9
Other	3	0	0	0	0	n/a	3
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	2	0	1	5	1	0	9

affordability. While these standards act to make affordable housing more safe and healthy, they also have the effect of demolishing some buildings and thereby reducing the stock of affordable homes. One respondent noted that these standards had benefited apartment dwellers but had been costly for homeowners.

One "other" measure that was mentioned was alternative building code compliance for heritage properties. This was deemed successful in one municipality because it allowed adaptive reuse of heritage buildings.

### Reforms Associated with the Approvals Process

Table 4.6 shows municipalities' responses related to processing development and building applications.

The co-ordination and standardisation of development applications was the measure related to approval processes that was adopted most widely by municipalities in the Atlantic provinces. Seven municipalities (78% of respondents) employ this measure while the two remaining were considering it. General improvements to computerisation of permits had been adopted in six municipalities and were being considered in two. Other measures that had been adopted included priority processing for affordable projects (three cities), dispute resolution measures (two cities ) and fast-tracking of certified builders (one city).

Several of the measures were considered successful by Atlantic region respondents.

**Table 4.6: Municipal Use of Measures Related to Approval Processes in the Atlantic Region**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	7	2	0	0	0	0	9
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	6	2	0	1	0	0	9
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for affordable housing (ownership, rental, special needs)	3	1	0	4	1	0	9
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	2	0	1	4	1	1	9
Fast tracking for certified builders	1	1	1	4	1	1	9
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	0	1	2	5	1	0	9
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	0	0	2	6	1	0	9

Priority processing for affordable housing was said to be successful because it leads to lower costs. In one municipality, subdivision fees were waived for a Habitat for Humanity project to further reduce costs. Computerisation was cited as a successful measure by two cities, one saying it sped up the process between the building and planning departments, while the other reported it "worked out great for our paper work". In another municipality one stop approvals have been successful since previously "everyone was spread out and it was time-consuming and confusing". Finally, according to one respondent, fast tracking for certified builders was successful because it entailed a program in which funding was made available to educate individuals.

The ACT program played a role in several of these measures including priority processing and co-ordination of applications (two cities each), as well as general computer improvements and fast tracking for certified builders (one municipality each).

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 4.7 shows municipal responses to four measures that were included in the survey as a follow-up to research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing". These measures have not come into wide use in Atlantic Canada.

**Table 4.7: (Atlantic) Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure					Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	3	0	1	5	0	0 9
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	2	0	1	5	1	0 9
Dedication of land required for special needs, rental or affordable housing, or cash-in-lieu	0	0	2	6	1	0 9
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	0	0	2	6	1	0 9

Three municipalities have entered into partnerships in affordable housing initiatives, through land leases, cash donations or in-kind contributions. Two of these cities mentioned that the partnerships had been quite successful, one involving the social housing sector and the other working with the private sector. In the latter case municipal land was used:

"though hurdles arose with subdivision and environmental contamination We will need provincial help to clean up one of the sites."

Habitat for Humanity was mentioned as a partner agency in two cases.

Two cities have employed some form of "other" financial measures, specifically grants and tax benefits for historical buildings.

### **Other Measures**

This group of six measures, summarised in Table 4.8, are some other techniques municipalities might use to encourage housing affordability and choice. These measures have not received as much interest in the Atlantic region as those in the other groups discussed above.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Research into housing needs and their solutions	4	1	0	0	4	0	0
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	3	1	1	1	4	0	0
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites to assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing	2	1	0	0	5	1	0
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	2	0	0	0	5	2	0
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	1	0	0	0	6	2	0
Levying development cost charges on an area basis	0	0	0	0	8	1	0

The “other” measure that was the most frequently adopted was research into housing needs and their solutions. Four cities in the Atlantic region had undertaken research, and it was being considered in one other community. Demonstration projects have occurred in three municipalities, with one other municipality considering such a project, while another had considered and rejected this measure. The production of educational information to assist in planning and delivering special needs and rental housing and affordable homeownership was underway in two municipalities and under consideration in one. Two municipalities had created advisory committees on issues related to housing affordability and choice. Only the largest municipality, Halifax, had staff assigned to work primarily on housing.

The respondents were not supportive of the idea of levying development cost charges on an area basis, as eight of them considered the measure not relevant, and the other municipality hadn’t considered it. For most of these “other” measures, there were more respondents who said the idea was not relevant or that they hadn’t considered it, than there were municipalities who had tried or who intended to try the idea.

Some successes were reported by those municipalities that had tried “other” measures. One city was able to make some low-cost apartments available, while another successful measure was including poverty groups on an ad-hoc advisory committee that played an advocacy role and helped in the communication between the provincial government and the city.

The ACT program had a role in the measures dealing with educational information, partnerships and demonstration projects (one each).

### **Other Factors**

The last section of the questionnaire asked about the influence that local advocacy groups, and external sources including the ACT program, played in the consideration of regulatory reform. The cities' responses are summarized in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9: Role of Other Factors in Regulatory Reform - Atlantic Region**

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Information gained directly from the ACT program about a reform undertaken somewhere else	0	6	3	0	9
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	2	3	4	0	9
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study your reform	2	2	4	1	9
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	3	0	6	0	9

The largest influence on regulatory reform was felt to be information about reforms undertaken somewhere else, either gained from the ACT program or acquired in other ways. Two respondents said financial support from ACT had a "large influence" and two others attributed a "small influence" to it, while one other respondent situated its influence as "between small and large".

### **Summary Observations**

Overall, the survey found that in the Atlantic region, as was common throughout Canada, municipalities make most use of the "land-related" regulatory measures, and the respondents are least involved with the "building-code related" measures. Generally, respondents were familiar with the measures identified by the Questionnaire. In many cases the measures were already in use in the municipalities or were being considered.

The Atlantic municipalities were quite interested in the subject of housing affordability and choice, and measures to improve them. Many had tried the measures mentioned in the survey, and had evaluative comments to make about their utility. Housing quality is a clear concern in the Atlantic region, as is the impact of NIMBY. The issue of housing for specific groups is another area of concern, especially for smaller cities. Most municipalities had reviewed their main regulatory instruments recently and reported that action to improve affordability and choice had ensued. Information about reforms undertaken elsewhere is important to Atlantic municipalities, and the ACT program has been useful in both providing information and funding support for reform initiatives, especially in relation to measures concerning building codes and approvals processes.

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**Chapter 5: Regional Summary** - **Quebec**

In Québec the survey covered 22 municipalities, located in fifteen of the province's seventeen administrative regions, and comprising about one-third of the provincial population. These municipalities are listed in Table 5.0, along with their 1996 populations and their placement within the survey's city-size group classifications. This selection of municipalities provides a good cross -section of the different sizes, locations, housing and governmental circumstances of Quebec communities.

**Table 5.0: Municipalities Surveyed in Quebec Region**

Urban Size Class (population of Census urban region in which the municipality is located)						
	Under 50,000	50,000 - 99,999	100,000 - 299,999	300,000 - 999,999	Over 1 Million	
Chibougamau	8,664	Shawinigan	18,678	Chicoutimi	63,061	Sainte-Foy
Gaspé	16,517	Drummondville	44,882	Trois-Rivières	48,419	72,330
Thetford Mines	17,635			Gatineau	100,702	Sillery
Baie-Comeau	25,554			Sherbrooke	76,786	
Rouyn-Noranda	28,819			Hull	62,339	
Cowansville	12,051					Verdun
Québec totals	6	2	5	3		6

In responding to the survey, the planners from these Quebec municipalities seemed quite interested in the subject of housing affordability. However, there were numerous non-responses to the first part of the survey, including questions on priority issues in housing affordability and choice. Many of these respondents explained this by saying that housing is already relatively affordable in their municipality. Also, in comparison to the other regions of Canada, more Quebec respondents said that housing affordability is not a key issue.

## **Survey Administration**

Once the sample of municipalities was determined, the next step was to identify appropriate survey respondents in each municipality. Prospective respondents were found in the list of members of the Corporation of Urban Planners working in municipalities, and through direct contact with municipal planning, building permit or housing departments. The objective of the study was described to the person contacted and the most pertinent person to complete the survey was identified, provided with the questionnaire (usually by fax) and asked to participate.

The respondents were primarily directors of departments (planning, building inspection, technical services, etc.) in smaller centres, while in the larger cities, housing or planning department staff responded.

In one case, staff filled out the questionnaire and it was reviewed by the Director of Planning. The participation in the survey is summarised in Table 5.1.

Surveys were completed from late May to August. Fourteen surveys were collected by telephone interview and eight were completed by fax or e-mail, entailing follow-up calls to obtain clarifications.

**Table 5.1: Administration of Survey - Quebec**

Municipal Official	Role in Survey	
	Initial Contact	Respondent
Chief Administrative Officer		
GM/Commissioner of Planning		
Director of Planning	8	6
Chief or City Planner or Engineer	8	4
Planning or Development Manager		
Senior Planner	3	6
Other Departmental Staff		
Building Inspector	3	6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

## **Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice**

When asked, in Part 1 of the survey, whether affordability and choice was a major issue in their municipality, seven of the 22 Quebec respondents answered that it was, while eight indicated that it was "only somewhat" of an issue. These responses are summarized in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2: Is Housing Affordability an Important Issue - Municipalities in Quebec**

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses by Municipality				No. of Cities Surveyed
	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Response	
Under 50,000	2	3	1		6
50,000 - 99,999			2		2
100,000 - 299,999	1	3	1		5
300,000 - 999,999	1	1	1		3
Over 1 million	3	1	2		6
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>32%</b>		

Two respondents who noted that it was "somewhat" an issue also observed that there were no data or specific studies to quantify this. In two municipalities it was felt that there were too many affordable units, in one case because of a severe loss of population (one-half in a five year period).

Almost all respondents (19 out of 22) indicated that planning and building regulations and the development approval process were not barriers to the supply of affordable housing, while one felt that they were barriers and two others answered that they were "somewhat" of a problem. The respondent who said regulations were a barrier underlined that this was voluntary since the municipality had a high proportion of public housing including units situated in the most desirable neighbourhoods. Another respondent, noting that regulations were not a barrier to housing, observed that they did cause problems in the commercial and industrial sectors.

When asked to identify key issues related to housing affordability and choice, Quebec respondents were divided with 11 selecting "lack or inadequate choice of affordable housing for specific groups", and 10 saying "poor condition or quality of some housing". The specific groups that were identified as needing more housing included (in relative order of response rate): low-income families/households, seniors, special needs, people needing housing with services, ex-inmates, and the homeless. No city-size pattern was observed in these responses.

When asked which issue had been the most difficult to deal with, the greatest response was the non-responses (seven municipalities). Six identified "poor quality and condition of some housing" as the most difficult problem, while five answered it was the "lack or inadequate choice for specific groups". Only three felt it was a "general lack of affordable housing".

For most who responded, the affordability and choice of housing was a fairly long-standing issue. Nine of the 15 municipalities who responded said that it had been an issue for more than six years and for one other it had been an issue for "many" years.

The municipalities were quite divided in their views about the changing severity of their affordability issues. Six said the issue was becoming more difficult, while five indicated it was the same or less difficult. Among the reasons cited for improvement in dealing with the problem were: changes to the zoning bylaw (the major issue was housing for specific groups); more experience (the major issue was housing for seniors; and increased experience has led to better response to needs and less restrictive requirements, such as parking spots for residents of projects); improvements in policies and programs for specific groups in need of housing; and the availability of renovation grants (the major issue was poor quality of some housing).

When asked to identify their top three regulatory issues, the clear answer was NIMBY (Not in My Back Yard). Table 5.3 summarises the responses.

**Table 5.3: What Are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues" -Quebec Municipalities**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	13	Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	2
Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses)	8	Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	2
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	5	Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	1
Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	5	Inefficient approval processes	
Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	5	Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	
Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	3	High development cost charges	
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	2		
(1) Note: Each of the 22 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)			

NIMBY was the number one issue for 11 of the 18 municipalities who responded, and was chosen as a "top three" issue 13 times by cities of all sizes and regions of Quebec.

The next most frequently selected "top three" issue was "barriers to housing for the lowest income groups", which was chosen eight times, and was the choice as second most important issue for six respondents. This was a top issue for the smallest places and the municipalities in the largest metropolitan areas, but was not chosen by Québec's medium-sized cities.

Barriers to accessory apartments and to alternative forms of tenures each had five responses with barriers to downtown redevelopment and to flexible housing each being cited three times.

Some respondents named other issues in their municipalities that were not of a regulatory nature, including low and unstable incomes, lack of economic growth, the predominance of high value detached housing, a lack of leadership for affordable housing, and the need for rental property owners to renovate units. One respondent noted that the number one problem was the lack of owner-occupants. In Montréal the issues identified included the withdrawal of significant senior government funding from health and new housing. The respondent noted that the impact of the first is especially severe in terms of homelessness and mental health. An inadequate supply of social housing for an increasingly poor clientele with increasingly complex needs also was a major issue.

*"Poverty is an important phenomenon. In fact, even though housing costs are lower in Montréal than in most large Canadian cities, the proportion spent on housing by tenants is often very high (25.3% of tenant households spend more than 50% of their income on housing)."*

A significant minority of Quebec municipalities did not answer this question about their "top 3 issues", stating that the question was not relevant or was inappropriate. Another observation from Montréal is illustrative of these reactions:

*"Among the regulatory issues listed, very few are present in Montréal or are so only in an exceptional manner in certain, very specific sectors of the city (such as production of accessory apartments or garden suites in Rivière-des-Prairies where the zoning is much more exclusive than elsewhere in Montréal). However, it is understood that the problem with contaminated soil in older parts of the city does exist."*

## **Recent Reviews**

Part 2 of the survey asked the municipalities whether they had identified impediments or constraints to housing affordability and choice during the course of recent reviews of major regulatory instruments (official plans, zoning bylaws, land development regulations, approval processes, and building standards).

The Quebec municipalities' responses indicated that they have been reviewing these instruments and have implemented some remedial action where they encountered constraints. In 13 of the 22 municipalities, constraints had been identified through zoning reviews during the last five years, and in eight cases this led to actions being undertaken. Two respondents noted that the idea of affordability was not the basis for reviews that had been undertaken even though in one case a review was followed by changes in the type of housing that was permitted, and the densification of certain sectors. Seven encountered impediments when reviewing building standards while five had found problems when reviewing land use plans. Measures that had resulted from this included permission for bi-generational and multi-family housing.

There was a high rate of non-response to this part of the survey in Quebec, particularly to the "actions taken" question. Many municipalities (4-6) did not respond to most of these five questions concerning the major regulatory instruments.

## **Regulatory Measures**

The essence of regulatory reform lies in the specific tools that are used (or not used) to facilitate housing choice and affordability. The questions in Part 3 of the survey explored these tools. This Part is divided into six sections, in which the Questionnaire asked, as prompts, about the municipalities' use of 30 measures the survey team had identified in the literature as being potential methods of improving housing affordability and choice. Municipalities were also invited to describe other measures that they employed to achieve these goals.

## Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning

The survey asked about 10 land-related measures that municipalities may have adopted to improve the supply and choice of affordable housing. The responses, summarised in Table 5.4, show a widespread use of some of the zoning measures, and a widespread rejection of a number of the other land-related measures.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	21	1	0	0	0	0	22
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	19	2	0	1	0	0	22
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing	19	2	0	1	0	0	22
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>							
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (ownership, special needs, rental)	12	2	0	8	0	0	22
Land is prezoned or designated for multi-family housing	12	1	0	9	0	0	22
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites or garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	8	1	9	4	0	0	22
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (ownership, special needs, rental)	8	3	0	11	0	0	22
Zoning allows for convertible housing	8	2	1	11	0	0	22
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	7	2	0	13	0	0	22
Replot schemes, special development districts	6	3	1	12	0	0	22

In twenty-one of the twenty-two municipalities surveyed, zoning allowed for a mix of housing types and lot sizes. In nineteen, the zoning allowed for innovative housing forms and mixed commercial/housing.

Twelve municipalities had land designated or prezoned for multi-family housing and an equal number reduced parking standards for affordable ownership, special needs or rental housing. There were no city-size patterns apparent in these responses.

In eight of the larger cities zoning allows accessory apartments (mainly secondary suites, with garden suites also allowed in several places) in neighbourhoods of primarily detached housing. Also, eight municipalities allowed for convertible housing, eight

reduced property line setbacks for affordable housing, and a few municipalities allowed reduced road sizes, replots or special development districts. However, over half of the respondents, mainly the smaller cities, had either rejected these measures or considered that they were not relevant.

One respondent pointed out that while many of these land-related measures had been adopted in their municipality, they had been put in place as normal practices to accompany the mixed use and variety in housing types that exist in their neighbourhoods, not as special policies to produce affordable housing.

Respondents mentioned other measures that had contributed to the affordability of their housing, including the allowance of condominiums, and reducing parking requirements for people needing extra services.

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

Building-related measures were less prominent in Quebec than other kinds of measures. As may be seen in Table 5.5, seven municipalities had adopted building code equivalents, one was considering this, and another had considered this measure and rejected it. Six municipalities had a “standard of maintenance” bylaw, one was considering this and another had rejected it. Half of the municipalities did not respond to this question.

