

DISPERSED LOW-INCOME FAMILY HOUSING:
TENANT SATISFACTION, NEIGHBOURHOOD
APPROVAL AND SUPPORT

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A Research Report

by

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an investigation of the degree of tenant satisfaction and neighbourhood acceptance produced by a somewhat unusual family social housing project in Hamilton, Ontario.

Under the provisions of Section 56.1 Non-Profit and Cooperative Housing Programs, the housing corporation has purchased vacant and generally rundown single detached houses dispersed throughout much of the city. The homes are then renovated and rented to families. Because the total unit price is low relative to the MUP price, a high percentage of the houses can be rented to the families most in need of social housing assistance. In addition, this process improves the condition of the housing stock in declining residential neighbourhoods.

Interviews were conducted with the tenants of 120 of the project houses and 251 of the closest neighbours at these 120 sites. The study found a very high level of tenant satisfaction with the decision to occupy a project house, with the housing organization, with the house itself, and slightly less satisfaction with the neighbourhoods. It also found a very high degree of approval and support amongst the neighbours who knew the home was part of a social housing project, and also amongst the even larger number who were unaware that it was a project house.

Approval and support were particularly evident from those neighbours who had become friends with the tenants, and the presence of children in the neighbouring families was highly correlated with knowing the tenants.

Overall, tenants were not stigmatized as social housing families. Rather, they were readily accepted into these mainly owner-occupied neighbourhoods.

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I INTRODUCTION

This research report centres on two aspects of the Kiwanis social housing project in Hamilton, Ontario: first, the level of tenant satisfaction; second, the level of neighbourhood approval and support for the project.

The project uses section 56.1 funding to house low and moderate income families in widely dispersed single detached houses. The project has a number of attractive features: per unit costs are low, the percentage of low-income families is very high, and the renovation of houses in poor repair has improved declining residential neighbourhoods. However, in the longer run the viability of this form of social housing will be dependent on the perceptions of both tenants and neighbours. Accordingly, this study was designed to investigate the question of tenant satisfaction and neighbourhood approval and support.

Evidence of satisfaction, approval, and support was obtained through structured interviews with tenants and neighbours. Interviews were conducted in the tenth and eleventh months of occupancy. Additional data on the house and family were obtained from the housing corporation.

II DESCRIPTION OF HOUSING PROJECT

1. General Overview

The Hamilton Project is a private non-profit housing project under section 56.1 of the N.H.A. Like many other 56.1 projects its primary purpose is to provide affordable housing for low and moderate income families. However, unlike most other family projects the Hamilton project relies heavily on the purchase and rehabilitation of existing single detached units widely dispersed throughout much of the city.

The corporation began to buy houses in December 1981, and by April 1983 it had purchased, renovated, and rented 131 houses. By December of 1983 seventy more houses had been purchased and were in the process of being renovated and rented. The 131 houses purchased prior to April 1983 were selected from the stock of vacant houses owned by C.M.H.C. Of the next seventy homes about one-third were purchased from C.M.H.C. and about two-thirds were purchased in the private market. Most future acquisitions are expected to be from the private market. This study is based on information from the 131 houses in the initial phase of the project.

The 131 homes in stage one of the project are dispersed throughout East Hamilton, an area of about ten square miles bounded on the west by the central business district, on the north by Burlington Street and the heavy industry

adjacent to Hamilton Harbour, on the east by the Hamilton-Stoney Creek boundary, and on the south by the steep ridge of land known as the Niagara Escarpment or Hamilton Mountain. With the exception of some apartment buildings near the downtown core, in the far eastern area near Stoney Creek, and along some major arteries, the housing in the area is mainly single-detached and owner-occupied. It varies in age from pre-1914 in the western areas near the downtown, to pre-1940 along Ottawa Street. The area from Ottawa Street to Kenilworth is a mix of pre and post-1940 housing. Immediately east of Kenilworth the housing is mainly post-1940s, and in the area near the Stoney Creek boundary the houses were generally built in the 1960s and early 1970s.

In Hamilton as a whole, house prices have risen only slightly during the past few years. In East Hamilton prices generally have been static, rising somewhat in the newer areas in the extreme east, but declining sharply in some areas, particularly in the northern strip between Barton Street and Burlington Street. These price movements are good indicators of the changing conditions of the housing stock. Decaying housing is not a problem in the newer areas near the city's eastern boundary, but in the northern area dilapidated and vacant houses have been a common phenomenon for many years.

The average purchase price of the first 131 units was about \$22,000 and the average rehabilitation cost was \$9,500. Rents range from \$170 to \$450 per month with an average of about \$285 per month. There is no clear distinction between rent geared-to-income and lower-end-of-market rent as is commonly found in private non-profit and municipal non-profit integrated projects. Rents below the average of \$285 are well below lower-end-of-market rents. Rents above \$350 per month are generally close to lower-end-of-market rents. Family incomes range from \$4,000 per year to \$32,000 and average about \$14,500 per year.

