

Stop, collaborate and listen: deliberative partnerships and affordable housing strategies in Toronto and Melbourne

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Abstract

In Melbourne and Toronto, problems surrounding the provision of affordable housing is threatening the long-term social, environmental and economic sustainability of each city. This year has seen the introduction of affordable housing strategies developed by the state government of Victoria and the provincial government of Ontario, respectively. The success of these strategies relies on partnerships between the private development sector, not-for-profit community housing providers, philanthropic investors and various levels of government.

A comparison of policy documents and eight interviews in each city suggest that active, legitimate and clear consultation varied with partners and the community. Literature further advocates for greater consensus building and collaboration from all key partners when forming strategic plans, to ensure that the legitimacy of ensuing strategy and to bolster its ability to live beyond political cycles. The research suggests that better affordable housing outcomes and strategies will arise from an active and deliberative partnership approach to housing strategies. The research concluded that the strong consultation and consensus building formed a strong foundation for the Toronto strategy's success. This was further strengthened by its clear vision and goals, as partners were more likely to be on board, compared to their Melbourne counterparts.

Declaration of Authorship

This thesis does not contain any material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any education institution and, to the best of my knowledge, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis. This thesis is of a length of 10,672 words (including Abstract).

Human research ethics for this thesis was approved by the ABP Human Ethics Advisory Group on the 31st May 2017. Ethics ID: 1341095.1

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. V. O. A.', is written next to the 'Signed:' label.

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1. Introduction

Housing affordability has become a crisis across most cities, and Toronto and Melbourne are no exception (City of Toronto, 2015; SGV 2017a). Both cities are of similar size, with slightly different metropolitan governance systems. At the 2016 census, the Greater Toronto Area had just under 6 million residents, whilst metropolitan Melbourne has just over 4.5 million residents (ABS, 2016; Statistics Canada, 2016). The local governments in Melbourne and Toronto are dependent on their respective state/provincial government to implement adequate affordable housing strategies (Suttor, 2011). Both these state and provincial governments also rely on their respective Commonwealth (Australian) and Federal (Canadian) governments for key subsidy funding, with both countries possessing no clear national affordable housing strategy (Government of Ontario, 2016; Burke & Hulse, 2010).

Affordable housing policy issues can be described as a ‘wicked’ policy issue due to the complexity of the issue and its involvement of a large range of different stakeholders (Head & Alford, 2015). The announcement of integrated affordable housing strategies in both Melbourne and Toronto have been welcomed to address increasing homelessness, rising rental prices and house-price driven urban sprawl. The average vacancy rate for rentals in Ontario decreased from 2.6 per cent in 2013 to 2.4 per cent in 2015 (Government of Ontario, 2016). Similarly, in metropolitan Melbourne, the vacancy rate decreased from 2.4 per cent in 2016 to 2.3 per cent in 2017 (REIV, 2017). Spending over 30 per cent of gross household income on rental costs is known as being in ‘rental stress’ (ABS, 2010). Using this definition, 44.5 per cent of low-income renters in Victoria are in rental stress, while the equivalent figure in the City of Toronto is 32 per cent (Breen, 2015; Canadian Rental Housing Index, 2017). To be able to cover its ownership costs, a typical household in Toronto would need to spend 45.9 per cent of its income, which is the highest since 1990 (Royal Bank of Canada, 2017).

Both rising population and unaffordable rental prices have caused public housing waiting lists to rapidly expand. The waiting list for emergency housing in Victoria exceeds 33,000 vulnerable individuals, which highlights that access to this system is nearly impossible (DHHS, 2016). Rooming houses and other ‘last resort’ options continue to close, which is highly

correlated with the large number of rough sleepers (Witte, 2017). Similarly, the average wait time in Toronto for 171,360 affordable housing applicants is approaching almost four years, and daily occupancy rates at homeless shelters running at 95 per cent (City of Toronto, 2017). A reliance on the private sector to increase the supply of affordable housing has not met the needs of low income households, with public housing the ‘option’ of last resort for the most disadvantaged households (Breen, 2015).

1.1 Introduction to both case studies

The provincial government of Ontario updated the 2010 ‘Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy’ (Ministry of Housing, 2016) in December 2016, which includes allowing municipal governments to implement inclusionary zoning. Davison *et al.* (2010) define inclusionary zoning as a planning tool used to deliver a proportion of affordable housing within a particular development, or a financial contribution paid by developers for the greater provision of affordable housing. In March 2017, the State Government of Victoria announced *Homes for Victorians*, which outlines various strategies to improve affordable housing outcomes within Victoria (SGV, 2017a). The State’s metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne Refresh*, was also released within the same month. This document integrates a housing stream within its implementation plan (SGV, 2017e).