**Table 5.5: Municipal Use of Regulatory Measures Related to Building Codes in the Quebec Region**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
“Standard of maintenance” bylaw (or equivalent)	6	1	1	3	0	11	22
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)	7	1	1	12	0	1	22
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	2	1	0	18	0	1	22
Other	0	2	0	0	0	0	2

Only two municipalities had “equivalents” for non-standard materials and one was considering this measure, while 85% of respondents said it was not relevant.

Respondents mentioned two other code-related measures that are important to housing affordability in Quebec; the need for building code equivalents for heritage buildings;

and the requirement for appropriate fire codes to deal with accessory apartments.

### **Reforms Associated with the Approvals Processes**

Table 5.6 shows the municipalities' responses related to processing of development and building applications.

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>					<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Considered but Rejected</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	13	1	1	7	0	0 22
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	12	0	1	9	0	0 22
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	11	1	1	8	0	1 22
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	6	2	1	12	0	1 22
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for affordable housing (ownership, rental or special needs)	2	1	1	18	0	0 22
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	1	1	1	18	0	1 22
Fast tracking for certified builders	0	0	1	19	0	2 22
Other	0	2	0	0	0	2 4

Over one-half of the twenty-two municipalities had undertaken general improvements to computerisation of development and building permits, and one municipality was considering this, while another had rejected the measure. Co-ordination and standardisation of permits was also relatively widespread (adopted in twelve municipalities and under consideration in one), while eleven used a dispute resolution process such as neighbourhood "information sessions" preceding the consideration of rezoning proposals by Council. The rest of the measures, including priority processing for affordable housing projects, were less prevalent with most respondents considering them to be irrelevant. The only municipality surveyed that had considered fast tracking for certified builders, had rejected the idea.

Most Quebec municipalities had found that computerisation had been a successful measure, although one respondent noted that this had led to greater internal efficiency but it had no link to the affordability of housing. One respondent noted that:

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*"the clearer, more succinct and rapid the process, the greater the number of persons requesting permits without the creation of "bureaucratization" or a maze in which the citizen is lost."*

Priority processing for conversion of apartments had increased the number of homeowners in one municipality while two others had found that public consultation had been an effective method of conflict resolution. In one city, this process had permitted bi-generational housing while another reported:

*"the use of conflict resolution (public consultation) permits concessions on both sides, making for better adjustments..."*

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 5.7 provides a summary of the responses of Quebec municipalities to four measures that were included in the survey as a follow-up to research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing". Most of these measures have not received much usage in Quebec.

**Table 5.7: (Quebec) Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	8	0	0	14	0	0	22
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	5	1	0	16	0	0	22
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	3	1	1	17	0	0	22
Dedication of land required for special needs, rental or affordable housing, or cash-in-lieu	3	0	0	18	0	1	22

Eight municipalities have engaged in some partnering measures to encourage affordable housing, such as leasing land, donating cash or making other in-kind contributions. It should be noted that partnerships are encouraged by the Quebec social housing program, Accès Logis, which requires matching funds from the "milieu" (the municipality or non-profit groups or charities.)

Five cities, mainly in the largest metropolitan areas, use financial measures such as linkage fees or municipal housing funds.

## Other Measures

The survey asked about a variety of other measures municipalities could use to encourage housing affordability and choice, and these responses are summarised in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8: Municipal Use of Other Measures to Improve Housing Affordability and Choice in the Québec Region**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Research into housing needs and their solutions	10	2	0	10	0	0	22
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	6	3	0	13	0	0	22
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	6	0	0	16	0	0	22
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	5	2	0	15	0	0	22
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites to assist in planning and delivering affordable housing (special needs, ownership and rental)	4	1	0	17	0	0	22
Levying development cost charges on an area basis	0	1	0	21	0	0	22

Ten of the 22 municipalities had undertaken research into housing affordability issues and solutions, and two more are considering this. Ten of the smaller cities indicated such research is not relevant.

Six cities had staff assigned to housing (many of whom were primarily involved in the administration of public housing units) and an equal number had undertaken demonstration projects (three others were considering this). One of these demonstrations had been supported by the ACT program. Five municipalities had adopted "other" financial measures.

While these "other" measures receive some use in Quebec municipalities, in more than one-half of the surveyed cities five of the six measures were not relevant. One measure, levying development cost charges on an area basis, was considered irrelevant by 21 of the 22 cities, and the other was still considering this reform.

Some municipalities mentioned particularly successful measures for encouraging housing affordability and choice, including helping applicants prepare requests for housing subsidies. In one municipality the city had bought and converted two six-plexes to demonstrate low-cost housing, which was then successfully sold. In Montréal, various financial measures and subsidies were considered to be the most successful:

*"in developing new affordable units, and especially in maintaining existing units and encouraging their renovation."*

## Other Factors

Finally, the Questionnaire asked about the influence that local advocacy groups, and external sources including the ACT program, played in the consideration of regulatory reform. Table 5.9 shows the municipalities' responses.

The respondents reported that the greatest influencing factor was local community groups that advocated for projects and measures which contributed to housing affordability and choice.

Eleven municipalities said

these groups have a large or small influence. Also, eleven cities said information about reforms undertaken elsewhere were influential, although only four said that they gained that information from the ACT program. Four cities said the financial support they obtained through the ACT program had a small influence in their own involvement in regulatory reform, and one of these cities said ACT had assisted it in undertaking a demonstration project.

**Table 5.9: Role of Other Factors in Regulatory Reform - Quebec Region**

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	6	5	10	1	22
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	3	8	9	2	22
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study your reform	0	4	16	2	22
Information gained directly from the ACT program about a reform undertaken somewhere else	0	4	15	3	22

## Summary Observations

Many respondents said that housing is relatively affordable in their municipality. Also, in comparison to the other regions of Canada, more Québec respondents said that housing affordability is not a key issue. Most felt that planning and building regulations do not act as barriers to housing affordability and choice.

Some Québec municipalities are quite involved in assisting and improving affordability and choice. While some cities have adopted many of the land and approvals-related measures, a large proportion of these municipalities, and particularly the smaller places where affordability is a lesser issue, have not.

In Quebec, as elsewhere in Canada, municipalities were most involved with "land-related" regulatory measures, and made least use of "building-related" measures.

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Most respondents were familiar with the measures identified by the survey, particularly the land measures. In many cases these measures had been already adopted, were being considered or had been considered and rejected.

## Chapitre 5 Résultats régionaux - Québec

Au Québec, l'enquête a été menée auprès de 22 municipalités réparties dans 15 des 17 régions administratives de la province et où vit à peu près le tiers de la population totale de la province. Ces municipalités sont énumérées au tableau 5.0; leur population en 1996 et la catégorie de taille dans laquelle elles ont été classées pour les besoins de l'enquête sont également indiqués. Ces 22 municipalités forment un échantillon représentatif de l'ensemble des municipalités du Québec du point de vue de la taille, de l'emplacement, de la situation du logement et de l'exercice de l'autorité.

Table 5.0: Municipalités interrogées au Québec						
Catégories de tailles de villes (population de la région urbaine dans laquelle la municipalité se trouve)						
	Moins de 50,000	50,000 à 99,999	100,000 à 299,999	300,000 à 999,999	1 000 000 et plus	
Chibougamau	8 664	Shawinigan	18 678	Chicoutimi	63 061	Sainte-Foy
Gaspé	16 517	Drummondville	44 882	Trois-Rivières	48 419	72 330
Thetford Mines	17 635			Québec	162 264	Chateauguay
Baie-Comeau	25 554			Sillery	12 003	65 927
Rouyn-Noranda	28 819			Gatineau	100 702	Laval
Cowansville	12 051			Sherbrooke	76 786	330 313
Total Québec	6	2	5	Hull	62 339	Saint-Jérôme
						23 916
						Verdun
						59 714
						Montréal
						1 016 376
						6

Les répondants des municipalités du Québec ont semblé très intéressés par la question de l'abordabilité du logement. Cependant, beaucoup d'entre eux n'ont pas répondu à certaines questions de la première partie de l'enquête, y compris à des questions portant sur des aspects essentiels de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement. Bon nombre de ces répondants ont justifié ces « non-réponses » en expliquant que le logement était déjà relativement abordable dans leur municipalité. En outre, un nombre proportionnellement plus élevé de répondants du Québec que des autres régions du Canada ont dit que la question de l'abordabilité du logement n'était pas un enjeu essentiel.

## Réalisation de l'enquête

Une fois l'échantillon de municipalités établi, il fallait trouver les personnes susceptibles de répondre aux questions de l'enquête dans chaque municipalité. Pour ce faire, on a utilisé la liste des membres de l'Association des urbanistes et des aménagistes municipaux du Québec et on a communiqué directement avec les services d'urbanisme, de délivrance des permis de construction ou d'habitation des municipalités concernées. On a ensuite demandé aux personnes ainsi trouvées, après leur avoir présenté l'enquête et leur en avoir exposé l'objectif, quelle était la personne la mieux placée dans leur municipalité pour répondre à nos questions. Puis on a envoyé le questionnaire (le plus souvent par télécopieur) à ces personnes, en les invitant à participer à l'enquête.

Dans les petites villes, ce sont surtout des directeurs de services (urbanisme, inspection des bâtiments, services techniques, etc.) qui ont répondu à nos questions, tandis que dans les grandes villes, les répondants ont été en majorité des membres du personnel des services d'habitation ou d'urbanisme.

Dans une municipalité, un membre du personnel a rempli le questionnaire, puis le directeur de l'urbanisme a examiné ses réponses. Les renseignements concernant les personnes qui ont participé à l'enquête sont présentés au tableau 5.1.

L'enquête a été menée entre la fin de mai et le mois d'août. Quatorze répondants ont été interrogés par téléphone et huit autres ont rempli eux-mêmes le questionnaire, qu'ils nous ont renvoyé par télécopieur ou par courriel. Il a fallu appeler ces derniers pour obtenir des éclaircissements sur leurs réponses.

**Tableau 5.1 - Réalisation de l'enquête - Québec**

Fonctionnaires municipaux concernés	Rôle dans l'enquête	
	Contact	Répondant initial
Directeur général		
DG ou commissaire de la planification		
Directeur de la planification	8	6
Urbaniste en chef ou urbaniste ou ingénieur	8	4
Cadre des services de planification ou responsable du développement		
Planificateur principal	3	6
Fonctionnaire d'autres services		
Inspecteur en bâtiment	3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

## Importance accordée à la question de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement

À la question de la première partie de l'enquête à savoir si l'abordabilité et le choix du logement était une question importante dans leur municipalité, sept des 22 répondants du Québec ont répondu que c'était « important », et huit autres ont indiqué que c'était seulement « un peu important ». Ces réponses sont présentées au tableau 5.2 .

Population (1996)	Réponses des municipalités				Nombre de villes interrogées
	Important	Un peu important	Pas important	Pas de réponse	
Moins de 50 000	2	3	1		6
50 000 à 99 999			2		2
100 000 à 299 999	1	3	1		5
300 000 à 999 999	1	1	1		3
1 000 000 et plus	3	1	2		6
Total : en nombre :en % des réponses	7	8	7	0	22
	32%	36%	32%		

Deux des répondants qui ont répondu seulement « un peu important » ont aussi indiqué qu'ils ne disposaient ni de données ni d'études particulières permettant de chiffrer la situation du logement. Dans deux municipalités, les répondants ont indiqué qu'il y avait trop de logements à prix abordables, dans l'une d'elle en raison d'une diminution considérable de la population (la moitié en cinq ans).

Presque tous les répondants (19 sur 22) ne pensaient pas que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction nuisent à l'offre de logements abordables, tandis qu'un répondant croyait qu'au contraire, ils y nuisaient, et que deux autres répondants ont indiqué qu'ils y nuisaient « juste un peu ». Le seul répondant qui a répondu « oui » a expliqué que la situation était voulue parce qu'il y avait dans sa municipalité un nombre important de logements publics, dont certains dans les quartiers les plus recherchés. Un autre répondant, qui était d'avis que la réglementation ne nuisait pas à l'offre de logements abordables, a fait observer que c'était plutôt dans les secteurs commercial et industriel que cette réglementation causait des problèmes.

À la question concernant les principaux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement, l'opinion des répondants du Québec était partagée entre « la pénurie ou le choix insatisfaisant de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers » (11) et le « mauvais état ou la qualité médiocre de certains logements » (10). Les groupes particuliers qui, selon les répondants, avaient besoin de plus de logements étaient, dans l'ordre (selon le nombre de fois que les répondants les ont mentionnés), les familles et les ménages à faible revenu, les personnes âgées, les personnes ayant des besoins spéciaux, les personnes ayant besoin de logements où certains services sont offerts, les anciens détenus et les sans-abri. On n'a observé aucune correspondance particulière entre les réponses et la taille des villes.

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À la question à savoir quel était le problème le plus difficile pour elles, sept municipalités ont choisi de ne pas répondre, soit le choix fait par le plus grand nombre. Six municipalités ont indiqué que c'était « le mauvais état ou la qualité médiocre de certains logements », tandis que cinq ont répondu que c'était « le manque ou le choix limité de logements abordables pour des groupes particuliers ». Seulement trois répondants ont affirmé que c'était « la pénurie ou le choix insatisfaisant de logements abordables en général ».

Par ailleurs, pour la plupart des municipalités visées par l'enquête, le problème de l'abordabilité et du choix du logement était un problème d'assez longue date. Neuf des quinze municipalités qui ont répondu à la question à ce sujet ont indiqué qu'elles faisaient face au problème depuis au moins six ans, et une municipalité y faisait face depuis de « nombreuses années ».

En ce qui concerne la question à savoir s'il devenait plus difficile ou moins difficile de faire face aux problèmes relatifs à l'abordabilité du logement, l'opinion des répondants était très partagée. Six municipalités ont répondu que cela devenait plus difficile d'y faire face, tandis que cinq municipalités ont indiqué que c'était « moins difficile » ou « ni plus ni moins difficile ». Parmi les facteurs qui leur permettraient de s'attaquer plus efficacement aux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité du logement, les répondants ont mentionné les suivants : des changements au règlement de zonage (le principal problème, dans cette municipalité, était le logement de groupes particuliers); une plus grande expérience (le principal problème étant le logement des personnes âgées, l'expérience acquise avait permis de mieux répondre aux besoins de ce groupe, notamment en allégeant certaines exigences, par exemple en ce qui touche aux places de stationnement requises pour les résidants des ensembles d'habitation); les améliorations aux politiques et aux programmes au profit des groupes particuliers ayant besoin de logements; l'accès à des subventions à la rénovation (le principal problème était la mauvaise qualité de certains logements).

À la question à savoir quels étaient les trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation, la réponse qui est revenue le plus souvent est le syndrome « pas dans ma cour ». Les réponses à la question sont présentées dans le tableau 5.3.

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**Tableau 5.3 - Quels sont les trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation - Municipalités du Québec**

Réponses suggérées dans le questionnaire	Nombre de fois choisies (1)	Réponses suggérées dans le questionnaire	Nombre de fois choisies (1)
Pas dans ma cour (opposition aux logements à coût modique comme les appartements secondaires).	13	Nécessité d'adopter de la réglementation favorisant la construction intercalaire et la conversion.	2
Obstacles aux logements pour les personnes dont les revenus sont les plus faibles (comme les maisons de chambres).	8	Absence de normes de rénovation efficientes.	2
Obstacles à l'aménagement d'appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins).	5	Normes d'aménagement foncier excessives (les marges de recul, la taille des terrains, places de stationnement, etc.).	1
Obstacles au réaménagement de quartiers du centre-ville en état de délabrement et des sites contaminés.	5	Processus d'approbation inefficaces	
Obstacles aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels (habitation communautaire).	5	Résistance aux primes de densité et aux programmes de compensation.	
Obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables.	3	Droits d'aménagement élevés	
Autres problèmes signalés (y compris ceux qui ne sont pas liés à la réglementation).	2		
<b>(1) Observation: Chacun des 22 répondants pouvait choisir jusqu'à trois des réponses proposées ou donner une ou plusieurs « autres » réponses.</b>			

Les syndrome « pas dans ma cour » a été choisi par onze des dix-huit municipalités qui ont répondu à la question. Il a en outre été choisi parmi les « trois principaux problèmes » à treize reprises par des villes de toutes tailles et dans toutes les régions du Québec.

Le deuxième facteur qui a été choisi le plus souvent (soit à huit reprises) parmi les trois principaux problèmes était les obstacles à la production de logements pour les économiquement faibles ; ce facteur a été choisi comme deuxième problème le plus important par six répondants. Il est à noter que ce facteur a été choisi par des petites villes et des municipalités des grandes zones urbaines, mais par aucune ville de taille moyenne.

Les obstacles aux appartements accessoires et les obstacles aux modes d'occupation non traditionnels ont été choisis chacun à cinq reprises, et les obstacles au réaménagement des quartiers centraux et les obstacles à la production de logements flexibles et adaptables trois fois chacun.

Certains répondants ont mentionné d'autres problèmes qui n'étaient pas liés à la réglementation, notamment le revenu faible et fluctuant, la faible croissance économique, la prédominance de l'habitation individuelle à prix élevé, le manque d'esprit d'initiative en matière de logement abordable et la nécessité pour les

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propriétaires d'immeubles locatifs de rénover leurs logements. Un des répondants a affirmé que le principal problème était le trop petit nombre de propriétaires-occupants. À Montréal, le problème de la diminution des fonds affectés par les ordres supérieurs de gouvernement à la santé et à la construction de nouveaux logements a aussi été mentionné par un répondant. Ce dernier a fait observer que dans le secteur de la santé, la réduction a eu des conséquences particulièrement graves sur le plan de la clochardise et de la santé mentale. Un autre problème important était l'offre insuffisante de logements sociaux pour une clientèle de plus en plus pauvre, ayant des besoins de plus en plus complexes.