Although the corporation expects to rent many of these homes indefinitely, it has provided a purchase opportunity for tenants. At any time during the first five years the tenant may buy the home at a fixed price: the initial purchase price plus renovation and initial administrative costs. After five years the price is to be negotiated by the tenant and the corporation based on market value at that time. At time of purchase the tenant is responsible for arranging a conventional mortgage at prevailing market rates and the subsidy from C.M.H.C. ends. However, there is no obligation to purchase; each family may choose to purchase if and when it wants to, assuming it has the required financial resources.

Of the 131 tenants in phase one of the project 120 were interviewed for the purposes of this study. The purchase

prices of the 120 houses range from \$6,000 to \$48,000 and averaged \$21,723. The thirteen purchases in the \$5,000-\$10,000 interval (see Table 1) include seven houses in such poor condition that they were demolished and replaced by new infills. Renovation costs range from \$1,300 to over \$25,000 on existing houses, and the construction costs of the seven infills were between \$40,000 and \$45,000. The average renovation cost, including construction of infills within the category of renovation, is \$10,871. The renovation cost for 61.7% of the houses was under \$10,000. Total unit costs, made up of purchase price plus renovation cost, range from just under \$10,000 to just under \$50,000. The average unit price is \$32,594. The 1982 maximum unit price (MUP) for Hamilton was \$57,000 for section 56.1 ground oriented family units. The average unit price in this project is about \$24,500 below the MUP price.

TABLE 1

**PURCHASE, RENOVATION, AND TOTAL COSTS
OF PROJECT HOUSES**

<u>Interval</u> \$	<u>Purchase Price</u>		<u>Renovation Cost</u>		<u>Total Cost</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0- 5,000	--	----	22	18.3	--	----
5,001-10,000	13	10.8	52	43.3	1	.8
10,001-15,000	15	12.5	29	24.2	1	.8
15,001-20,000	36	30.0	8	6.7	2	1.7
20,001-25,000	13	10.8	1	.8	16	13.3
25,001-30,000	23	19.2	1	.8	29	24.2
30,001-35,000	11	9.2	--	----	31	25.8
35,001-40,000	3	2.5	--	----	19	15.8
40,001-45,000	5	4.2	7	5.8	7	5.8
45,001-50,000	<u>1</u>	<u>.8</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>----</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>11.7</u>
Total	120	100.0	120	100.0	120	100.0

Averages:

Purchase Price	\$21,723.00
Renovation Cost	<u>10,871.00</u>
Total Price	\$32,594.00

Lower-end-of-market rents range from \$290 a month to just over \$500 a month and average \$371 per month (see Table 2). Actual rents range from \$170 per month to \$450 per month and average \$285 per month. Rents do not include heating and hydro costs.

TABLE 2

LOWER-END-OF-MARKET RENT AND ACTUAL RENT

<u>Interval</u> \$	<u>Lower-End-Of-Market</u>		<u>Actual Rent</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Below 200	---	----	33	27.5
201 - 250	---	----	21	17.5
251 - 300	4	3.3	22	18.5
301 - 350	51	42.5	13	10.8
351 - 400	34	28.3	19	15.8
401 - 450	22	18.3	12	10.0
450 - 500	3	2.5	---	----
Above 500	4	3.3	---	----
Missing	<u>2</u>	<u>1.7</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>----</u>
Total	120	100.0	120	100.0

Average Rents: Lower-End-Of-Market \$371, Actual Rent \$285.

The houses are mainly rented below lower-end-of-market rent. As table 3 indicates less than 10% are rented at market rent. With 90% of the homes rented below lower-end-of-market there is little room for very deep subsidies. Accordingly, only about 16% of the homes are rented more than \$150 below lower-end-of-market.

TABLE 3

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOWER-END-OF-MARKET AND ACTUAL RENT

<u>Interval</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
\$		
0	11	9.2
1- 50	29	24.2
51-100	33	27.5
101-150	26	21.7
Above 150	19	15.8
Missing	<u>2</u>	<u>1.7</u>
Total	120	100.0

The low unit price combined with a broad but shallow subsidy allows the project to house a large proportion of low-income families. Family incomes for the 120 families in this study range from just under \$5,000 per year to about \$32,000 per year, and average \$14,717 per year. As table 4 indicates, if \$15,000 is used as a low-income line about 51% of the families are low-income. Drawing the line at \$20,000 places 72.5% of the families in the low-income category.