*« La pauvreté est un phénomène important. En fait, bien que le logement soit moins cher à Montréal que dans la plupart des autres grandes villes du Canada, beaucoup de locataires y consacrent une proportion très élevée de leur revenu (25,3 % des ménages qui sont locataires consacrent plus de la moitié de leur revenu au logement). »*

Une minorité importante de municipalités du Québec n'ont pas répondu à la question concernant les trois principaux problèmes liés à la réglementation, en indiquant que la question n'était pas pertinente. L'observation ci-dessous d'un répondant de Montréal apporte des éclaircissements à ce sujet.

*« Bien peu des problèmes liés à la réglementation qui sont énumérés existent à Montréal ou, s'ils existent, ils sont circonscrits à des secteurs bien précis de la ville (par exemple, en ce qui concerne la construction de logements accessoires et de pavillons-jardins à Rivière-des-Prairies, où le zonage est beaucoup plus exclusif qu'ailleurs à Montréal. Cela dit, on sait qu'il y a des problèmes de sol contaminé dans les parties plus anciennes de la ville. »*

### **Examens récents**

Pour la deuxième partie de l'enquête, on a demandé aux municipalités si elles avaient entrepris récemment des examens de leurs principaux éléments de réglementation (plans d'occupation des sols, règlement de zonage, normes et directives d'aménagement foncier, processus d'approbation et normes du bâtiment) qui avaient révélé des entraves ou des contraintes à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement.

Les répondants ont indiqué qu'on avait procédé à de tels examens dans les municipalités du Québec et qu'on avait pris des mesures pour éliminer les contraintes décelées, le cas échéant. Dans 13 des 22 municipalités, des examens du règlement de zonage réalisés au cours des cinq dernières années avaient révélé des entraves au choix et à l'abordabilité du logement; dans huit d'entre elles, des mesures correctives avaient été prises. Deux répondants ont fait observer que l'abordabilité du logement n'était pas l'objet principal des examens qui avaient été réalisés, même si dans un cas, il en avait résulté des changements quant aux types d'habitation autorisés ainsi qu'une augmentation de la densité dans certains secteurs. Sept municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles avaient décelé des entraves en examinant les normes du bâtiment, et cinq municipalités en avaient décelés durant l'examen des plans d'occupation des sols. Ces

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observations ont donné lieu à l'adoption d'un certain nombre de mesures, notamment l'autorisation de l'habitation collective (logements multifamiliaux et logements pour deux générations).

Beaucoup de municipalités du Québec n'ont pas répondu aux questions de cette partie de l'enquête, et plus particulièrement à celle concernant les mesures qui avaient été prises. Beaucoup de municipalités (4 à 6) n'ont pas répondu à la plupart des cinq questions concernant les principaux éléments de réglementation.

### **Mesures de réglementation**

L'aspect essentiel de la réforme réglementaire est l'utilisation - ou la non-utilisation - de mesures particulières pour favoriser le choix et l'abordabilité du logement. Les questions de la 3<sup>e</sup> partie de l'enquête portaient sur ces mesures. Cette partie est divisée en six sections, et elle comprend des questions au sujet de l'utilisation, par les municipalités, de 30 mesures (trouvées par l'équipe de recherche dans les publications spécialisées) susceptibles de favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. Les municipalités étaient aussi invitées à décrire d'autres mesures qu'elles avaient appliquées pour atteindre les mêmes objectifs.

### **Réformes liées à la planification de l'utilisation des terrains**

L'enquête comprenait des questions au sujet de dix mesures liées aux terrains que les municipalités étaient susceptibles d'avoir adoptées pour améliorer l'offre et l'abordabilité du logement. Comme on le voit au tableau 5.4, la très grande majorité des municipalités appliquaient certaines mesures relatives au zonage, tout comme beaucoup de municipalités rejetaient certaines des autres mesures liées aux terrains.

Vingt et une des 22 municipalités interrogées autorisaient, dans leur règlement de zonage, divers types de logements et de tailles de terrains. De plus, 19 municipalités autorisaient aussi bien les formes de logement novatrices que la combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux.

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**Tableau 5.4 Recours par les municipalités à des mesures de réglementation en matière d'urbanisme dans la région du Québec**

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Rejetée	Envisagée mais	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	
<b>MESURES LARGEMENT ADOPTÉES</b>							
Le zonage permet la combinaison de divers types de logements et tailles de terrains dans certains secteurs.	21	1	0	0	0	0	22
Le zonage permet la combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux et les conversions.	19	2	0	1	0	0	22
Le zonage permet les formes de logement novatrices comme l'habitation communautaire et les foyers de groupe.	19	2	0	1	0	0	22
<b>UTILISATION DE MESURES COMBINÉES</b>							
La réduction des exigences relatives aux places de stationnement pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location).	12	2	0	8	0	0	22
Terrains préalablement zonés pour les collectifs.	12	1	0	9	0	0	22
<b>MESURES UTILISÉES MOINS FRÉQUEMMENT</b>							
Le zonage permet les appartements accessoires (appartements secondaires, pavillons-jardins) dans les quartiers où l'on retrouve principalement des maisons unifamiliales détachées.	8	1	9	4	0	0	22
La réduction des marges de recul est acceptable pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location).	8	3	0	11	0	0	22
Le zonage permet des logements de type convertible.	8	2	1	11	0	0	22
Réduction de la taille des terrains et de la largeur des voies publiques.	7	2	0	13	0	0	22
Révision des plans de lotissement, districts d'aménagement spéciaux.	6	3	1	12	0	0	22

Douze municipalités ont indiqué qu'elles réservaient, dans leur plan de zonage, des terrains pour le logement collectif, et un nombre égal de municipalités qu'elles réduisaient les exigences relatives aux places de stationnement pour favoriser les logements abordables. Il n'y avait pas de correspondance apparente entre les réponses et la taille des villes.

Dans huit des plus grandes villes, le zonage permet les appartements accessoires (principalement les appartements secondaires, mais aussi les pavillons-jardins à certains endroits) dans les quartiers où l'on trouve principalement des maisons unifamiliales détachées. De plus, huit municipalités autorisent des logements de type convertible, huit municipalités réduisent les exigences concernant les marges de recul pour favoriser le logement abordable et quelques municipalités acceptent de réduire les exigences relatives à la largeur des voies publiques, de réviser des plans d'emplacement ou d'établir des districts d'aménagement spéciaux. Cependant, plus de

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la moitié des répondants, surtout dans les petites villes, ont indiqué que ces mesures avaient été rejetées ou jugées non pertinentes.

Un répondant a fait observer que bon nombre des mesures liées aux terrains présentées dans le questionnaire avaient été adoptées dans sa municipalité suivant la façon de procéder habituelle pour s'accorder à la diversité des utilisations et des types d'habitation observée dans les quartiers, plutôt que pour favoriser explicitement la construction de logements abordables.

Les répondants ont mentionné d'autres mesures qui avaient contribué à l'abordabilité du logement dans leur municipalité, parmi lesquelles l'autorisation de la copropriété et l'allégement des exigences relatives au stationnement pour les personnes ayant besoin de services supplémentaires.

### **Réformes liées aux codes et aux règlements concernant les bâtiments**

Au Québec, les mesures liées aux bâtiments étaient appliquées d'une façon moins générale que les autres catégories de mesures. Comme on le voit au tableau 5.5, sept municipalités avaient adopté des normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment, une autre envisageait de faire de même, et une autre encore avait envisagé la mesure, mais l'avait écartée. Six municipalités avaient adopté un règlement visant les normes d'entretien, une autre envisageait d'en adopter un et une autre encore avait décidé de ne pas en adopter. La moitié des municipalités n'ont pas répondu à cette question.

**Tableau 5.5 Réformes concernant les codes et les règlements de construction dans la région du Québec**

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
Règlement visant les normes d'entretien (ou l'utilisation d'équivalents).	6	1	1	3	0	11	22
Normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment permettant les rénovations efficientes (appartements accessoires).	7	1	1	12	0	1	22
Équivalents permettant l'utilisation de matériaux, de systèmes et de méthodes de construction non traditionnels.	2	1	0	18	0	1	22
Autres	0	2	0	0	0		2

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Seulement deux municipalités avaient établi des « équivalents » permettant l'utilisation de matériaux et de méthodes non traditionnels, et une autre envisageait de faire de même, tandis que 85 p. 100 des répondants jugeaient la mesure non pertinente.

Les répondants ont fait mention de deux autres mesures liées aux codes du bâtiment qui sont importantes pour assurer l'accès à des logements abordables au Québec : l'établissement de normes équivalentes aux codes pour les immeubles à valeur patrimoniale et l'établissement de codes de prévention des incendies appropriés pour les appartements accessoires.

### Réformes liées aux processus d'approbation

Les réponses des municipalités du Québec aux questions concernant le traitement des demandes de permis d'aménagement et de construction sont présentées au tableau 5.6.

Description de la mesure	Degré d'utilisation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée	Envisagée mais rejetée	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
Amélioration générale de l'informatisation du processus d'émission des permis d'aménagement et de construire.	13	1	1	7	0	0	22
Coordination, normalisation des demandes, guichets uniques pour les approbations.	12	0	1	9	0	0	22
Recours à des processus de résolution des conflits dans les cas où les modifications de zonage sont source de litige avec les voisins et la collectivité.	11	1	1	8	0	1	22
Traitemment pertinent pour les sites contaminés.	6	2	1	12	0	1	22
Traitemment prioritaire des demandes (traitement accéléré, diminution des frais exigées) pour favoriser les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriétaire-occupant, location)	2	1	1	18	0	0	22
Diminution de la priorité du traitement des propositions d'aménagement qui donnent lieu à une réduction nette du nombre de logements abordables.	1	1	1	18	0	1	22
Traitemment accéléré des demandes pour les constructeurs accrédités.	0	0	1	19	0	2	22
Autres.	0	2	0	0	0	2	4

Plus de la moitié des 22 municipalités du Québec avaient apporté des améliorations générales à l'informatisation du processus d'émission des permis d'aménagement et de construire, une autre envisageait de faire de même, et une autre encore avait décidé de

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ne pas le faire. Douze municipalités avaient adopté des mesures visant à coordonner et à normaliser les formalités d'approbation des permis et une autre envisageait de faire de même, tandis que onze municipalités appliquaient un processus de règlement des différends, prenant par exemple la forme de « séances d'information » de quartier tenues avant l'étude des propositions de changement de zonage visées par le conseil municipal. Les autres mesures, y compris le traitement prioritaire des demandes relatives à des projets d'aménagement de logements à prix abordables, n'étaient appliquées que dans quelques municipalités, la plupart des répondants les jugeant non pertinentes. La seule municipalité qui avait étudié la possibilité d'accorder un traitement accéléré aux demandes des constructeurs accrédités avait fini par écarter l'idée.

Comme on l'a dit, la plupart des municipalités du Québec avaient appliqué avec succès des mesures destinées à améliorer l'automatisation de leurs processus d'approbation. Un répondant a fait observer que cela s'était traduit par des gains d'efficacité interne, mais que ces mesures n'avaient aucun effet sur l'abordabilité du logement. Un répondant a fait l'observation suivante :

« (...) plus le processus est clair, simple et rapide, plus il y a de personnes qui peuvent présenter une demande de permis sans déclencher une cascade bureaucratique ou sans risquer de se perdre dans un labyrinthe de procédures. »

Dans une municipalité, le traitement prioritaire des demandes de conversion d'appartements s'était traduit par une augmentation du nombre de propriétaires, tandis que dans deux autres municipalités, la consultation publique s'était révélée un moyen efficace de régler les différends. Dans l'une de ces deux villes, ce moyen avait permis d'autoriser les logements occupés par deux générations, tandis qu'un autre répondant a fait l'observation suivante :

« (...) le recours au processus de règlement des différends (en l'occurrence, la consultation publique) fait en sorte que des concessions se font des deux côtés, ce qui permet d'apporter les modifications qui s'imposent (...). »

## **Mesures découlant de l'étude de 1999 de la SCHL sur la planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement**

Les réponses des municipalités du Québec à quatre questions qui avaient été intégrées à l'enquête pour faire suite à une recherche réalisée par la SCHL en 1999 dans le cadre d'un projet intitulé « La planification municipale axée sur l'abordabilité du logement » sont présentées au tableau 5.7. La plupart des mesures visées étaient peu appliquées au Québec.

Description de la mesure	Situation de la mesure						Total
	Déjà adoptée	Envisagée écartée	Envisagée mais non pertinente	Non pertinente	Pas envisagée	Pas de réponse	
On participe à des partenariats publics-privés prenant la forme de location à bail de terrains, de dons en argent et de contributions en nature.	8	0	0	14	0	0	22
Autres mesures financières (taxe de dénaturation de l'environnement, droits de compensation, fonds municipaux destinés au logement).	5	1	0	16	0	0	22
Primes ou mesures de zonage incitatives pour favoriser l'aménagement de logements abordables.	3	1	1	17	0	0	22
Réserve de terrains pour les logements abordables (besoins spéciaux, propriété, location) ou compensation financière équivalente.	3	0	0	18	0	1	22

Huit municipalités avaient participé à des partenariats (location de terrains, contributions financières et autres) pour favoriser le logement abordable. Il est à noter que le programme de logements sociaux du Québec appelé Accès-Logis, qui prévoit un apport de fonds équivalent à celui du « milieu » (la municipalité ou des groupes sans but lucratif ou caritatifs), favorise ce genre de partenariats.

Cinq municipalités, surtout dans les plus grandes zones urbaines, appliquent des mesures financières comme les droits de compensation et les fonds municipaux destinés au logement.

### Autres mesures

Les réponses aux questions concernant un certain nombre d'autres mesures que les municipalités pourraient appliquer pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement sont présentées au tableau 5.8.

**Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

<b>Tableau 5.8 Utilisation par les municipalités d'autres mesures destinées à améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix du logement dans la région du Québec</b>							
<b>Description de la mesure</b>	<b>Situation de la mesure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Déjà adoptée</b>	<b>Envisagée</b>	<b>Envisagée mais écartée</b>	<b>Non pertinente</b>	<b>Pas envisagée</b>	<b>Pas de réponse</b>	
On effectue de la recherche en matière de besoins de logements et de solutions à ces besoins.	10	2	0	10	0	0	22
Des projets de démonstration ont été entrepris - logement novateur, normes d'aménagement foncier, matériaux de construction .	6	3	0	13	0	0	22
Des membres du personnel sont précisément affectés au logement.	6	0	0	16	0	0	22
Le comité consultatif examine les questions relatives à l'abordabilité et au choix de logements et entretient à cet égard des liens avec d'autres organismes.	5	2	0	15	0	0	22
Information (imprimés, vidéos, sites Web) aide à la planification et à la production de logements spéciaux, logements locatifs et de logements abordables pour propriétaires-occupants.	4	1	0	17	0	0	22
On prélève des droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs.	0	1	0	21	0	0	22

Dix des 22 municipalités interrogées avaient effectué des recherches sur les besoins en logements abordables et sur les moyens d'y satisfaire, et deux autres envisageaient de faire de même. Dix municipalités plus petites ont indiqué que cette mesure n'était pas pertinente.

Six municipalités ont des membres de leur personnel affectés au logement (beaucoup d'entre eux s'occupent essentiellement de l'administration des logements sociaux) et un nombre égal de municipalités avaient entrepris des projets de démonstration (trois autres municipalités envisageaient de faire de même). Un des projets de démonstration avait été entrepris avec le soutien du programme ACT. Cinq municipalités avaient adopté d'autres mesures financières.

Bien que ces « autres » mesures étaient appliquées dans un certain nombre de municipalités du Québec, cinq des six mesures présentées dans le questionnaire étaient jugées non pertinentes par plus de la moitié des municipalités visées par l'enquête. Une de ces mesures, à savoir le prélèvement de droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs, était même considérée comme étant non pertinente par 21 des 22 municipalités interrogées, et la 22<sup>e</sup> municipalité n'avait pas encore décidé si elle allait ou non l'appliquer.

Certaines municipalités ont signalé des mesures particulièrement efficaces pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement, notamment le fait d'aider les personnes à rédiger les demandes de subventions au logement. Une municipalité avait acheté puis converti deux maisons de six appartements dans le cadre d'un projet de démonstration relatif au logement à prix modique, et avait ensuite facilement vendu les deux maisons. À Montréal, diverses mesures financières et subventions étaient considérées comme étant les plus efficaces :

« (...) pour augmenter le parc de logements abordables et surtout pour conserver les logements existants et encourager leur rénovation. »

### **Autres facteurs**

Enfin, on a demandé aux municipalités du Québec dans quelle mesure les pressions exercées par les groupes de revendication locaux et les sources d'information externes, dont le programme ACT, les avaient influencées au moment de l'étude des réformes de la réglementation requises. Leurs réponses sont présentées au tableau 5.9.

**Tableau 5.9 Rôle des autres facteurs dans la réforme de la réglementation - région du Québec**

Facteur	Importance du rôle					Total
	Grand rôle	Petit rôle	Aucun rôle	Pas de réponse		
Pressions exercées par des groupes de la collectivité locale concernant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements.	6	5	10	1	22	
Information au sujet d'une réforme entreprise ailleurs.	3	8	9	2	22	
Soutien financier fourni dans le cadre du programme ACT pour la préparation ou l'examen de votre réforme.	0	4	16	2	22	
Information obtenue directement du programme ACT au sujet d'une réforme entreprise ailleurs.	0	4	15	3	22	

## **Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

Comme on le voit au tableau 5.9, le facteur qui a le plus influencé les municipalités, ce sont les pressions exercées par les groupes de revendication locaux pour qu'on mette en oeuvre des projets et des mesures propres à améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. Onze municipalités ont indiqué que ces groupes avaient eu beaucoup ou un peu d'influence. Onze municipalités ont aussi indiqué que l'information au sujet de réformes entreprises ailleurs les avait influencées, mais seulement quatre municipalités ont répondu qu'elles avaient obtenu cette information grâce au programme ACT.

Quatre municipalités ont indiqué que le soutien financier qu'elles avaient obtenu dans le cadre du programme ACT avait joué un petit rôle dans leurs activités de réforme de la réglementation, l'une d'entre elles précisant que cette aide lui avait permis de réaliser un projet de démonstration.

### **Observations sommaires**

Beaucoup de répondants ont dit que le logement était relativement abordable dans leur municipalité. En outre, les répondants du Québec ont été proportionnellement plus nombreux que ceux des autres régions du Canada à dire que l'abordabilité du logement ne constituait pas une question essentielle. La plupart des répondants pensaient par ailleurs que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction ne nuisaient pas à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement.

Certaines municipalités du Québec s'efforcent d'améliorer l'abordabilité et le choix du logement sur leur territoire. Quelques villes ont ainsi adopté de nombreuses mesures liées aux terrains et aux processus d'approbation, mais beaucoup d'autres municipalités - surtout les plus petites, où la question de l'abordabilité du logement se pose avec moins d'acuité - ne l'ont pas fait.

Au Québec, comme ailleurs au Canada, c'est aux mesures de réglementation « liées aux terrains » que les municipalités avaient eu le plus souvent recours et celles « liées aux bâtiments » qu'elles utilisaient le moins. La plupart des répondants connaissaient les mesures présentées dans le questionnaire, surtout celles liées aux terrains. Beaucoup de municipalités avaient déjà adopté ces mesures, envisageaient de le faire ou les avaient écartées après étude.

**Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

**Chapter 6: Regional Summary - Ontario**

The survey included 41 municipalities in Ontario representing over 60 percent of the province's population. Listed in Table 6.0, these municipalities were selected to provide a cross-section of the different sizes, locations, housing and governmental circumstances of Ontario communities. The survey occurred as Ontario's metropolitan areas were undergoing significant restructuring, so some of the governments surveyed no longer exist.

**Table 6.0: Municipalities Surveyed in Ontario Region**

Urban Size Class (population of Census urban region in which the municipality is located)							
		Under 50,000	50,000 - 99,999	100,000 - 299,999	300,000 - 999,999	Over 1 Million	
Elliot Lake	13,588	Cornwall	47,403	Windsor	197,694	Gloucester	104,022
Timmins	47,499	Sault Ste Marie	80,054	Thunder Bay	113,662	Welland	48,411
Woodstock	32,086	Chatham	43,409	Sudbury	92,059	Nepean	115,100
'Loyalist Township	14,551	North Bay	54,332	Barrie	79,191	St Catharines	130,926
Owen Sound	30,319	Belleville	37,083	Whitby	73,794	Niagara	76,917
Coburg	16,027			Guelph	95,821	Cambridge	101,429
Bracebridge	13,223					London	325,646
Orillia	27,846					Kitchener	178,420
						Grimsby	19,585
						Burlington	136,976
						Hamilton	322,352
						Ottawa	323,340
						Stoney Creek	54,318
						RM of Hamilton-Wentworth	RM of Ottawa-Carleton
Ontario totals	8		5	6		14	8

## **Survey Administration**

The size of community turned out to be a factor in determining who was the respondent for this survey. In smaller centres the Chief Administrative Officer was often the initial contact, but the assigned respondent was usually the most senior planner, often the "Chief" or "Head" of Planning. In the larger communities the initial contact was sometimes a Commissioner but the survey was usually assigned to the Director of a functional area such as Development or Planning.

Once a contact was established in a selected municipality, the survey was explained and the official was invited to participate in it. The extensive participation by senior officials in Ontario, summarised in Table 6.1, is indicative of the high level of interest in the topic and the survey design.

A time was arranged to complete the survey by telephone and the survey instrument was faxed out in advance. All of the respondents reviewed the questionnaire before the telephone interview, so they were prepared to provide a considered response. All but one of the Ontario surveys were completed through a phone interview.

Municipal Official	Role in Survey	
	Initial Contact	Respondent
Chief Administrative Officer	3	0
Commissioner of Planning	3	2
Director of Planning	27	23
Chief or Head of Planning	2	3
Planning Manager	2	2
Senior Planner	1	10
Other Departmental Staff	3	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>

The planning officials who were the respondents generally did not have responsibility for building inspections. In some cases building inspection officials were consulted during the course of completing the questionnaire and in one case the head of the inspection department participated in the interview as a conference call. While inspection officials were very familiar with the building code their main orientation was on regulations and compliance and they provided less input on broad issues such as the effect of standards on affordability. Also, the situation was complicated by the fact that the Ontario Building Code was undergoing a major review.

The 41 Ontario interviews were completed between the May 24<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2000.

## **Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice**

The general topic of housing affordability and choice was of considerable interest to Ontario cities. This was demonstrated by the high willingness of respondents ranging from small communities to large metropolitan centers to participate in the survey. The incidence of housing affordability varied, as did the perceptions of municipal officials about their abilities to affect changes in affordability.

In Part 1 of the survey, 33 of 41 Ontario municipalities (80%), responded that

the issue of housing affordability is important or somewhat important (see Table 6.2).

The respondents from urban regions with populations over 1,000,000 all indicated that it is important. Seven municipalities said it is not important and these were mainly a minority view within the two smallest categories of cities. There was a divergence in the responses between big and small cities concerning the importance of housing affordability issues.

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses by Municipality				No. of Cities Surveyed
	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Response	
Under 50,000		5	3		8
50,000 - 99,999	1	2	2		5
100,000 - 299,999	4	2			6
300,000 - 999,999	6	6	2	1	15
Over 1million	5	2			7
Totals - as numbers	16	17	7	1	41
- as % of all responses	39%	41%	17%	2%	

The vast majority of respondents (32 out of 41) did not feel that planning and approval processes acted as barriers to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing.

*"The regulations are quite facilitative at the moment so there is no constraint from that point of view in building affordable housing"*

*"The City attempts to provide choice across the board in the matter of housing and regulation more generally"*

*"The main factors affecting affordable housing is high land and construction costs along with the loss of affordable housing through demolition and conversions"*

*"Regulatory issues have not been a factor vis-à-vis affordability since there are no proposals for building affordable housing"*

Among the 16 respondents who said that housing affordability was an important issue, three felt that planning and approvals processes were a barrier and six answered that these processes were somewhat a barrier. It appears there is a minority opinion among Ontario respondents that planning and related matters could effect housing affordability.

The key issue in housing affordability and choice most frequently selected in Ontario was "lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing for specific groups" (27 out of 41 municipalities). When respondents were prompted to identify a specific group that was affected by the lack of affordable stock, the most frequent response, given by cities from a broad spectrum of community sizes, was "young people", followed by low

income families and single parents. Although many respondents did not specify any groups, others mentioned immigrants, ex-psychiatric patients and young people in university communities.

Seven respondents (17%), cited "lack of affordable housing in general" as the key affordability problem, and there were 6 selections of "poor quality and condition of some housing". In the latter case, several respondents mentioned that the problem related to the rental stock. One official stated that despite rigorous occupancy by-laws, quality problems tend to keeping arising in one part of the city or another.

A few respondents mentioned key issues that had not been suggested in the prompts provided in the survey questionnaire. One person referred to the complexity of redeveloping "brownfield" sites, while several municipalities said there are not enough developers willing to bring on new, affordable projects.

When asked to identify a key issue that has been the most difficult, respondents overwhelmingly pointed to the lack of housing choice for specific groups such as low income and special needs. When asked how long this problem had existed, nine didn't reply, 17 said "for many years", and another seven said it had persisted for more than six years. Very few of the respondents felt that the problems were becoming less difficult to deal with. There was an almost equal split between those who felt that the problem remains unchanged and those who felt it is getting worse.

Municipalities were asked "what were their top three regulatory issues", and their most frequent response was NIMBY, (Not in My Back Yard). They made 81 choices in response to this question (see Table 6.3), and 23 of these were "NIMBY". Of the 31 cities that indicated a "first choice" regulatory issue, 18 (58%) chose NIMBY, and it was also the most frequently selected "second choice" issue (four out of 26 responses).

The respondents who assigned this importance to NIMBY were located in all regions of Ontario, and were of all sizes. Several respondents from smaller

cities mentioned that when a development application proposes to increase density, NIMBY forces arise. As one of them observed:

"NIMBY shows up when there are applications to raise the density".

There was a view expressed by some that no matter what change was proposed in a neighbourhood, someone would oppose it. An example cited was a property changing use from a servicing yard for heavy equipment to a home for seniors. Some of the local

**Table 6.3: What are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues" - Ontario Municipalities**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	23	Barriers to housing for the lowest income	5
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	9	Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	4
High development cost charges	8	Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	4
Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	8	Inefficient approval processes	2
Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	7	Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	2
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	7	Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	1
		Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	1

(1) Note: Each of the 41 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)

residents objected to that change despite the expected reduction in noise and heavy traffic.

Five issues were selected as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> choice issues by 5-9 municipalities: barriers to accessory apartments; high development cost charges; the need for regulation to encourage infill; barriers to downtown or brownfields redevelopment; and barriers to low income housing. The cities choosing "barriers to accessory apartments" were from across the spectrum of city-sizes but were more concentrated in the larger urban regions, and those choosing "high development cost charges" were exclusively from the larger regions. The cities which saw "need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion", and "barriers to housing for the lowest income", as top issues, were quite varied in size. Lastly, the municipalities which emphasised "barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfields sites" were in regions having populations under 300,000.

It is notable that several Ontario municipalities identified "other" issues that were not suggested by the survey prompts. Several mentioned that the withdrawal of senior governments from funding new social housing was a "top 3" issue, and there was a strong minority among the respondents who described this same issue and indicated that it was far more important than any of the regulatory issues suggested by the prompts. One respondent explained this as:

"All of the issues above may play a small role. However, there are no new proposals for affordable housing so they really are not in play. Affordable housing will not be built without some form of subsidy. It's not economic otherwise".

## **Recent Reviews**

In Part 2 of the survey municipalities were asked whether they had identified impediments or constraints to housing affordability and choice during the course of recent reviews of major regulatory instruments. Most municipalities responded that they have reviewed these instruments during the last five years and had taken action to address constraints that had been found.

Of the 41 municipalities, 33 had reviewed their official plans and 20 had taken actions to improve housing affordability and choice as a direct outcome of these reviews.

Twenty-three municipalities had reviewed their zoning bylaws since the mid-1990s and had found impediments to housing affordability. Twelve of these cities have already implemented actions to remove the impediment(s).

Land development standards and development approval processes had also been reviewed by most municipalities (20 out of the 39 cities that responded to this question). Nearly half of them had not identified any constraints to housing affordability and choice in these instruments.

Municipalities in Ontario generally did not see a connection between building regulations and housing affordability and choice. When asked whether recent reviews of building standards had identified impediments to affordability, six of the 41 municipalities did not answer, and seven others replied that they "didn't know". Of the 35 who did answer this question, 60 percent said they had not found any impediments. Several municipalities explained they had little ability to effect the application of building standards because the building code is a provincial responsibility, and they merely enforce these provincial regulations. Several respondents checked with the building inspection staff before the interview took place, and in one case the Chief Building Inspector sat in on the teleconference interview.

## **Regulatory Measures**

Part 3 of the survey goes to the heart of regulatory reform by exploring the specific tools that are used (or not used) in Ontario to facilitate housing choice and affordability. It is divided into six sections, dealing respectively with land-related measures, building-related measures, approvals processing measures, certain other measures noted in recent CMHC research, a catchall "others" heading, and other factors. In these categories the survey questionnaire asked, as prompts, about the municipalities' use of 30 measures or reforms which the survey team had identified in the literature as being potential methods of improving housing affordability and choice. Municipalities were also invited to describe other reform measures that they employed for this purpose.

### Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning

A series of 10 questions asked about land-related measures that municipalities may have adopted that could have affected the supply and choice of affordable housing. Table 6.4 summarises the responses.

<b>Table 6.4: Municipal Use of Land-Related Regulatory Measures in Ontario</b>								<b>Total</b>
<b>Description of Measure</b>		<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	<b>No Response</b>		
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>								
Zoning allows mix of housing types/ lot sizes in parts of the community	38	1	0	2	0	0	0	41
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	37	0	0	4	0	0	0	41
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing	34	1	0	6	0	0	0	41
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	34	0	1	6	0	0	0	41
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>								
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	23	2	3	9	1	3	0	41
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (special needs, ownership or rental)	23	3	2	13	0	0	0	41
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (special needs, ownership or rental)	19	1	3	15	1	2	0	41
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites and garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	18	4	11	7	0	1	0	41
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>								
Zoning allows for convertible housing	10	2	3	23	3	0	0	41
Replot schemes, special development districts	7	1	4	21	2	6	0	41

Many of the zoning measures identified in the question had been widely adopted, and very few municipalities indicated the negative views "considered but rejected" or "not relevant". Mixing housing types and lot sizes in some districts appears to be a norm. Many municipalities in Ontario are encouraging mixed commercial and residential developments as a way of revitalizing downtown areas. Even in smaller centres, there was a concern with declining downtown cores, particularly because in some municipalities the downtown areas are architecturally significant. There is a concern for preserving the aesthetic qualities of these structures while adapting the buildings for safe and contemporary use.

The measure described in the prompts as "zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing", was not always understood in Ontario cities. Whereas group homes were well-known housing forms,

often used by special needs groups including ex-psychiatric patients, the concepts "co-housing" and "collaborative housing" were not well understood.

There was a distinct second tier of land-related measures which have been adopted by about 50% of cities, of varied city-sizes. For example, reducing lot sizes, road widths, parking requirements or property set-backs in order to encourage affordability was used by many larger places, but was not well accepted by smaller municipalities. In the latter, land costs are relatively lower so this reform would have little impact on project costs. Also, several cities indicated that with their heavy snowfall, narrower roads are not desirable from perspectives of snow clearing or storage, or maintaining access for emergency vehicles. Also, commenting on the approval of smaller lots, several municipalities mentioned that the market is the ultimate decision-maker and it is not always receptive to reduced space around houses. One municipality had a project which they described as 'long-shallows' (i.e., longer frontage with less depth). They found that more frontage meant longer roads which added significant servicing and other costs.

There were many variations in the responses concerning accessory apartments. Generally, a greater proportion of large municipalities than smaller places approved this measure. In some municipalities, secondary suites were allowed throughout while in others, a zoning variance was required for each application. Two small cities said secondary suites are not allowed anywhere, while another allowed secondary suites anywhere but once one had been allowed, no others could be approved in proximity to it. A city in southern Ontario said garden suites are allowed in any residential zones, but they can only be occupied by family members, while other municipalities said that they had no control over occupancy or even tenure, only zoning and use.

The demand side also varied. In some places where secondary suites had been allowed, there was little demand. A large southern Ontario municipality described allowing a housing development with an additional unit over the garage. However, after occupancy it was found that these units were simply being treated as extra space (e.g., as a home office) rather than as accommodation for an additional family member. On the other hand, in university towns, municipal planners are concerned that minimal secondary suites are becoming the main form of student housing.

Finally, there were four measures that were rarely implemented in Ontario, and some of them were not familiar to many of the respondents. While flex or convertible housing is sometimes allowed, many respondents indicated there wasn't a demand for a facilitative regulatory environment to allow these types of units to be built. There was little recognition of the concept of "replotting" except for planners who had worked in Western Canada, and most smaller places were not familiar with "special development districts".

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

Many of the Ontario respondents indicated they were not fully familiar with building and inspection measures and code enforcement, and how well these measures may contribute to housing affordability and choice. They pointed out that these matters were often the primary responsibility of the provincial government, and that municipalities' function is to apply the Ontario Building Code. As noted above, the inspection people included in the survey were more concerned with technical and enforcement issues (including safety concerns) than with questions about the impact of codes on affordability and choice.

**Table 6.5: Municipal Use of Regulatory Measures Related to Building Codes in Ontario**

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>					<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Considered but Rejected</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>		
"Standard of maintenance" bylaw (or equivalent)	26	0	0	8	1	6	41
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	22	0	0	12	2	5	41
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)	19	1	1	13	2	5	41
Other	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	1

Table 6.5 summarizes the responses concerning the three building-related measures that were included in the survey. Twenty-six of the 35 Ontario respondents reported that they had a "Standard of Maintenance" by law, sometimes referred to as an "Occupancy and Maintenance" by-law, and these were usually the responsibility of the inspection department. Six cities did not respond and eight cities indicated these measures are not relevant.