TABLE 4

1981 FAMILY INCOME

<u>Interval</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
\$		
0- 5,000	8	6.7
5,001-10,000	32	26.7
10,001-15,000	21	17.5
15,001-20,000	26	21.7
20,001-25,000	23	19.2
25,001-30,000	7	5.8
30,001-35,000	<u>3</u>	<u>2.5</u>
	120	100.0

Average Income \$14,717.00

As the above evidence demonstrates, the project provides family housing at a low per unit cost. The low cost makes it possible to direct this housing toward low-income rather than middle-income families. However, for such a project to be viable in the long run it must be able to obtain both tenant satisfaction and neighbourhood support. The project was designed with both these considerations in mind.

2. Special Features

(a) Tenant Satisfaction

A number of features of the project were designed to increase tenant satisfaction; these include:

House type, community amenities, dispersion of units, choice of house and neighbourhood, ownership opportunity, maintenance of existing social networks, and the use of existing neighbourhood networks.

House Type: All houses are ground level with private frontyards and backyards. There is good evidence that in our society most families with young children believe single-detached or semi-detached housing to be the most appropriate. Other forms of housing, however adequate objectively, are generally believed to be satisfactory only on a temporary basis, and/or as a means to a more appropriate type of housing.¹

Community Amenities: Each house is located in an established urban neighbourhood with a mature network of services: schools, libraries, recreation complexes, social service agencies, hospitals, bus service, churches, service clubs, social clubs, neighbourhood stores. Location within a dense web of services is particularly important for low-income families because they generally lack the private resources to make use of services unless they are in close proximity.

1. William Michelson, Environmental Choice, Human Behaviour and Residential Satisfaction (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 25, 26. See also Michelson's "Long and Short Range Criteria for Housing Choice and Environmental Behaviour," Journal of Social Issues 36:3 (1980), 135-149.

Dispersion of Units: The houses are widely dispersed throughout a substantial area of the city, and each is part of a residential neighbourhood. Tenants may have to deal with neighbourhood apprehension or even hostility toward social housing families, but it is also quite possible that neighbours do not even know that a project house is part of a housing project. Thus the tenant family has considerable opportunity to become an unobtrusive part of a typical neighbourhood.

Choice: When approved for a house a family has a choice about the house and the neighbourhood. In conjunction with the choice of type of house the family also can consider the advantages of different locations such as: proximity to friends and relatives, to place of employment and worship, and to the schools attended by their children. The family's opportunity to choose should enhance satisfaction in two ways: first, by allowing the family as much scope as possible to fit housing to its own needs as it understands them; second, the family can be expected to feel a significant responsibility to make the best of whatever shortcomings the house and/or location may have, for it was after all their choice.

Home Ownership: The Hamilton project provides families with rental housing in the short run and the possibility of home ownership in the longer run. This opportunity can be expected to alter the way that the family feels about their home. Michelson's work on the criteria for choosing a house indicates that a family's satisfaction with their current housing is "...in part a function of their expectations for the future, apart from the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction engendered by the objective characteristics of present surroundings".² If a family expects to own the house they are moving into, and if home ownership is one of their goals, they will be more satisfied with this accommodation than with customary rental accommodation.

Existing Networks: Many of the tenants have chosen to live in neighbourhoods close to relatives and friends. This choice allows existing social networks to be maintained and strengthened. These networks are used as resources by nearly all families in dealing with the activities and problems of every-day life, and they are of particular importance to low-income families.

2. Michelson (1980), 139.

Neighbourhood Networks: The neighbourhoods of these houses provide the possibility of augmenting the existing social networks. As predominantly owner-occupied neighbourhoods each has its own helping network for the tasks of daily living. This potentially supportive environment is usually taken for granted, because it is such a ubiquitous feature of residential neighbourhoods. However, these networks are very thin in transient areas, and also in concentrations of low-income social housing units.

(b) Neighbourhood Approval and Support

If the project does produce a high level of tenant satisfaction, this satisfaction should in turn contribute to neighbourhood support. But the project was designed to have the potential for eliciting neighbourhood support more directly.

In the first stage of the project all houses were empty when purchased. Some had been empty for more than three years and most required extensive renovations. Empty houses create negative externalities. At a minimum they become a neighbourhood eyesore, a minor nuisance for adjacent homeowners, and they may reduce slightly the market value of nearby homes. In the longer run an empty house becomes overgrown and the exterior deteriorates from lack of maintenance and minor vandalism. Also there is a good

chance that the house will be broken into and the interior vandalized. In some areas there is a substantial risk that it will be set on fire by a casual trespasser, posing a real danger to the adjacent houses. The longer the house remains empty the greater the negative externalities, which will be reflected in substantially reduced prices for neighbouring homes as owners opt to move rather than maintain and renovate their homes, and potential buyers shy away from a declining neighbourhood.