Twenty-two of the respondents reported that they would allow equivalents to enable the use of non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for residential construction (often for renovation). Twelve others indicated this measure was not relevant.

Nineteen respondents reported that their municipalities had approved building code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation. Only a few examples were provided under these headings, although the use of wood foundations was mentioned several

times. Also, as the survey was being conducted, task forces and other reviews were underway at the provincial level on this topic.

There were no geographical or city-size patterns observed in these responses.

### **Reforms Associated with the Approval Process**

Table 6.6 shows the municipalities' responses related to processing of development and building applications. This was an area where respondents were more engaged and many municipalities felt they had made considerable improvements in their processes, although housing affordability and choice was not the primary focus of these improvements.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	32	0	3	5	0	1	41
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	32	2	0	5	0	2	41
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	29	4	0	7	0	1	41
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for rental, special needs or affordable ownership housing	20	1	2	17	0	1	41
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	13	6	0	17	2	3	41
Fast tracking for certified builders	6	1	1	28	3	2	41
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	4	0	2	31	2	2	41
Other	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	1

Three of the reform measures had found a great deal of acceptance, across the range of city-sizes and locations. Cities felt that they had made great strides in improving the responsiveness of the approval process. They wanted to make their communities 'development' friendly, particularly to projects that would result in job creation. They had worked on coordination and computerization within their processes, and many had standardised or co-ordinated application documents.

Dispute resolution processes were also widely adopted. Several respondents described a pragmatic rationale for this reform, to resolve issues before they got to Council, or the even more costly stage of the Ontario Municipal Board, and iron out differences at the

earliest stage possible, thereby saving time and money. New proposals are introduced to the neighbourhood affected in order to identify and resolve objections early, find areas of agreement, create compromises and accommodations before the formal process, which is adversarial, encourages positions to harden. The mechanics described for dispute resolution varied, but the most common approach was open consultation meetings and presentations of some kind animated by city staff or outside consultants. One municipality uses a sub-committee of City Council. Some cities don't use municipal staff for this purpose because they are considered to be "conflicted". One respondent disagreed with dispute resolution, stating that Council is the appropriate forum to air and resolve differences.

Views were quite mixed about several of the measures. Many respondents mentioned that there were quite difficult "brownfield" sites in their communities, and in some cases, the municipality owned the properties. More than one respondent mentioned a preference to develop these sites as non-residential since the environmental regulations for residential development were more demanding. Municipalities often provided incentives, such as no development fees, to encourage the development of these sites.

While 20 municipalities, primarily the larger places, said they would reduce fees or accelerate processing to encourage certain affordable housing projects, almost as many municipalities said this concept is irrelevant. Several respondents suggested that if there were a need to assign processing priorities, a project with job creation potential would be given priority.

Several municipalities reported that they fast-track certain 'models' of dwellings, rather than giving priority to qualified builders. For instance, if a builder often built basically the same home, each application for a building permit would not be subjected to the same level of technical review each time.

There was less evidence that projects could be given a lower processing priority if they would result in a loss of affordable stock. While four municipalities indicated they had adopted this, there was a strong negative response and there were no other municipalities considering this measure. Some concern was expressed that the measure might not be legal in Ontario and could leave municipalities vulnerable to legal action.

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 6.7 shows the municipalities' responses related to four measures that were included in the survey as a follow-up to research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a

project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing". Generally, these measures are not well established in Ontario.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	16	2	1	17	1	4	41
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	11	1	8	19	2	0	41
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	5	1	1	25	1	8	41
Dedication of land required for special needs, rental or affordable housing, or cash-in-lieu	4	0	8	27	2	0	41

Sixteen cities (44% of respondents) indicated they are partnering through land leases, cash donations or in-kind contributions to help produce some affordable housing. Habitat for Humanity was mentioned as a partner agency by many of the small to medium sized municipalities which responded, while several of the larger places usually partner in these ways with their own housing agencies. A large proportion of the municipalities, 47%, indicated this concept was irrelevant.

Only 11 cities indicated that they use density bonussing to encourage affordable housing.

While five cities employ some form of linkage fees or operate municipal housing funds to support affordable housing, and four places require the dedication of land for these purposes, over two-thirds of Ontario municipalities consider these measures irrelevant, and eight cities had specifically rejected the latter. Some respondents expressed doubt that a requirement to dedicate land for special or affordable housing purposes would be legal in Ontario.

## Other Measures

This group of measures, summarised in Table 6.8, included ways municipalities could encourage housing affordability and choice. There was a clear polarisation in Ontario over these measures, with one-half of the municipalities having adopted or currently considering them, and the other half saying the measures are not relevant.

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites) assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing	20	2	0	17	0	2	41
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	17	0	0	19	1	4	41
Research into housing needs and their solutions	16	2	1	19	0	3	41
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	16	0	2	22	0	1	41
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	14	1	1	21	1	3	41
Levying development cost charges on an area basis	9	0	2	21	3	6	41

In the places experiencing growth, which tended to be the larger municipalities, there was evidence that planning staff are becoming more service-oriented. That includes helping people to understand planning and approvals processes by producing informative documentation and Web site pages, cable television programs, downloadable forms and the like.

Many of these measures, where adopted, are not directed exclusively at housing, or housing affordability. Less than half of the respondents reported having staff specifically assigned to housing issues and studies. Some respondents indicated that in the days of federal/provincial assisted housing projects, there would have been municipal employees dedicated to housing activities but in the absence of housing assistance programs and in the present fiscal environment this was not generally seen to be an effective assignment of limited staff resources. There were some advisory committees on housing issues, often made up of non-profit groups such as churches, service clubs, Habitat for Humanity, or civic groups working on homelessness.

Under this category, the surveyors anticipated uncovering ways that municipalities may have found to encourage housing development. There were some examples of this

such as contributing land or waiving development charges for Habitat for Humanity or Salvation Army. Generally speaking, municipalities did not initiate housing projects but rather, tried to give help to projects as they came along. Respondents often mentioned that housing projects are long term and very expensive, and are considered beyond municipalities' fiscal capacity. Some cities, such as Toronto, Hamilton and Ottawa, were quite active in encouraging housing projects.

Lastly, the idea of levying development charges based on the size of the housing unit or the lot has been adopted by nine cities, but this concept were considered not relevant by more than one-half of the municipalities who responded.

It appeared that many of the small to medium sized cities which considered many of these measures to be irrelevant, were also less knowledgeable about the measures than the larger places.

### Other Factors

The final area of investigation concerned the influences that local advocacy groups, and external sources including the ACT program, played in the consideration of regulatory reform in Ontario municipalities. The survey included four questions on this subject, and the responses are summarised in Table 6.9.

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	5	12	19	5	41
Information gained directly from the ACT program about a reform undertaken somewhere else	4	12	22	3	41
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	4	10	22	5	41
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study your reform	1	6	31	3	41

Seventeen respondents

(47% of those who replied) indicated that local advocacy groups had an influence, large or small, in bringing about reforms, but 19 respondents said such groups have no role.

There was no clear geographic particular pattern in these responses, but the "no role" responses often came from the smaller places that were less actively involved in measures to improve affordability. For the more active places, the following observations, both from municipalities in metropolitan areas, characterise the situation:

*"There is a lot of exchange of experience between municipalities in sharing experiences, often pollinated by consultant visits or busmans' holidays".*

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*"The municipality keeps track of the ACT material. This helps inform their own processes. For instance, some ACT materials were used in the focus groups around the changes to the Official Plan and are used in presentations to Council."*

Sixteen respondents indicated that information from an ACT program reform influenced them, although they did not refer to specific initiatives.

### **Summary Observations**

The survey responses indicated that Ontario municipalities are quite knowledgeable about their housing affordability situations. Affordability and choice are greater issues in the larger places, and these are the municipalities that are more actively pursuing measures to improve affordability. Smaller places frequently mentioned that affordable housing is not much of an issue, and not surprisingly, they reported that they have not adopted many of the reform measures.

Overall, the survey found that Ontario municipalities are most familiar with "land-related" regulatory measures, and less familiar with "building-related" measures. This pattern was common across Canada. Most respondents were familiar with the measures identified by the survey and usually these were reforms that had been already adopted, were being considered or had been considered and rejected. Most respondents were able to point to one or two measures that had been particularly successful in their municipalities, but there were only a few patterns of city-sizes or regional locations discernible among the responses.

Many municipalities noted that regulatory and approval processes, while being facilitative, have a limited role to play in the housing affordability and choice in Ontario. The following comments are illustrative.

*"Regulatory issues are not a factor pro or con housing problems"*

*"The planning and approval process can facilitate affordable housing but only the market can make it happen."*

*"The entire city has been zoned to accommodate accessory suites, although not many (about 12) have materialized."*

*"Regulatory issues have not been a factor vis-à-vis affordability since there are no proposals for building affordable housing."*

*"The assumption underlying this questionnaire is that municipal attitudes, regulations & procedures conspire against affordable housing. I submit that such is not the case and at best serves as a partial explanation. Many municipalities have their part on most of the topics in the questionnaire. Yet we have a large and growing problem. So, might there be other reasons? I think we may finally realize we are barking up the wrong tree."*

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**Chapter 7: Regional Summary - Prairie and North Regions**

In the Prairie region the survey covered 20 municipalities, while in the North region, which comprises the Yukon, Northwest and Nunavut territories, three municipalities were surveyed. This chapter reports on the two regions together.

Table 7.0 is a list of all 23 municipalities surveyed in these regions, along with their 1996 populations and their placement in the survey's city-size group classifications. These municipalities represent each city-size category that can be found in these regions, and contained 60% of their total population, with slightly greater proportions of the populations of Manitoba and Alberta.

**Table 7.0: Municipalities Surveyed in Prairie Region**

Urban Size Class (population of Census urban region in which the municipality is located)					
	<b>Under 50,000</b>	<b>50,000 - 99,999</b>	<b>100,000 - 299,999</b>	<b>300,000 - 999,999</b>	<b>Over 1 Million</b>
Moose Jaw	34,829	Medicine Hat	46,783	Regina	180,400
Thompson	14,385	Lethbridge	63,053	Saskatoon	193,647
North Battleford	17,987	Red Deer	60,075		Springfield
Portage	20,385				12,162
Yorkton	17,713				Strathcona County
Wetaskiwin	10,959				64,176
Brandon	40,581				Edmonton
Lloydminster	18,953				616,306
Camrose	13,738				Calgary
Yellowknife	17,275				768,082
Whitehorse	19,157				
Iqualuit	4,220				
Prairie totals	12	3	2	6	0

There are several other notable factors about the survey in these regions. Unlike other regions in this national survey, all of these municipalities are one-tier governments. Housing is not a specific local government responsibility, although some municipalities in these regions have a long history of active involvement in the provision of housing (e.g. Saskatoon, Red Deer, Edmonton, Lloydminster, Yellowknife). Many of the respondents mentioned that their municipality is in a transitional situation following the withdrawal of senior governments from new housing production programs.

## **Survey Administration**

In the Prairie and North regions the survey was completed between May 26 and July 19, 2000.

The aim of the survey was to obtain authoritative responses from senior municipal officials who would be the most knowledgeable about their communities' experience with housing affordability, and about planning and building regulations. In all cases, the initial contact was made by telephone, the survey was introduced and the municipality was requested to identify an appropriate official to participate in it. The survey questionnaire was sent to the city by fax and the designated official was invited to set up a time for a telephone interview to complete the survey, or to complete it and return it by fax. Nine of the midsize municipalities opted for the telephone interview, while 14 places, including most of the largest Prairie cities and all of the northern municipalities and many of the smaller Prairie towns, elected to complete the survey themselves and fax in the results. Of the 14 places that sent in their responses by fax, nine were recontacted by telephone with follow-up questions or requests for clarifications.

**Table 7.1: Administration of Survey - Prairie/North Regions**

Municipal Official	Role in Survey			Respondent		
	Initial Contact					
	Under 50,000	50,000 - 299,999	Over 300,000	Under 50,000	50,000 - 299,999	Over 300,000
Chief Administrative Officer			1			1
GM/Commissioner of Planning		1	1			1
Director of Planning	2	1	3	2	1	1
Chief or City Planner or Engineer	6			6		
Planning or Development Manager	2	3	1	1	2	1
Senior Planner	2			3	2	2
Other Departmental Staff						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

As can be seen in Table 7.1, in most municipalities the person who was contacted initially was the one who responded to the survey. In a few cases, a commissioner, director or manager of planning was contacted, who then elected to delegate the task of completing the survey to a senior planner. In the two largest municipalities, Calgary and Edmonton, parts of the survey were completed by several members of the municipal staff in accordance with their area of expertise, but were coordinated by one respondent.

## Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice

In the Prairie and North regions the survey found a widespread concern with housing affordability and choice. Thirteen of 23 municipalities surveyed said housing affordability is "an important issue" while nine others said it is somewhat important, and only one said it was "not important". These responses are reported in Table 7.2.

In large cities where growth is currently strong, the respondents described affordability as a focus on keeping costs down and ensuring there is housing for those who cannot afford what is produced in the marketplace. Where growth is slower and there is a large stock of low cost housing, the affordability problem is seen as ensuring

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses by Municipality				No. of Cities Surveyed
	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Response	
Under 50,000	6	5	1		12
50,000 - 99,999	2	1			3
100,000 - 299,999	2				2
300,000 - 999,999	3	3			6
Over 1million					0
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>4%</b>		

adequacy and safety in the stock. Even in smaller places, the respondents consistently indicated that affordability is an important issue. This is demonstrative of the attentiveness in these municipalities to addressing housing problems of individuals and groups who are having difficulty, regardless of whether, to an outsider, these difficulties may not seem as great as those in Central Canada or west coast cities.

"Lack of supply of housing for specific groups" was the choice and affordability issue that was cited most frequently by respondents (18 out of 23). There was a variation in the specific groups involved, but those mentioned most frequently were single parents, low-income families and seniors, special needs groups, and aboriginal households. Three of the mid-sized cities mentioned that housing for seniors was no longer a problem. Thirteen of the municipalities said "poor quality and condition of some housing" is a key issue, while in ten places the key issue is "lack of affordable housing in general". In smaller places, selecting the latter issue was often accompanied by an observation that their market situations are weak and do not cater to lower income levels. Larger places which noted the same problem saw different dimensions. In Alberta's high growth cities, lower cost housing is not keeping up with demand. Several cities observed that this problem is exacerbated by the drying up of the supply of new social housing. In one unusual situation, a border city noted that housing choice in general is much weaker in the portion of the urban region in one province than it is in the other province.

When asked which of the three above affordability problems was most difficult, only one-quarter of the municipalities responded, and of these, there were five or six responses for each of the three problem areas suggested by the survey. There was no pattern in the size or location of municipalities who identified any one of the three problems. One capital city indicated it is equally involved in all three. All of the larger centres in the Prairie region said their most difficult problem was the maintenance and improvement of the oldest housing in central areas.

When questioned about whether their major affordability problem was improving or worsening, only two municipalities said it was becoming less difficult to deal with, while six said it was more difficult and nine said the difficulty remained about the same. Some large places were finding the problem worsening, while smaller places generally reported the problem was the same.

When asked how long the major affordability problem had been an issue, 13 of the 18 municipalities who gave a clear response indicated the issue was at least five years old. Six respondents said it had emerged 3-5 years ago while others said the growth of poor housing conditions in central areas have long term roots but accelerated during the last decade. Two cities specified that their major problems have arisen with the demise of senior government's social housing programs.

No municipalities in the Prairies or North regions said planning and building regulations and the development approval process act as important barriers to the supply of affordable housing, although 10 cities said they may have some effects. As one respondent in a smaller place observed:

"development financing approvals are more complex (*than planning approvals*), and the costs of planning approvals are insignificant"

The effects of approvals were mentioned primarily by municipalities within the larger urban regions which pointed out that they are in competitive housing markets and could lose market share to neighbouring municipalities if their regulations increased the relative costs of development.

In the final question of Part I of the survey, municipalities were prompted with a list of 13 prominent regulatory concerns encountered in the literature, and were asked to identify their "Top Three Regulatory Issues". Their responses are presented as Table 7.3.

Of the 22 municipalities which responded, 13 (59%) identified the top issue as NIMBY, the opposition of neighbourhoods to land use change, and two others chose it as the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> most important issue. In particular, NIMBY is seen as the prominent problem in Alberta as it was the "Top Issue" in eight of the nine Alberta places surveyed.

**Table 7.3: What are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues" - Prairie and North Municipalities**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	15	High development cost charges	4
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	9	Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	3
Barriers to housing for the lowest income	6	Inefficient approval processes	3
Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	6	Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	2
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	6	Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	2
Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	4	Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	1
		Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	1

(1) Note: Each of the 41 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)

Apart from NIMBY, at least one municipality selected each of the 13 prompted suggestions as a "top three" issue, and a few were selected by more than one place:

- "Barriers to secondary or garden suites" was chosen nine times, including by many of those Alberta and other large municipalities which had selected NIMBY as their principal issue. Respondents frequently mentioned a difficult situation surrounding secondary suites, which they recognise as a vital source of low cost housing, but which often receives vocal neighbourhood opposition in public hearings, and which requires supervision because some units can be health or safety problems. There were other, lesser problems mentioned by some of the smaller cities in relation to garden suites;
- several issues were of particular interest in the municipalities of the North region: "need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion"; "barriers to flexible, adaptable housing"; and "high development cost charges". The latter is symptomatic of the difficult economics of constructing buildings in the North;
- Two municipalities that selected "high development cost charges" as a "Top 3" issue explained that if their development charges or standards get higher than other places in their competitive regional land markets, developers will move their operations to the lower-cost locale;
- "Inefficient approval processes" was an issue for three municipalities, and in each case the respondent indicated that the issue was being promoted by the development industry, but that evidence of it was lacking;

In the write-in category "other", two of the large towns in the Prairie region mentioned that resistance to any increase in density was an issue. Some responses in the "other"

category did not pertain to planning and building regulations, including the withdrawal of senior governments from programs to construct new social housing. Respondents said this had exacerbated their problem with housing affordability, and others said this situation was made worse because tax and lending policies discourage the construction of private rental. Two cities mentioned that any proposals that would increase density in neighbourhoods, including downtown neighbourhoods, meet strong resistance.

In summary, in the Prairie and North regions the forces opposing neighbourhood change stand out among factors having a significant negative impact on the availability and choice of affordable housing, and other issues are more localised and less severe.

### **Recent Reviews**

In Part 2 of the survey, questions explored whether the municipalities had identified impediments or constraints to housing affordability and choice during the course of recent reviews of major regulatory instruments. The responses in these regions indicated that municipalities have been reviewing their major instruments and have implemented some remedial action where they encountered constraints.

During the last five years, over 70% of the municipalities surveyed had undertaken reviews of affordable housing aspects of their land use plans (variously known as Official Community Plans, Area Structure Plans, Urban Development Plans). Of these 15 municipalities, 11 had taken follow-up action in order to improve the availability and choice of affordable housing. Similarly, 15 of the 22 responding municipalities had reviewed their zoning bylaw during these recent years, leading 12 of them to undertake actions to improve affordability. Just over 50% of the responding municipalities had reviewed land development standards or guidelines during this period, and once again, follow up actions to improve the availability and choice of affordable housing were undertaken by 75 % of them. The few places which had not found constraints in reviewing these planning tools recently were all smaller municipalities where rapid changes in the development/affordability situations were less likely.

Of the municipalities surveyed, 35% had been involved in reviewing building standards during the last five years, even though most mentioned that the principal construction regulation, the building code, was a provincial responsibility. Parts of the development approval process had recently been examined by 44%, attempting to find ways to improve the speed and efficiency of the process. These reviews were primarily undertaken by the larger municipalities, and in almost all cases, respondents said they had taken follow-up actions to improve housing affordability and choice.

### **Regulatory Measures**

The key aspects of regulatory reform that were studied by the survey were questions

which asked about regulatory tools used in specific areas of development and planning. These 30 tools are discussed below in six study areas: land-related, building code related, approvals-related, certain other measures noted in recent CMHC research, a catchall "others" heading, and other factors. In the Prairie and North regions, as elsewhere in Canada, the survey found respondents were quite interested in the questions concerning land and approvals measures, which they saw as central elements of their work, while the questions about building codes were usually seen as matters within provincial, rather than municipal jurisdiction.

### **Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning**

Municipalities were queried about 10 land-related measures, and their responses are summarised in Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4: Municipal Use of Land-Related Regulatory Measures in Prairie/North Regions**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	20	2	1	0	0	0	23
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	20	2	0	1	0	0	23
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	18	2	0	2	1	0	23
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing	17	2	0	2	1	1	23
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>							
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites, garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	11	3	6	1	2	0	23
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (ownership, special needs or rental)	10	3	0	8	0	2	23
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	9	3	4	5	1	1	23
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (ownership, special needs or rental)	7	3	2	7	3	1	23
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>							
Replot schemes, special development districts	5	8	0	7	1	2	23
Zoning allows for convertible housing	4	4	0	9	3	3	23

Four zoning measures are in widespread use or under consideration by over 70% of

municipalities in the Prairie/North regions: allowing for housing mix; allowing for residential/commercial mix; designating or pre-zoning land for multiples; and allowing for group homes or other particularly affordable multiple-housing forms. Many municipalities have zoning that allows low-density group homes as of right.

There were mixed views about several measures. In 11 municipalities, secondary suites are allowed in most residential neighbourhoods, while in six others, mainly smaller places, this measure had been rejected. This is quite a controversial measure in many of the smaller prairie cities, with NIMBY forces strongly opposing secondary suites, even though there may already be considerable numbers of these units in their neighbourhoods.

One Alberta city mentioned that it had authorized, as an affordability measure, a small secondary unit over the garage in a particular house model, as part of the approval of one new subdivision. The city was disappointed, as was an Ontario city that approved a similar experiment, when it learned that the occupants used the space as an extra bedroom, home office or hobby room, rather than for affordable housing.

Two of these cities mentioned that there is a particular problem with garden suites, which the community will only authorise if the garden unit is occupied by a relative. The cities are considering what to do, once the relative leaves or dies. One option being considered is establishing a stock of municipally-owned garden suites to be leased out by the Municipal Health Unit for the use of bona fide relatives, and delivered to and removed from the backyards of lessor's homes by means of a large crane.

All of the largest cities reduce parking standards for some special affordable housing situations, which may include ownership, special needs or rental housing, especially seniors projects. A strong minority of eight smaller municipalities have rejected this idea or consider it is not relevant. In one city the parking requirement is reduced for downtown seniors' projects, while in suburban locations the normal standard is maintained.

The respondents were quite divided about reducing lot sizes or road widths. Most of the larger places in Alberta have experimented with both. Nine municipalities said they had rejected these ideas or consider them not relevant. Several small to medium-sized cities mentioned that they have authorised smaller lots but they were not well accepted in the market. Some municipalities indicated that existing 18 metre rights-of-way are standard requirements for snow storage. One city strongly argued that local industry and government have established an efficient, standard allocation of functions in a 20 metre right-of-way, and said that varying from this approach would entail losing economies of scale and might increase development costs.

There was also a division of views about reducing setbacks and other variances. Nine municipalities said such measures were not relevant, seven had adopted them, and in three places the ideas were still under consideration. There was no particular pattern of

city-sizes in these results.

There were two less frequently used ideas. While special development districts or replots are only used in five cities now, they seem to be growing interests in the Prairie region as eight other municipalities are considering them, including many of the larger places. One municipality mentioned that it had saved some affordable homes by creating a special "transitional zone" under direct planning controls, which allowed the integration of limited commercial uses within an aging downtown residential area. The other measure, zoning which allows for convertible housing, was rejected by nine of 17 responding cities, but had been adopted or was under consideration by eight others.

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

The responses concerning building codes show a quite different municipal involvement than the land-related measures (see Table 7.5).

Description of Measure	Status of Measure							Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
"Standard of maintenance" bylaw (or equivalent)	13	0	1	6	0	3		23
Building Code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)	4	3	6	7	1	2		23
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	1	7	3	9	1	2		23
Other	0	0	0	0	0	n/a		0

Most municipalities have Standards of Maintenance bylaws (also variously called Property Standards Bylaws, Minimum Maintenance and Occupancy Bylaws, Property Maintenance Bylaw, Safe Housing Standards, or even Unsightly Premises Bylaw) in order to keep the housing stock in good and safe condition. In particular, all of the larger cities in the region said they have such by-laws and it is likely that some form of a bylaw of this type exists in every municipality.

The application of these bylaws, as well as health and safety regulations and building codes, are the central elements of the approach each city takes to encouraging or discouraging a stock of affordable housing. Several municipalities described task force approaches they had developed, involving building inspectors, planners and fire officials, to ensure that residential units (particularly boarding houses, SRO hotels

and secondary suites) meet health and safety requirements even though they may not rigorously adhere to the n<sup>th</sup> clause in each formal code. Comments from two other large cities from the region are illustrative of this philosophy:

*"codes are enforced in secondary suites on a complaints basis"  
 "in secondary suites inspections, our priority is safety and health, not building codes "*

A few of the smaller cities, which are mainly made up of newer, detached houses, indicated that property maintenance bylaws are irrelevant.

While equivalents are often proposed as a technique for aiding affordability, these measures have not gained wide acceptance. Only a few larger cities have adopted equivalencies, and these were usually equivalencies in some parts of the building code that are directed to making renovation less costly. Equivalencies in either codes or materials are under consideration in about 25% of the regions' cities, and have been rejected by about 60 percent.

When asked about other building code-related measures, two municipalities mentioned that it would be useful to have code equivalents to allow the restoration or renovation of heritage buildings.

### **Reforms Associated with the Approval Processes**

Table 7.6 shows the municipalities' responses concerning seven measures associated with the processing of building and development applications.

**Table 7.6: Municipal Use of Regulatory Measures Related to Approval Processes in the Prairie and North Regions**

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	18	1	0	4	0	0	23
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	17	2	0	4	0	0	23
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	15	5	1	2	0	0	23
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>							
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	3	2	1	14	2	1	23
Fast tracking for certified builders	2	3	0	15	1	2	23
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for affordable housing (ownership, rental, special needs)	1	1	2	16	1	2	23
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	0	0	3	18	1	1	23

There were three measures that received widespread use:

- A high proportion of the surveyed cities (18 of the 23 respondents), including all of the largest urban regions, employ some form of mechanism to help resolve disputes in rezonings or development proposals. In most cases, this entails information and problem-solving meetings that are held in the neighbourhood which would be affected by a development proposal, before the proposal is considered by the municipal Council. Planning staff often serve as mediators at these meetings, or the municipality contracts a facilitator or mediator for the purpose. One city mentioned that it provides formal mediation for conflicted proposals. Several municipalities said that under their province's Planning Act or Municipal Act, there is a formal appeal process for disputed applications;
- 17 cities have standardized applications and coordinated approvals processes, including, in some cases, one-stop approvals;
- 15 municipalities, including most large places have made general improvements to computerization to improve processing, and another five are considering such improvements. One relevant example is the POSSE® computer system for automating development approvals and other municipal regulatory processes and operations, which was developed by the City of Edmonton and commercialized (see box). POSSE® has been acquired by several other municipalities in the Prairie region, in British Columbia and in Ontario.

#### **The City of Edmonton's POSSE® Program**

POSSE® is a one-stop work management system used in several cities and counties across North America for managing workflow, licensing, planning and development, permitting and inspections, complaints and code enforcement, desktop GIS map viewing, and other functions.

Land management areas, such as subdivision approvals or re-zonings are "job types," configured to the unique business rules of each client. Many kinds of information related to a parcel of land may be related to each other, such as CAD drawings, word documents, and even video files. POSSE's workflow management capabilities can automatically route each step in a job to the appropriate staff, regardless of department or location, for review and completion.

POSSE was initially developed in 1995 for the City of Edmonton's Planning and Development department, and has been commercialised. The firm involved, Computronix and the City have won seven national and international awards for POSSE.

There was also a widespread rejection of several measures, including all of the measures that would see altering the priority assigned to processing applications, depending on whether the application did or did not have some desired affordability characteristics. These measures included fast-tracking affordable housing projects, and fast-tracking approvals for builders or developers who have obtained special certification. Several cities mentioned that builders often receive a de facto acceleration in processing when they make repeated applications to build the same model of house. Once the inspectors are familiar with the plans for a particular house, they will quickly pass it in subsequent applications.

Only a few Prairie cities employ special approvals measures to assist the processing of redevelopments involving brownfields sites. Of the 23 municipalities surveyed, three had adopted such measures, and generally the others felt that redevelopment of industrial or otherwise environmentally-damaged sites didn't warrant special treatment at the approvals stage. It seems likely that in the Prairie region, special treatment of brownfields redevelopment proposals in the approvals process is an activity that will grow from its present foothold. .

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 7.7 shows the responses of cities in the Prairie and North regions to four measures included in the survey to follow-up research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing". These may be characterised as: partnering, bonusing, linkage fees and dedications. Generally, these measures are not well established in the Prairie region, although partnerships are growing in usage.

Nine cities had developed partnerships, provided cash, or employed in-kind contributions to assist affordable housing projects. It was frequently mentioned that municipalities formerly used these measures to support senior governments

with social housing projects, but that now, Habitat for Humanity is often the principal partner agency. As was mentioned earlier, several cities said they use municipal land development to assist in the provision of sites for affordable housing. One city provides a tax incentive, a five-year deferral, to encourage the construction of condominium housing in the downtown area. Another three municipalities were considering other supportive measures, and eight (mainly smaller places), did not support these types of measures.

Two measures had been rejected or were considered not relevant by over one-half of the municipalities which were surveyed: land dedications for affordable housing, and

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Rejected	Considered but	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	9	3	1	8	1	1	23
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	3	2	3	12	2	1	23
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	2	3	2	12	2	2	23
Dedication of land required for special needs, rental or affordable housing, or cash-in-lieu	1	2	2	13	3	2	23

density bonusing for affordable housing. However, in one city new developments are required to reserve two units for six months in case they are needed for social housing, and if not taken up they can then be sold.

There was little interest in linkage fees in this region, although a few places have well-established housing funds to accumulate the money needed to support housing affordability projects.

### **Other Measures**

The survey asked about six other measures that municipalities might use to encourage housing affordability and choice. The responses, summarised in Table 7.8, were quite mixed.

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but Being Considered</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	<b>No Response</b>	
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	10	3	0	7	1	2	23
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites) to assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing	9	1	0	10	1	2	23
Research into housing needs and their solutions	8	3	0	10	1	1	23
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	6	2	0	13	1	1	23
Levy development cost charges on an area basis	5	4	1	9	2	2	23
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	5	4	1	9	2	2	23

Advisory committees or networks are used increasingly to promote affordability. Ten cities, including larger places are using some measure of this type, and three others are considering doing so. The Mayor's "Special Advisory Committee on Housing" in Regina was mentioned as an illustration of a successful working group which is deeply involved in housing affordability issues.

Also, nine cities are providing educational information associated with housing affordability (pamphlets, seminars, local television programs), and another is considering this measure. These were also mainly the larger places, although the regular use of community cable television to inform the public about housing and planning matters is growing, and extending to smaller communities.

Eight of the larger places conduct some research on affordability matters, and have assigned specialised staff to work on housing affordability issues. While several others were considering these measures, they are specifically rejected by many smaller places (10 reject research and 13 reject assignments of staff).

Only five municipalities have undertaken demonstration projects, but four others are considering this measure. Similarly, five have levied development cost charges on an areal basis. In one case the development permit fees are based on the square footage of the proposed building. While four others are considering similar measures, nine respondents consider that each of these measures is not relevant.

Several municipalities mentioned that they had received support under the ACT program in their involvement with a number of these measures.

### **Other Factors**

The survey concluded with four questions concerning the influences that local advocacy groups, and external sources including the ACT program, played in the consideration of regulatory reforms to improve housing affordability in the municipalities of the Prairie and North regions. The responses are summarised in Table 7.9.

Of these factors, the one with the largest influence on municipalities' regulatory reform is the information they gather about reforms undertaken by other cities. Five cities said this has a large influence and 11 others said it has a small influence. The smaller places often mentioned that they

monitor the activities of other municipalities in their region as a source of ideas. Other information sources such as professional networks and the Internet were also mentioned.

Eleven respondents said the advocacy of local groups promoting housing affordability has had an influence, large or small, on reforming regulations to improve housing choice and affordability, while 11 others said such groups have had no role. Some of

**Table 7.9: Role of Other Factors in Regulatory Reform in the Prairie/North Regions**

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/ study your reform	2	6	14	1	23
Information gained directly from the ACT program about a reform undertaken somewhere else	1	9	13	0	23
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	4	7	11	1	23
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	5	11	7	0	23

the larger places indicated that the ACT program has helped inform these groups.

The information provided about reforms by the ACT program was considered to have influenced reform activity in 10 cities, 44% of the municipalities which were surveyed. Several of these respondents mentioned that it was useful in informing them, and allowing them to inform councilors, rate payer groups and other interested parties about the general elements of reforms that have been undertaken somewhere else.

About one-third of respondents indicated that the financial support received from the ACT program had an influence, either small or large, on their regulatory reform. In general, the ACT program was reported as having an influence more often in larger places than in the smaller places.

One respondent observed that the housing literature places too much emphasis on the basic financial “affordability” dimension of low income housing. There are multiple factors involved in making a low cost housing project successful, including location relative to transportation, employment and services. It does a disservice to true “best practice” in housing affordability to overemphasize short-term cost savings in project economics.

### **Summary Observations**

Municipalities in the Prairies and North regions were interested in the survey and the general subject of housing affordability and choice. The larger places use a greater variety of measures than smaller places. Land-related measures and reforms to the approvals processes were used more commonly than measures related to buildings or other measures.

**Chapter 8: Regional Summary - British Columbia**

This chapter reports the findings of the survey in British Columbia. The more-settled regions of British Columbia's growing west coast and Okanagan Valley have some of Canada's highest housing costs, and for the last decade the provincial government has been actively encouraging municipalities to undertake urban planning and regulatory measures to improve housing affordability.

The survey covered 15 municipalities, listed in Table 8.0, which comprised 38% of British Columbia's population in 1996. They were selected as a cross-section of communities of varying sizes, locations, housing and governmental circumstances (1). One-half of British Columbians reside in the Lower Mainland, so in this area three municipalities which represent its diversity were surveyed: the central city of Vancouver and the suburban communities of Surrey and Maple Ridge. In order to fully represent the province's varied geographic and economic regions, the survey covered a few more cities and towns under 99,999 than were needed strictly on the basis of population.