The purchase, renovation, and rental of vacant houses removes the negative externality. Objectively the size of this benefit depends on the condition of each house as reflected in the cost of renovation, or perhaps more accurately by the ratio of renovation cost to purchase price. Subjectively the size of the benefit will be determined by the evaluations of those living nearby. The initial result of the project is to benefit the immediate residents by removing the negative impact of empty and deteriorating houses. By contributing to a neighbourhood in this manner the project can be expected to earn the support of nearby residents.

III EVIDENCE OF TENANT SATISFACTION

1. Overall Satisfaction

Tenants were interviewed in their homes with a highly structured questionnaire (see Appendix I) nine or

ten months after initial occupancy, and always after they had been notified about lease renewal. They were asked about their overall degree of satisfaction with their decision to move into a project house. They were also asked about their satisfaction with the house, the neighbourhood, and the services provided by the housing corporations.

Also included were a number of more detailed questions about both the house and the neighbourhood. They were asked how the house compared with their previous residence, whether it was the right size for their family, their view of the condition of the house, and how the cost of maintaining the house compared with their expectations. On the question of location they were asked whether they felt the street was quiet or noisy, safe or unsafe, friendly or unfriendly, and whether they felt "at home" in the area. Tenants were also asked whether they would like to buy the house and whether they planned to buy the house.

The data on overall satisfaction with their decision, on the degree of satisfaction with the house, the neighbourhood, and Kiwanis' services are found in table 5. Although all four questions elicited a high degree of satisfaction, the question about the decision to move into a project home elicited the greatest degree of satisfaction. Of the 120 tenants 71 were very satisfied, 45 satisfied, 3 were indifferent, 1 dissatisfied, and none very dissatisfied. The degree of satisfaction with both the house and

TABLE 5

TENANT SATISFACTION WITH DECISION, HOUSE, NEIGHBOURHOOD, AND ORGANIZATION

	<u>Decision</u>		<u>House</u>		<u>Neighbourhood</u>		<u>Organization</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very Dissatisfied	---	---	---	---	1	.8	---	---
Dissatisfied	1	.8	2	1.7	6	5.0	---	---
Indifferent	3	2.5	4	3.3	8	6.7	11	9.2
Satisfied	45	37.5	59	49.2	76	63.3	51	42.5
Very Satisfied	71	59.2	55	45.8	29	24.2	57	47.5
Missing	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>.8</u>
Total	120	100.0	120	100.0	120	100.0	120	100.0

the services of the organization were slightly less, but both were still very positive. The level of satisfaction with the neighbourhood was lower than with either the house or the organization. Twenty-nine tenants were very satisfied with the neighbourhood, 76 were satisfied, 8 were indifferent, 6 dissatisfied, and 1 very dissatisfied.

2. Satisfaction with House

Overall there was a high degree of satisfaction expressed in response to the more detailed questions about the house. Of the 120 tenants, 109 said they were more satisfied with the house than what they had lived in before, 2 were less satisfied, 3 were indifferent between the house and their previous accommodation, and 2 said they did not know. On the question of house size, 103 said the house was just right in size, 13 found it to be too small and 4 felt it was too large. There was also general satisfaction with the condition of the house. Forty-seven said it was very good, 52 good, 18 average, 3 bad, and no one felt it was very bad. This high level of satisfaction persisted even though many tenants found the costs (excluding rent) to be higher than they had expected. Fifty-two tenants said costs were higher than expected, 42 that they were the same, 19 that they were less, and 7 said they did not know. Nearly all of the 52 who found costs to be higher cited heating as being more than expected. The

high level of satisfaction with the house, despite higher than expected costs for nearly half the tenants, may in part be explained by the almost unanimous preference expressed for living in a house. All but three tenants prefer a house to an apartment or a townhouse.

Although there is a wide range of house prices (purchase plus renovation) there was no overall correlation between degree of satisfaction with the house and house price. Tenants in the lower priced houses were as satisfied as in the higher priced houses. However, as expected, those tenants who received the largest subsidy (the difference between lower-end-of-market rent and actual rent) were more satisfied than those who pay closer to market rent. Nearly 46% of all tenants were very satisfied with the house but nearly 74% of those receiving a subsidy of more than \$150 per month were very satisfied. Since the lower-income families receive the largest subsidies there is also a corresponding relationship between income and satisfaction with the house. Compared to the nearly 46% of the 120 tenants who were very satisfied, 60% of those with incomes under \$10,000 were very satisfied.

3. Satisfaction with Neighbourhood

The responses to different aspects of the neighbourhood were less positive than to different elements of the house. As indicated in table 6, although a large majority of the tenants feel their neighbourhoods are quiet,

safe, and friendly, nonetheless, 25 feel the neighbourhood is not quiet, and 23 feel it is not safe. The variance in perceptions of quietness and safety is closely associated with degree of satisfaction with the neighbourhood.