**Table 8.0: Municipalities Surveyed in British Columbia Region**

Urban Size Class (population of Census urban region in which the municipality is located)						
	<b>Under 50,000</b>	<b>50,000 - 99,999</b>	<b>100,000 - 299,999</b>	<b>300,000 - 999,999</b>	<b>Over 1 Million</b>	
Fort St John	15,021	Prince George	68,953	Kelowna	89,442	Victoria
Fernie	4,877	Nanaimo	70,130	Abbotsford	105,403	Maple Ridge
Port Alberni	4,877	Chilliwack	60,186			Surrey
Salmon Arm	14,664					Vancouver
Schelt	7,343					
Whistler	7,172					
BC totals	6	3	2	1	3	

For at least a decade the Province of British Columbia has engaged in policy and program activity directed to improving housing affordability. Following the 1992 Provincial Commission on Housing Options, it developed a formal strategy for affordable housing and introduced housing programs, planning and local government legislation(2), and engaged in specific research and advocacy activity directed to improving housing affordability(3).

## **Survey Administration**

The process of conducting this survey began with the identification and contacting of appropriate respondents. Likely contacts, many of whom were Planning Directors, were telephoned and once the survey was introduced to them, it was determined who would be the best person in that municipality to complete the survey. When that person was had been identified, they were sent a letter and a copy of the survey questionnaire to allow the municipality to examine the questions involved, then telephoned to set up a time for the survey interview. In all but two cases, the surveys were administered as interviews on the telephone, between May 26 and July 17, 2000.

The extensive participation by senior municipal planners in British Columbia, summarised in Table 8.1, is reflective of a high level of interest in the topic and in the survey.

**Table 8.1: Administration of Survey - British Columbia**

Municipal Official	Role in Survey			Respondent				
	Initial Contact			Under 50,000	50,000 - 299,999	Over 300,000	Under 50,000	50,000 - 299,999
Chief Administrative Officer								
GM/Commissioner of Planning								
Director of Planning	4	2	2	2	1	1		
Chief or City Planner or Engineer								
Planning or Development Manager		1					1	
Senior Planner	2	2	2	3	3	3		
Other Departmental Staff					1			
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>		

## **Priority Issues in Housing Affordability and Choice**

Cities in British Columbia are clearly interested in housing affordability and choice. When asked in Part 1 of the survey whether housing affordability is an important issue, 11 of these municipalities said "yes", while the other four said it is "only somewhat important" (see Table 8.2). None said it was "not important".

Some of the "only somewhat" responses came from towns and smaller cities which mentioned that housing issues do not have a high profile,

(e.g. "not a burning issue here"),

or they are not as problematic as they have been in the past

(e.g. "rents are falling").

Two smaller cities on the fringes of the Lower Mainland observed that their affordability situation is relatively good when compared with other places:

(e.g. "half the price of Vancouver", "more affordable than other communities").

When asked which are key issues related to housing affordability, 13 of the 15 respondents (87%) selected the problem

of "specific groups having a lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing". The specific groups that were identified included (in relative order of response rate): low-income families/households, special needs, seniors, single parents, youth, and singles. Smaller municipalities tended to identify more groups lacking housing, while the larger cities were more specific, and focused on the first four groups.

Seven cities selected "lack of affordable housing in general" as a key issue, and these included six of the ten municipalities whose average house price to household income ratio exceeded 3.0. Four places, all of them outside the Lower Mainland, selected "poor quality and condition of some housing". Several respondents identified issues which had not been suggested by the survey prompts, including "NIMBY" (two responses), and the lack of government funding for new social housing (two responses).

When asked which key issue has been the most difficult, nine responded that it has been "affordable housing for specific groups". Some illustrative comments were:

- "finding housing for mental health clients is becoming very difficult",
- "special needs seniors are a growing issue",
- "our issues are related to seasonal employees",
- "front line service providers are finding it difficult to secure decent housing for their clients (e.g. John Howard Society)".

City-Size Groups (1996 Population)	Responses by Municipality				No. of Cities Surveyed
	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Response	
<b>Under 50,000</b>	4	2			6
<b>50,000 - 99,999</b>	2	1			3
<b>100,000 - 299,999</b>	2				2
<b>300,000 - 999,999</b>	1				1
<b>Over 1 million</b>	2	1			3
<b>Totals - as numbers</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>- as % of all responses</b>	73%	27%	0%		

Four municipalities said "affordable housing in general" was the most problematic, and two selected housing quality concerns. Among the nine that responded that housing for special needs groups was the most difficult, five also said that this issue is becoming more difficult to deal with. Two of the 15 municipalities said that affordable housing had only been an issue for 3-5 years, but most cities (12) felt it had been an issue for over six years.

The responses to the question "what would you say are the top three regulatory issues"

**Table 8.3: What are the "Three Top Regulatory Issues" - B.C. Municipalities**

Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)	Issues Suggested by Questionnaire Prompt	No. of Times Selected (1)
NIMBY" - opposition to low-cost housing, (e.g. secondary suites)	10	Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs	3
Barriers to accessory apartments (secondary suites, garden suites)	5	Inefficient approval processes	2
All other issues reported (includes non-regulatory issues)	5	High development cost charges	2
Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking)	4	Barriers to housing for the lowest income	1
Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion	4	Barriers to redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites	1
Lack of cost-effective renovation standards	3	Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing	1
		Barriers to alternative forms of tenure (e.g. co-housing)	0

(1) Note: Each of the 15 respondents could have given 1-3 responses, or the "other" response(s)

revealed NIMBY is clearly considered to be a major impediment in B.C. municipalities (see Table 8.3).

Eight cities of all sizes selected "NIMBY" as their first choice, and overall, NIMBY was the most common choice as the first, second and third most important issue.

"resistance at the neighbourhood level makes it very difficult"

"impossible to get secondary suites legalized"

Other selections as the "first choice" were: excessive land development standards (identified once as the first choice and four times overall); inefficient approval processes (selected once as first choice and twice overall); barriers to housing for the lowest income groups (selected once); and barriers to redevelopment of downtowns and brownfields which was selected once. Two cities responded with unprompted "other" non-regulatory issues as their "first choices": weakness in the local economy; and problems with provincial legislation.

Barriers to accessory apartments were identified five times, four of which were the respondent's second choice.

When asked whether planning and building regulations and development approval processes act as barriers to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing, two

municipalities said "yes", three said "no", and 10 said "only somewhat". One respondent observed:

"there are many, many factors that act as barriers, not just our regulations"

and other noted a greater barrier is:

"finding developers that want to do it" (build affordable housing).

## **Recent Reviews**

Part 2 of the survey explored whether the participating municipalities had identified impediments or constraints to housing affordability and choice during the course of recent reviews of major regulatory instruments. The responses indicated that reviews had generally been undertaken and some implementing actions had been made to address constraints that had been found.

Of the 15 communities studied, 10 said they had undertaken reviews of their community plan or local area plan within the past five years, and the reviews had identified impediments and constraints to housing affordability and choice. Eight of them said they had taken actions as a direct outcome of these reviews. Some illustrative comments are:

"Our area planning processes have led to a wider range of zoning densities"

"Just completed a two-year study on housing"

There was no pattern of city-size or location seen in these responses.

Zoning bylaws were also the subject of some reviews. Nine communities had reviewed their zoning and seven indicated they had taken actions to improve housing affordability and choice. Again, no size or location patterns were seen in these responses.

Approval processes were also studied with a view to speeding and simplifying the process. Eight of the larger cities have undertaken these reviews and all of them said they have taken actions consistent with the findings of these reviews.

Five municipalities had undertaken reviews of land development standards and guidelines. These were all medium-sized municipalities, and of them, three said they had revised aspects of their standards and one was expecting to do so shortly. Building standards have not generally been the subject of reviews. Only one municipality indicated that this had been done and that subsequent actions had been taken.

## **Regulatory Measures**

Part 3 of the survey dealt with the essence of regulatory reform, in that it asked about the specific tools that are used (or not used) to facilitate housing choices and affordability.

### **Reforms Associated with Land-Use Planning**

British Columbia municipalities made a number of reforms to land-related regulatory measures in support of housing affordability and choice, most notably to zoning measures. Table 8.4 shows how many municipalities have adopted or are considering each of 10 land-related measures that were included in the survey.

**Table 8.4: Municipal Use of Land-Related Regulatory Measures in B.C.**

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	
<b>WIDELY ADOPTED MEASURES</b>							
Zoning allows mixed commercial/housing, conversions	15	0	0	0	0	0	15
Zoning allows mix of housing types/lot sizes in parts of the community	14	0	0	1	0	0	15
Zoning allows innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing	11	0	0	4	0	0	15
Reduced parking standards for affordable housing (special needs, ownership,rental)	11	0	1	2	0	1	15
Zoning allows accessory apartments (e.g. secondary suites, garden suites) in predominantly detached housing neighbourhoods	11	2	1	1	0	0	15
<b>USAGE OF MEASURES MIXED</b>							
Land is designated/prezoned for multi-family housing	8	0	2	5	0	0	15
Reduced lot sizes, road widths	8	3	0	4	0	0	15
Reduced property line setbacks allowed for affordable housing (special needs, ownership,rental)	7	1	0	5	0	2	15
<b>LESS FREQUENTLY USED MEASURES</b>							
Replot schemes, special development districts	2	2	1	10	0	0	15
Zoning allows for convertible housing	2	1	0	10	0	2	15

All municipalities that were canvassed had zones that allowed for a mix of residential and commercial uses and almost all (14) had zones that allowed a mix of housing types and lot sizes. In British Columbia, this is generally referred to as “comprehensive development” zoning.

Many municipalities (11) had already allowed reduced parking standards for affordable homes, and had adopted zoning that allows for accessory apartments (usually known in British Columbia as secondary suites) and innovative housing forms.

Two measures stood out because two-thirds of municipalities (10 cities) considered that they were not relevant - zoning for convertible housing, and the creation of replot schemes or special development districts. On the other hand, each of these measures had been adopted by several of the largest cities.

One municipality reported that the ACT program had been a helpful influence in bringing about the reform concerning reduced lot sizes and setbacks. A large Lower Mainland municipality mentioned that small lots had been very successful, and that the market is looking for this product.

### **Reforms Associated with Building Codes and Regulations**

According to the survey results, there is limited use of measures related to building codes to facilitate housing affordability and choice in BC municipalities. Table 8.5 shows the use, by municipalities, of the three measures that were included in the survey. Seven municipalities had adopted reforms in the form of "equivalents" to enable non-standard materials, procedures and systems in construction, and these were all medium to larger places. Five municipalities, mainly larger cities, had adopted "building code equivalencies". One indicated that an ACT project had influenced a reform it had made, related to building regulations.

**Table 8.5: Municipal Use of Regulatory Measures Related to Building Codes in British Columbia**

<b>Description of Measure</b>	<b>Status of Measure</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>Already Adopted</b>	<b>Being Considered</b>	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Considered but</b>	<b>Not Relevant</b>	<b>Not Considered</b>	
Equivalents for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction	7	1	0	5	1	1	15
Building code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)	6	2	1	4	1	1	15
"Standard of maintenance" bylaw (or equivalent)	4	1	4	5	1	0	15
Other	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	1

Only four cities are using "standard of maintenance" bylaws, and another is considering this measure. Speaking of these building code measures generally, one respondent observed:

"these measures don't seem to contribute much to affordability, but they provide more flexibility for the builder or owner".

Under the heading "other", one respondent mentioned that it has established standards for some common outdoor amenities like decks and patios that are commonly used in housing of all price ranges.

### **Reforms Associated with the Approvals Processes**

Table 8.6 shows the municipalities' responses related to processing development and building applications.

**Table 8.6: Municipal Use of Regulatory Measures Related to Approval Processes in British Columbia**

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Coordination, standardization of applications, one-stop approvals	10	2	0	3	0	0	15
General improvements to computerization of development and building permits	10	3	0	1	0	1	15
Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community	6	3	0	6	0	0	15
Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for rental, special needs or affordable ownership housing	6	2	3	4	0	0	15
Fast tracking for certified builders	5	2	0	4	0	4	15
Appropriate processing for brownfield sites	4	0	0	11	0	0	15
Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing	1	1	0	12	0	1	15
Other	1	0	0	0	0	n/a	1

Of the seven measures identified in this area of investigation, most municipalities (10) of all sizes said they had made improvements to coordinate, standardise and computerise the processing of applications, while others are actively considering this.

Six, mainly larger municipalities, have priority processing for affordable and special needs housing and six of the larger communities use some form of dispute resolution, usually public information meetings, in addition to normal application processing. Five larger municipalities have fast-tracking for certified builders and two are considering this measure.

Most municipalities in British Columbia indicated that two of the proposed measures were not relevant at this time - special processing for brownfields proposals, and reducing the priority for processing applications which would result in a net reduction of affordable housing. The four cities that indicated they have special processing arrangements appropriate for brownfields sites were scattered across the city-size spectrum.

### **Measures from 1999 CMHC Study on Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing**

Table 8.7 shows the British Columbia responses to questions about four measures included in the survey to follow-up research undertaken by CMHC in 1999, in a project entitled "Municipal Planning for Affordable Housing".

Description of Measure	Status of Measure						Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	No Response	
Bonusing or incentive zoning is allowed if affordable housing produced	12	2	0	1	0	0	15
Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or in-kind contribution	8	2	0	3	1	1	15
Dedication of land required for affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental), or cash-in-lieu	6	1	2	5	0	1	15
Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)	3	2	0	6	2	2	15

Twelve municipalities have made provision for "bonus" or "incentive" zoning, and two others are considering this measure, perhaps in response to enabling legislation provided by the Province in the late 1990s. Eight cities of various sizes have partnered in public-private partnerships to assist affordable housing, while six, again of mixed sizes, require developers to dedicate land for affordable housing (or cash-in-lieu). Municipal housing funds are used in several places to accumulate funds for use in direct activities to produce affordable housing.

## Other Measures

About half the municipalities canvassed have been actively involved in other practices to improve housing choice and affordability. Table 8.8 shows how many municipalities are using (or not using) the six other measures that were mentioned in the survey.

Description of Measure	Status of Measure					Total
	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Not Considered	
Research into housing needs and their solutions	9	0	0	4	1	15
Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice	8	0	1	4	1	15
Educational information (print materials, videos, websites) to assist in planning and delivering affordable housing (special needs, ownership, rental)	7	2	0	4	1	15
Levying development cost charges on an area basis	4	1	0	7	2	15
Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing	3	0	0	9	1	15
Demonstration projects undertaken - innovative housing, land development standards, building materials	2	3	0	7	2	15

A number of municipalities have undertaken housing-related research (nine, mainly larger cities), have an advisory housing committee (eight, also larger cities), or have developed educational materials (seven larger cities).

Relatively few British Columbia cities levy development cost charges on the basis of the size of the lot or housing unit (four cities of mixed sizes), although this measure has been strongly promoted by the Pacific Chapter of the Urban Development Institute and the B.C. Ministry of Housing. Nine municipalities said it is not relevant to assign staff primarily to work on housing. Seven cities said they consider that demonstration projects concerning housing affordability are not relevant from their perspectives.

## Other Factors

The final area of investigation in the survey concerned the role that local advocacy groups and other sources of information, such as the ACT program, played in influencing regulatory reform. Table 8.9 shows the municipalities' responses.

**Table 8.9: Role of Other Factors in Regulatory Reform - British Columbia**

Description of Factor	Extent of Influence				Total
	Large Influence	Small Influence	No Role	No Response	
Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice	7	7	1	0	15
Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else	4	8	3	0	15
Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study your reform	1	3	11	0	15
Information gained directly from the ACT program about a reform undertaken somewhere else	0	7	8	0	15

Overall, the greatest influence on regulatory reform among these factors is local advocacy groups. In 14 cities, especially the smaller ones, respondents indicated that these groups have a large, or small influence. Information about a reform undertaken elsewhere was seen as a significant influence in 12 cities, all but the smallest communities. Seven respondents noted that information from the ACT program had a small influence on the reforms undertaken in their municipality. Of the 15 municipalities canvassed, financial support from the ACT program had a large influence in studying/developing a specific reform in one municipality and a small influence in three others.

### **Summary Observations**

British Columbia municipalities seem quite interested in housing issues, and a number have been using regulatory reform and other measures to facilitate greater housing choice and affordability. A recurring theme that was mentioned by respondents but that did not easily fit into the interview questions was that, despite local governments' efforts, there is a lack of developers who are interested in building affordable housing. Another recurring theme not easily captured in the interview form, was that no single regulatory reform will significantly improve housing affordability and choice. There must be a combination of reforms and initiatives in order to achieve success.

The overall reaction to the survey indicated that municipalities in British Columbia have the most familiarity with "land-related" regulatory measures, and the least with "building-related" measures. It was evident from the interviews that the respondents were familiar with most of the measures mentioned in the questionnaire, and that these

measures had been already adopted, were being considered or had been considered then rejected. Most respondents were able to point to one or two measures that had been particularly successful in their municipalities, but there were no strong trends in these responses.

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## **Chapter 8 Endnotes**

1. Local government in British Columbia is comprised of over 150 municipalities, 27 regional districts, more than 300 improvement districts and the Islands Trust, all governed by the provisions of the Local Government Act. The City of Vancouver and the Resort Municipality of Whistler have greater scope for independent action than the other local authorities, as each has their own charter.
2. Specific measures introduced by the Province of British Columbia during the past decade include: requiring municipalities to include affordable, rental and special needs housing policies within their Official Community Plans (OCPs); enabling municipalities to allow a "density bonus" to increase allowable floorspace within a zone in exchange for certain amenities, including affordable housing. Generally, a "housing agreement" is entered into between the municipality and a landowner; and enabling municipalities to use "comprehensive development zoning" to increase flexibility in allocating density and land uses on specific sites. This zoning also provides an opportunity for municipalities to negotiate for public amenities and affordable housing.
3. A detailed listing of these initiatives, with "hot links" to most of the relevant documentation, is contained in a B.C. Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security information paper entitled "Housing Policy and Programs: Advances and Activities since the Provincial Commission on Housing Options", at: <<http://www.sdes.gov.bc.ca/housing/PCUPDATE/index.htm>>.

## **Chapter 9: Concluding Observations**

The results of this survey capture the responses of a sample of 110 municipalities in each region of Canada, stratified by city-size.

Affordability issues are clearly important to Canadian cities, particularly the affordability problems of groups like single parents, low income families, special needs, youth, seniors and singles. According to the survey, the single largest affordability issue is NIMBY, the forces opposing neighbourhood change that dominate the politics of development.

Canadian municipalities are using a wide variety of reforms to encourage housing affordability and choice. The survey found that seven of them are employed by over two-thirds of municipalities:

- zoning that allows for housing mix;
- residential/ commercial mix;
- zoning for innovative housing;
- rezoning land for multiples;
- coordinating/standardizing the approvals process;
- dispute resolution processes; and
- computerization of approvals.

Seven more of the measures are already adopted or being considered by over one-half of the cities surveyed:

- three alternative development standards measures:
  - reduced parking standards,
  - reduced property line setbacks, and
  - smaller lot sizes and road widths;
- zoning that allows accessory apartments;
- standard of maintenance bylaws;
- engaging in partnerships;
- conducting research.

These findings demonstrate that municipalities are committing resources and energy to address problems associated with housing affordability and choice.

However, many surveyed municipalities were not convinced about some measures. Sixteen of the measures were rejected or were deemed "not relevant" by over one-half of the municipalities. The measures that were not widely supported include:

- building code equivalencies that enable cost-effective renovation;
- equivalencies that enable non-standard materials, systems and procedures;
- fast-tracking certified builders;
- reducing processing priority for projects that would reduce net affordable housing;
- requiring land dedications for affordable housing; and
- levying development cost charges on an area basis.

Many respondents commented that building code-related reforms are beyond their sphere of influence. Also, many provided explanations that the measures which they had not supported were not relevant to their current market situation, or to cities of their size.

Some differences between Canadian regions were also noted. For example, British Columbia municipalities accounted for nearly one-half the respondents who use density bonusing and a high percentage of those influenced by community groups. Barriers to accessory apartments appear to be stronger in many Prairie cities and smaller cities in Ontario than in most other municipalities, although the Prairie region also reported innovative measures to facilitate them. Dispute resolution is widely known and widely used by municipalities in the Ontario, Quebec and Prairie/North regions, but is less used elsewhere. In the Atlantic, Quebec and Ontario regions, numerous municipalities mentioned that there is a need for building code equivalencies and other measures which can facilitate the improvement of older or heritage buildings, so they can contribute to the stock of affordable housing. And lastly, many respondents in all regions mentioned that in order to address housing affordability issues there is a need for an ongoing program to build new social housing.

The survey showed that municipalities are engaged in and knowledgeable about issues of housing affordability. Many are improving their processes and regulations concerning development. However, respondents often expressed the view that planning and building regulations had only a limited role to play in increasing the supply of affordable housing. While these measures could be facilitative, they do not expect these measures, in and of themselves, to substantially effect housing affordability and choice.

## **Chapitre 9 Observations finales**

L'enquête a été menée auprès d'un échantillon de 110 municipalités de toutes les régions du Canada stratifié selon l'importance de la population des municipalités.

Les résultats de l'enquête montrent clairement que la question de l'abordabilité du logement est importante pour les municipalités du Canada, qui trouvent à cet égard particulièrement préoccupante la pénurie de logements abordables pour des groupes comme les familles monoparentales, les familles à faible revenu, les personnes aux besoins spéciaux, les jeunes, les personnes âgées et les personnes vivant seules. Selon les répondants, le principal obstacle à l'abordabilité du logement est le syndrome « pas dans ma cour », c'est-à-dire la réaction d'opposition des citoyens aux changements envisagés dans leur voisinage, qui est devenue le courant politique dominant en matière d'aménagement.

Les municipalités ont recours à un large éventail de mesures de réforme pour favoriser l'abordabilité et le choix du logement. L'enquête a révélé que sept de ces mesures étaient appliquées par plus des deux tiers des municipalités. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Zonage permettant la combinaison de divers types de logements.
- Combinaison d'immeubles résidentiels et commerciaux.
- Zonage favorable aux formes d'habitation innovatrices.
- Réserve de terrains pour du logement collectif dans le plan de zonage.
- Coordination/normalisation des processus d'approbation.
- Recours à des processus de règlement des différends.
- Automatisation des approbations.

Sept autres mesures ont été adoptées ou sont examinées en vue d'être éventuellement adoptées par plus de la moitié des municipalités interrogées. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Trois de ces mesures concernent les normes d'aménagement, à savoir :
  - allégement des normes relatives aux places de stationnement;
  - réduction des exigences concernant le recul;
  - réduction des exigences concernant la grandeur des terrains et la largeur des voies publiques.
- Zonage permettant les appartements accessoires.
- Règlement sur les normes d'entretien.
- Partenariats.
- Recherche.

Ces résultats montrent que les municipalités déploient des ressources et des efforts pour s'attaquer aux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité et au choix du logement.

Cependant, bon nombre des municipalités interrogées n'étaient pas convaincues de

## **Sondage auprès de municipalités canadiennes : Mesures de réglementation favorisant l'abordabilité et les choix de logements**

l'utilité de certaines mesures. C'est ainsi que 16 des mesures considérées avaient été écartées ou étaient jugées « non pertinentes » par plus de la moitié des municipalités. Il s'agit des mesures ci-dessous.

- Normes équivalentes au code du bâtiment permettant les rénovations efficientes.
- « Équivalents » permettant l'utilisation de matériaux, de méthodes et de systèmes de construction non traditionnels.
- Traitement accéléré des demandes des constructeurs accrédités.
- Traitement moins prioritaire des projets entraînant une réduction nette du parc de logements abordables.
- Réserve de terrains pour des logements abordables.
- Prélèvement de droits d'aménagement selon les secteurs.

Beaucoup de répondants ont fait observer que les réformes en rapport avec les codes de construction débordaient de leur champ de compétence. Beaucoup d'autres ont en outre expliqué que les mesures qu'ils n'appuyaient pas étaient des mesures mal adaptées à la situation du marché dans leur municipalité ou des municipalités de la taille de la leur.

On observe aussi certaines différences d'une région du Canada à l'autre. Ainsi, c'est en Colombie-Britannique qu'on trouve près de la moitié des municipalités qui ont recours aux primes à la densité et un fort pourcentage de celles dont les décisions ont été influencées par des groupes de revendication. De même, les obstacles aux appartements accessoires sont apparemment plus fréquents parmi les villes des Prairies et les petites villes de l'Ontario, bien que des répondants des Prairies aient indiqué que des mesures innovatrices avaient été prises pour faciliter l'aménagement de ce genre d'appartements. Les processus de règlement des différends sont bien connus et largement utilisés par les municipalités de l'Ontario, du Québec ainsi que des Prairies et du Nord, mais on y a moins recours ailleurs. Beaucoup de municipalités des régions de l'Atlantique, du Québec et de l'Ontario ont par ailleurs indiqué qu'elles avaient besoin de normes équivalentes aux codes du bâtiment et d'autres mesures permettant de faciliter l'amélioration des immeubles anciens et des immeubles à valeur patrimoniale, afin d'augmenter le nombre de logements abordables. Enfin, beaucoup de répondants de toutes les régions ont fait observer que la réponse aux problèmes liés à l'abordabilité du logement devait nécessairement passer par la mise en place d'un programme permanent de construction de nouveaux logements sociaux.

Il ressort de l'enquête que les municipalités connaissent bien les questions liées à l'abordabilité du logement et qu'elles s'en occupent. Beaucoup d'entre elles travaillent à améliorer leur processus et leurs règlements. Cependant, beaucoup de répondants étaient d'avis que les règlements d'urbanisme et de construction n'influait que de façon limitée sur l'offre de logements à prix abordable. Bien qu'ils reconnaissent que les mesures axées sur ces règlements puissent être d'une certaine utilité, ils ne pensent pas qu'elles puissent, en soi, favoriser de façon notable l'abordabilité et le choix du logement.

**APPENDIX**

**Survey Questionnaire**

**Housing Choice and Affordability - Regulatory Tools**

# Housing Choice and Affordability – Regulatory Tools Interviewers Form

«City»

Respondent's Name .....

Respondent's Title .....

Date of Interview .....

Duration of Interview.....

## Part I – Major housing issues in «city»

**Q1. Is housing affordability an important issue in «city»?**

- Yes
- Only somewhat
- No

*Do you have any additional comments?*

**Q2. Do you think that planning and building regulations and development approval processes act as barriers to increasing the supply and choice of affordable housing in «city»?**

- Yes
- Only somewhat
- No

*Do you have any additional comments?*

**Q3a. Which of the following are key issues related to housing affordability and choice in «city»?  
(Select one or more.)**

- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing in general?
- Lack of, or inadequate choice of, affordable housing for specific groups (e.g youth, singles, low income families, single parents, special needs, seniors, others)? Please specify.
- Poor quality and condition of some housing?
- Other(s) .....

*Do you have any additional comments about these key issues?*

**Q3b. Of the issues you selected in Question 3a:**

.1 Which one has been the most difficult for «city» to deal with?

Lack of, or inadequate choice, of affordable housing in general?

Lack of, or inadequate choice, of affordable housing for specific groups (e.g youth, singles, low income families, single parents, special needs, seniors, others)?

Poor quality and condition of some housing?

Other(s) .....

*Do you have any additional comments?*

.2 How many years has this been an issue? .....years

.3 Is the issue becoming:

- more difficult to deal with?
- less difficult to deal with?
- about the same?

*Do you have any additional comments?*

**Q4. What would you say are the three top regulatory issues in «city»? Please rank – 1, 2, 3.**

a. Inefficient approval processes \_\_\_\_\_

b. “NIMBY” – opposition to low-cost housing,(e.g. secondary suites) \_\_\_\_\_

- b. Barriers to housing for the lowest income (e.g. rooming houses) \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Barriers to the redevelopment of declining downtowns, brownfield sites \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Barriers to suites (accessory, secondary, garden) \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Lack of cost-effective renovation standards (e.g. secondary suites) \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Excessive land development standards (i.e. set-backs, lot sizes, parking) \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Need for regulations to encourage infill and conversion \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Barriers to alternative forms of tenures (e.g. co-housing) \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Barriers to flexible, adaptable housing \_\_\_\_\_
- k. High development cost charges \_\_\_\_\_
- l. Resistance to density bonusing, linkage programs \_\_\_\_\_
- m. Other ..... \_\_\_\_\_

*Do you have any additional comments?*

## Part 2 – Recent reviews in «city»

**Q5. Within the past five years, has «city» undertaken any of the following reviews which identified any impediments and constraints to housing affordability and choice?**

- |   |     |    |            |
|---|-----|----|------------|
| a. Land use plans (Official Community Plan, area plans) | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| b. Zoning bylaw   | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| c. Land development standards/guidelines                | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| d. Building standards                                   | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| e. Approval processes                                   | Yes | No | Don't Know |

**Q6. If you answered “yes” to any parts of Q5, have actions been taken as a direct outcome of these reviews to improve housing affordability and choice?**

- |   |     |    |            |
|---|-----|----|------------|
| a. Land use plans (Official Community Plan, area plans) | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| b. Zoning bylaw   | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| c. Land development standards/guidelines                | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| d. Building standards                                   | Yes | No | Don't Know |
| e. Approval processes                                   | Yes | No | Don't Know |

*Do you have any comments about either the reviews or the actions that have been taken?*

### **Part III –Use of regulatory measures in «city»**

Local governments have a range of regulatory measures that can be used to facilitate housing choice and affordability. While these measures range somewhat across Canada depending on provincial legislation, many are commonly used from Newfoundland to BC. We've grouped these into four categories and would like to discuss their use in «city».

First, we'd like to know whether the measures are in use in «city» and if they were influenced by the ACT program? If they are in use, we'd like to discuss the details with you and find out how successful their use has been in improving housing affordability and choice.

	<b>Q7a. Land-Related Measures</b>	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Influenced by ACT?
<b>1</b>	Zoning allows for a mix of housing types and lot sizes in some parts of the community					Y N
<b>2</b>	Zoning allows for innovative housing forms such as co-housing, group homes and collaborative housing					Y N
<b>3</b>	Zoning allows for mixed commercial/housing, conversions					Y N
<b>4</b>	Zoning allows for suites in neighbourhoods that are predominantly detached housing (e.g. accessory apartments, secondary suites, in-law suites, granny flats)					Y N
<b>5</b>	Zoning allows for convertible housing (e.g. SPROUT house, flexi-house, made-to-convert housing)					Y N
<b>6</b>	Land is prezoned for multi-family housing					Y N
<b>7</b>	In a rezoning application, additional floorspace is allowed if certain amenities, or affordable housing, is provided – this is also known as ‘bonusing or incentive zoning’					Y N
<b>8</b>	The dedication of some land for special needs, rental or affordable housing (or cash-in-lieu) is a requirement of any major rezoning or subdivision					Y N
<b>9</b>	Reduced parking standards are acceptable for special needs, rental or affordable home ownership housing					Y N
<b>10</b>	Reduced property line setbacks (and other similar variances) are acceptable for special needs, rental or affordable home ownership housing					Y N
<b>11</b>	Reduced lot sizes or road widths					Y N
<b>12</b>	Replot schemes, special development districts					Y N

**Q7b. Of the land-related measures that you indicated in Q7a that have been adopted in «city», have any been particularly successful? Why is that?**

	<b>Q8a. Building-Related Measures</b>	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Influenced by ACT?
<b>1</b>	“Equivalents” for enabling non-standard building materials, systems and procedures for construction					Y N
<b>2</b>	“Standard of maintenance” bylaw (or equivalent)					Y N
<b>3</b>	Building code equivalents that enable cost-effective renovation (e.g. secondary suites)					Y N
<b>4</b>	Other .....					Y N

**Q8b. Of the building-related measures that you indicated in Q8a that have been adopted in «city», have any been particularly successful? Why is that?**

	<b>Q9a. Approvals Processes</b>	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Influenced by ACT?
<b>1</b>	Priority processing (e.g. fast-tracking, reducing fees) for rental, special needs or affordable ownership housing					Y N
<b>2</b>	Coordination, standardization of applications, i.e. one-stop approvals					Y N
<b>3</b>	General improvement to computerization of development and building permits					Y N
<b>4</b>	Use of dispute resolution processes where rezoning application is contentious with neighbours and community					Y N
<b>5</b>	Reducing the priority for processing development proposals which result in the net reduction of affordable housing					Y N
<b>6</b>	Fast tracking for certified builders					Y N
<b>7</b>	Appropriate processing for “brownfield” sites					Y N
<b>8</b>	Other .....					Y N

**Q9b. Of the approvals process measures that you indicated in Q9a that have been adopted in «city», have any been particularly successful? Why is that?**

	<b>Q10a. Other Measures</b>	Already Adopted	Being Considered	Considered but Rejected	Not Relevant	Influenced by ACT?
<b>1</b>	Educational information (print materials, videos, websites) to assist in planning and delivering special needs, rental and affordable home ownership housing					Y N
<b>2</b>	Advisory committee considers and networks on issues related to housing affordability and choice.					Y N
<b>3</b>	Staff are assigned primarily to work on housing.					Y N
<b>4</b>	Research into housing needs and their solutions.					Y N
<b>5</b>	Partnering in a public-private partnership via land lease, cash donation or other in-kind contribution.					Y N
<b>6</b>	Demonstration projects undertaken –innovative housing, land development standards, building materials.					Y N
<b>7</b>	Levy development cost charges on an area basis municipal housing funds					Y N
<b>8</b>	Other financial measures (e.g. impact fees, linkage fees, municipal housing funds)					Y N

**Q10b. Of the other measures that you indicated in Q10a that have been adopted in «city», have any been particularly successful? Why is that?**

**Q.11 And a final area of questioning, have the following factors played a role in «city»'s involvement in regulatory reform associated with housing?**

		No role	Small Influence	Large Influence
<b>a.</b>	Information gained <u>directly from the ACT program</u> about a reform undertaken somewhere else?			
<b>b.</b>	Information about a reform undertaken somewhere else?			
<b>c.</b>	Financial support provided by the ACT program to develop/study <u>your</u> reform?			
<b>d.</b>	Advocacy by local community groups promoting housing affordability and choice			

*Do you have any additional comments about the factors that have played a role in regulatory reform?*

**Q12. Do you have any other comments to make about regulatory reforms related to housing choice and affordability that you would like to pass along at this time?**

*On behalf of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, thank you very much for participating in this interview. We are currently interviewing people like yourself in more than 100 local governments across Canada. The results of these interviews, will be widely shared. We hope that the information will be useful to you and others in «city».*