TABLE 6

**PERCEPTIONS OF NEIGHBOURHOOD
QUIETNESS, SAFETY, AND FRIENDLINESS**

	<u>Quiet</u>	<u>Safe</u>	<u>Friendly</u>
<u>Response</u>	Number	Number	Number
Yes	86	90	97
Don't Know	9	7	17
No	<u>25</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	120	120	120

Of the 86 tenants who say the neighbourhood is quiet, 26 or 30.6% are very satisfied, 54 or 63.5% are satisfied, and 5 or 5.9% are indifferent or dissatisfied. However, of the 25 who say the neighbourhood is noisy, only 2 or 8.0% are very satisfied, 16 or 64% are satisfied, and 7 or 28% are indifferent or dissatisfied. Safety is even more closely associated with satisfaction. Of the 90 tenants who feel their neighbourhood is safe, 28 or 31.1% are very satisfied, 55 or 61.1% are satisfied and 7 or 7.7% are indifferent or dissatisfied. Of the 22 who feel the neighbourhood is unsafe, none are very satisfied, 15 or

68% are satisfied, and 7 or 31.8% are indifferent or dissatisfied.

Tenants were also asked three series of questions designed to indicate the strength of friendship and family networks, on the expectation that the stronger these networks the more likely the tenant would be satisfied with the choice of a house, the location, and the overall decision to move into a project house. (See Appendix 1 questions 23-36.) However, the data does not support the expectation. There is no discernable relationship between the indicators of the strength of friendship and family networks and the indicators of satisfaction.

On the other hand, interaction with the neighbours was associated with satisfaction with the neighbourhood. (Questions 38-46 in Appendix 1 were used as indicators of neighbourhood interaction.) Tables 7 and 8 indicate the nature of this relationship. Moving down table 7 from those who do not know their neighbours to those who know them very well the proportion of tenants who are very satisfied increases substantially. Indeed, of the 10 who do not know their neighbours none are very satisfied with the neighbourhood, whereas the four who know their neighbours well are very satisfied.

TABLE 7

SATISFACTION WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD

AND KNOWING THE NEIGHBOURS

	<u>Satisfaction with Neighbourhood</u>					
	(Number)					
	<u>Very</u> <u>Dissat.</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>	<u>Ind.</u>	<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Very</u> <u>Satis.</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Knowing the</u> <u>Neighbours</u>						
Not at All	--	1	3	6	--	10
A Bit	1	3	3	39	10	56
Fairly Well	--	--	2	22	14	38
Very Well	--	--	--	--	4	4
	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1	4	8	67	28	108

A similar relationship is evident in table 8. As the degree of satisfaction with the neighbourhood increases the percentage of those who visit their neighbours increases. Thus, 77.8% of the 27 who are very satisfied visit their neighbours and only 22.2% of those who are very satisfied do not visit their neighbours. For the tenants as a whole only 53.4% visit their neighbours and 46.6% do not.

TABLE 8

**VISITING WITH NEIGHBOURS AND SATISFACTION
WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD**

		<u>Satisfaction with Neighbourhood</u>					
		<u>Very Dissat.</u>	<u>Dissat.</u>	<u>Indif.</u>	<u>Satis.</u>	<u>Very Satis.</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Visit with Neighbours</u>							
<u>Yes</u>							
Number	----		1	3	38	21	63
Percent	----		16.7	37.5	50.0	77.8	53.4
<u>No</u>							
Number		1	5	5	38	6	55
Percent		100	83.3	62.5	50.0	22.2	46.6
		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<u>Total</u>							
Number		1	6	8	76	27	118
Percent		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

4. Summary

Overall there is a high level of satisfaction amongst the tenants. The degree of satisfaction is somewhat higher with respect to the house and the housing corporation than with the neighbourhoods in which the houses are located.

With very few exceptions tenants feel the project provides them with better housing than they previously lived in, and there is a high level of satisfaction with the size of the house and the condition of the house. Those families receiving the largest subsidies stand out as particularly satisfied with the house, and because the lower-income families receive the largest subsidies there is a negative correlation between income and satisfaction. Although nearly one-half the families feel the costs of living in the house are greater than they expected, this feeling does not appear to have significantly affected the level of satisfaction. Higher than expected costs are also offset by the fact that all but three tenants feel that single detached housing is preferable to either apartment units or row housing.

Quietness and safety emerged as the two aspects of the neighbourhood most closely related to satisfaction. Proximity to friends and/or relatives was not associated with neighbourhood satisfaction, but knowing the neighbours was associated with satisfaction. Tenants who knew their

neighbours and who visited them were much more likely to be very satisfied with the neighbourhood.

IV EVIDENCE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD APPROVAL AND SUPPORT

1. Level of Approval and Support

Data on neighbourhood support was obtained from interviews with the closest neighbours of the 120 project houses. The neighbours interviewed lived in the homes on either side of the project house or directly across the street. From a potential group of 360 neighbours--3 at each site--251 neighbours were interviewed. All interviews were conducted within one month of the tenant interviews, approximately 10 months after the tenants moved in. The interview questionnaire (see Appendix II) was designed so that if the neighbours did not know that the project house was project house, they would not learn this fact from the interview. In short, precautions were taken not to alter the neighbours' perception of the status of the project house, whatever that perception might be. This precaution was even more important than expected, because of the 251 neighbours interviewed only 102 or about 41% correctly identified the tenants as living in a social housing unit.

As an indicator of approval for the changes in the project house neighbours were asked if the changes in the project house had been good for their street. The wording of this question varied depending on whether the neighbours

had indicated that they knew the house was a project house (Appendix II, question 4). As an indicator of support for the continuation of this form of housing, neighbours were also asked if they would like the process to be repeated in the area. Again the exact wording was altered depending on the neighbours' responses to prior questions which determined whether they knew the home was a project house (Appendix II, question 13).

As indicated in table 9 there was substantial neighbourhood approval and support. Nearly 78% thought the changes had been good for the street, 3.3% said the changes had not been good, and 17.9% did not know whether they had or not. Support for the similar use of other houses in the area was also very high. More than 82% were positive, only 2.5% negative and 15.1% were undecided.

TABLE 9

NEIGHBOURHOOD APPROVAL AND SUPPORT

<u>Response</u>	<u>Good for Street</u>		<u>Support for More</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	189	78.7	164	82.4
No	8	3.3	5	2.5
Don't Know	<u>43</u>	<u>17.9</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>15.1</u>
Total	240	100.0	199	100.0

The responses in table 9 include both those neighbours who identified the project house and those who did not.

Table 10 contains the responses from the 102 neighbours who identified the house as a project house. Amongst this group approval and support are both somewhat stronger than for the neighbours as a whole.

TABLE 10

**NEIGHBOURHOOD APPROVAL AND SUPPORT FROM
THOSE WHO IDENTIFY THE PROJECT HOUSE**

<u>Response</u>	<u>Good for Street</u>		<u>Support for More</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	88	88.0	86	86.0
No	7	7.0	3	3.0
Don't Know	5	5.0	11	11.0
Missing	<u>2</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>----</u>
Total	102	100.0	102	100.0

Surprisingly, there does not appear to be a relationship between neighbourhood approval and support and the purchase price, the cost of renovations, or the total cost of the house. However, there is a partial relationship between family income and approval. Overall, 78.7% of the neighbours approve, but of the 17 neighbours of the families with income under \$5,000 per year only 9 or 52.9% approve.

TABLE 11

NEIGHBOURS' APPROVAL AND SUPPORT BY HOW WELL THEY KNOW TENANTS

<u>Know Tenant</u>		<u>Good For Street</u>				<u>Support For More</u>			
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>
Not at All	Number	63	6	3.3	102	49	4	22	75
	Percent	61.8	5.9	32.4	100.0	65.3	5.3	29.3	100.0
A Bit	Number	86	2	9	97	77	1	7	85
	percent	88.7	2.1	9.3	100.0	90.6	1.2	8.2	100.0
Fairly Well	Number	33	---	1	34	31	---	1	32
	Percent	97.1	---	2.9	100.0	96.9	---	3.1	100.0
Very Well	Number	6	---	---	6	6	---	---	6
	Percent	<u>100.0</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Total		188	8	43	239	163	5	30	198

There is a strong relationship between both approval and support and how well the neighbours know the tenants (table 11). Of the neighbours who do not know the tenants at all 61.8% approve; the percentage of approval rises to 88.8 for those who know the tenant a bit, to 97.1 for those who know them well, and 100.0 for the small group of 6 neighbours who know the tenants very well. The relationship is much the same between support and knowing the tenants. The four corresponding percentages are: 65.3, 90.6, 96.9, and 100.0. By far the largest difference in both instances is between those who know the tenants a bit and those who do not know them at all. Thus, it appears to be important to understand what factors contribute to neighbours meeting the tenants and getting to know them at least a bit.

From our data one factor stands out as very important in distinguishing between neighbours who know the tenants and those who do not--the presence of children in the neighbours' homes. Table 12 compares the percentage of neighbours who have met the tenants with the percentage for those neighbours with children at home, children close in age to the tenants', and those whose children get along with the tenants' children, regardless of age. Just over 61% of the neighbours have met the tenants, but of the 104 neighbours with children at home 71.7% have met the tenants. If the children are close in age the figure is 84.0%. If the children get along with the tenants' children, regardless of age differences, the percentage rises to 88.7.

TABLE 12

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NEIGHBOURING CHILDREN
AND MEETING THE TENANTS**

	NEIGHBOURS			
	<u>Total</u>	<u>With Children at Home</u>	<u>Children Close in Age</u>	<u>Children Get Along</u>
Number of Neighbours	251	145	50	62
Number who have met Tenant	154	104	42	55
Percentage who have met Tenant	61.4	71.7	84.0	88.7

The presence of children is not only relevant to whether neighbours meet the tenants, but also to how well they know the tenants. (See table 13 next page.) Because only 6 neighbours know the tenants very well the bottom row is not very informative. But comparisons between "Not at all" and "Fairly Well" show significant differences when children are taken into account. Of 239 neighbours 42.7% do not know the tenants and 14.2% know them fairly well. For those with children at home the corresponding percentages are 33.1 and 18.6; for those with children close in age they are 20.0 and 28.0; and for those whose children get along with the tenants only 14.5% do not know the tenants, whereas 30.6% know the tenants fairly well.

TABLE 13

NEIGHBOURING CHILDREN AND HOW WELL TENANTS ARE KNOWN

<u>Know Tenant</u>	<u>All Neighbours</u>		<u>Children at Home</u>		<u>Children Close in Age</u>		<u>Children Get Along</u>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not at all	102	42.7	48	33.1	10	20.0	9	14.5
A bit	97	40.6	67	46.2	24	48.0	31	50.0
Fairly Well	34	14.2	27	18.6	14	28.0	19	30.6
Very Well	<u>6</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2.1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4.0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4.8</u>
Total	239	100.0	145	100.0	50	100.0	62	100.0

2. Summary

Nearly 60% of the neighbours were unaware that the project house was part of a social housing project. However, from both those who realized it was social housing, and from those who did not, there was a very high level of approval for the changes that had taken place, and support for similar changes in their neighbourhood. Indeed, the level of approval and support was somewhat higher from those who knew it was a project house.

Unexpectedly, approval and support were not associated with the price of the house nor with the cost of renovations. However, approval and support were significantly reduced amongst neighbours if the project house was occupied by a very low-income family.

Neighbours who knew the tenants were much more likely to approve than those who did not know the tenants. Those neighbours with children at home were much more likely to know the tenants than those without children, and also were likely to know the tenants well.

V CONCLUSIONS

The evidence in this study indicates that the first stage of the project produced a high level of tenant satisfaction, and a high level of neighbourhood approval

and support. The fact that there was a high degree of approval and support from those neighbours who knew the house was part of a social housing project is very significant. It indicates that neighbourhood approval for the improvements made to empty and deteriorating housing is not offset by disapproval for the use of the house for social housing. Indeed, approval and support was somewhat higher from those neighbours who knew that the house was part of a social housing project than for those who were unaware of this fact. These findings are sufficiently positive to suggest that housing projects of this nature may be viable in other urban areas with comparable stocks of empty housing.

The very substantial neighbourhood acceptance of this form of family social housing is encouraging for the next stage of the project in which most of the houses purchased are owner-occupied. However, the amount of neighbourhood approval and support under these circumstances is yet to be determined. If the use of previously occupied housing does generate widespread acceptance, then this type of social housing may be feasible in urban communities. without a significant stock of vacant housing.

QUESTIONNAIRE - TENANT

A. We are interested in knowing how people feel about their homes, the street they live on and whether people in the neighbourhood help each other. First, I would like to ask some questions about how you feel about this house.

1. Before you moved here, did you live in an:

- 1. Apartment
- 2. Townhouse
- 3. House
- 4. Other _____

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2. Are you more satisfied or less satisfied with this house than the last one you lived in?

- 1. More
- 2. Less (go to 4, then 3)
- 3. About the same
- 4. Don't know

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3. What do you like most about this house?

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4. What do you like least about this house?

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5. Is this house too large,
too small or just right
for your family?

Comments

1. Too large
2. Too small
3. Just right
4. Don't know

6. Generally, how do you feel
about the condition of this
house? Is it:

1. Very bad
2. Bad
3. Average
4. Good
5. Very good

7. In terms of cost, does this
house cost more to maintain
or less to maintain than
you thought it would?

1. More
2. Less
3. The same (Go to 9 then 8)
4. Don't know

8. What costs more than you
thought it would?

--

9. What costs less than you
thought it would?

--

10. Overall, how do you feel
about this house? Are you:

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. _____
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

11. If you could choose, would you prefer to live in:

1. Apartment
2. Townhouse
3. House
4. Other _____

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12. What is it that you like about living in a/an _____?
(type of housing)

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B. Now, I would like to ask how you feel about this neighbourhood.

13. Why did you choose to live in this area and not another one?

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14. How do you feel about living in this part of the city?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. _____
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

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15. How do you feel about living on this street?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. _____
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

16. Do you feel at home in this area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

17. Is this a quiet or a noisy area to live in?

1. Noisy
2. Quiet
3. Don't know

18. Do you feel that the streets around here are safe for you and your family?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

19. Is this a friendly or an unfriendly street?

1. Friendly
2. Unfriendly
3. Don't know

20. Overall, how do you feel about this neighbourhood?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. _____
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

21. Would you like to buy this house?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

22. Do you plan to buy this house?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

C. We would also like to ask a little bit about the people in this neighbourhood.

23. Do any of your relatives live near here?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

24. About how far away do they live?

- 1. Less than one block
- 2. About a block
- 3. About half a mile
- 4. More than a mile
- 5. None in this city

Do any of these relatives help you with:

25. Babysitting?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

26. House repairs?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

27. Do they lend you things?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

28. Talking about problems?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

29. Other things?

- 1. Yes _____
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

30. How far away does your most helpful relative live?

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31. About how far away do your closest friends live?

1. Less than one block
2. About a block
3. About half a mile
4. More than a mile
5. None in this city

Do any of these friends help you with:

32. Babysitting?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

33. House repairs?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

34. Do they lend you things?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

35. Talking about problems?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

36. Other things?

1. Yes _____
2. No
3. Don't know

37. How far away does your most helpful friend live?

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38. How well have you gotten to know the neighbours on this street?

1. Not at all
2. A bit
3. Fairly well
4. Very well

39. Do you do things with your neighbours, like:

(M) go to football games?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know
4. Other _____

OR

(F) go shopping or bingo?

40. Do you go over to visit any of the people you have met in this area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know

Do any neighbours help with:

41. Babysitting?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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42. House repairs?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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43. Do they lend you things?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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44. Talking about problems?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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45. Other things?

- 1. Yes _____
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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46. How far away does your most helpful neighbour live?

_____ ☐

D. In this last part of the questionnaire, we are interested in knowing how you feel about the Kiwanis Homes Organization.

47. How did you find out about Kiwanis Homes?

- 1. Friend
- 2. Relative
- 3. Newspaper
- 4. Radio
- 5. Social agency
- 6. Other _____

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48. Would you recommend Kiwanis Homes to a friend or relative?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know

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49. Why?

_____ ☐

1. Satisfied
2. Not satisfied
3. Don't know

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54. Overall, how do you feel about your decision to move into a Kiwanis home?

1. Very dissatisfied
2. Dissatisfied
3. _____
4. Satisfied
5. Very satisfied

Do you have any further comments on anything I have not asked you about?

[illegible]

QUESTIONNAIRE - NEIGHBOURHOOD SUPPORT

1. Do you remember when the house
next door, # _____,
was empty?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't Know

2. I think it was fixed up about
a year ago. Do you know who
had it fixed up?

- 1. Kiwanis (go to 4)
- 2. Wrong Answer
- 3. Don't Know

3. Do you know who the family next
door is renting or buying from?

- 1. Kiwanis
- 2. Wrong Answer
- 3. Don't Know

4. Has it been good for your street
to have Kiwanis fix up and rent
the house? OR
Has it been good for your street
to have the house sold and
fixed up?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (go to 6 & 6a)
- 3. Don't Know

5. (IF YES) What do you like about
it?

6. (IF NO) What don't you like
about it?

6a. Is there anything you like
about it?

7. Do you know anybody who has applied for a Kiwanis home?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

8. Have you met any of the people from _____ who fixed the house up?

1. Yes
2. No (go to 13)
3. Don't Know (go to 13)

9. Maintenance people?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

10. Did they disturb you in any way?

11. Have you met any others?

1. Yes
2. No (go to 13)
3. Don't Know (go to 13)

12. Were they helpful or not?

1. Yes, they were
2. No, they were not
3. Don't Know

13. If there were other empty houses in your area, would you like _____ to buy them and fix them up?

OR

would you like them to be bought and fixed up in the same way?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

14. Have you met the family next door?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

15. How well do you know them?

1. Not at all
2. A bit
3. Fairly well
4. Very well

16. Have you helped them with anything?

1. Yes
2. No

17. Have they ever helped you?

1. Yes, they have
2. No, they have not

18. Do you have any children at home?

1. Yes
2. No (go to 21)

19. Are they close in age to the children next door?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

20. Do your children get along with the children next door?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

21. How long have you lived at your present address?

THANK YOU