Both the state (Victoria) and provincial (Ontario) governments’ affordable housing policies aim to affect the quality and quantity of affordable housing through collaborative partnerships. This includes partnerships within various local (Victoria) and municipal (Ontario) governments. In metropolitan Melbourne, there are thirty-two local governments, with population sizes varying from 100,000 to 500,000, including inner-city councils such as Melbourne and Moreland, located directly north of central Melbourne (ABS, 2016 – and see Figure 1, below). Conversely, there are five municipal governments within the Greater Toronto Area, with the City of Toronto responsible for 2.5 million residents and the remaining regional governments of approximately one million residents each (Statistics Canada, 2016 – see Figure 2, below).

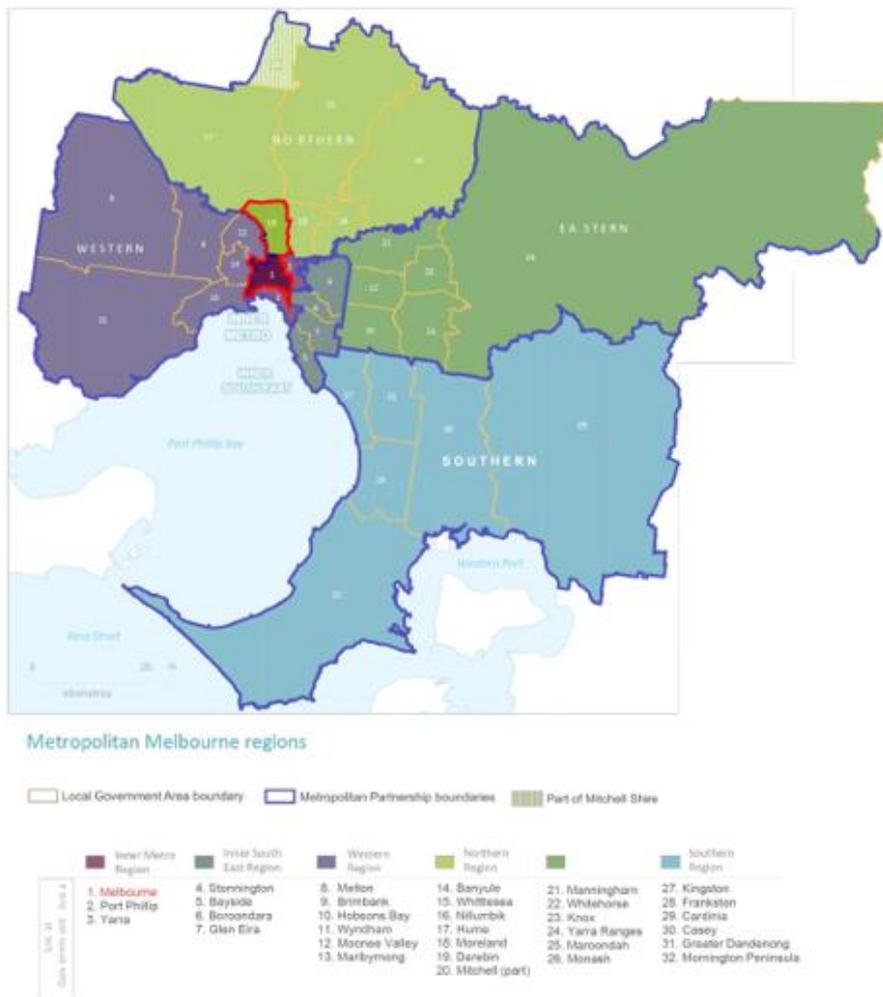


FIGURE 1: METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

Metropolitan Melbourne has 32 local government areas, including the City of Melbourne and the City of Moreland. A representative of Moreland was interviewed for this research (Image Source: SGV 2017b, p. 48)



FIGURE 2: GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE AREA

Greater Toronto Area outlined in Red (Image Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2013, Page 99)

1.2 Aims and justification of research

Deliberative planning theory contends that greater partnerships between governments, the private sector, philanthropic actors and community advocates are the greatest way to develop and implement innovative solutions to ‘wicked’ policy problems, such as affordable housing (Whitzman, 2015). Since both new strategies highlight the importance of working with a multiplicity of actors, a natural experiment can be conducted between the two case

studies – to explore the initial reactions from key housing actors on the development of the strategies; the extent to which they were consulted during the development of these strategies; and whether this amount of consultation was adequate to ensure the successful implementation of each strategy through partnerships moving forward.

1.2.1 Research questions appropriate to the problem:

The main research question is:

- *What are the initial reactions of key affordable housing actors regarding the introduction of affordable housing strategies in Melbourne and Toronto and their potential for successful implementation through partnerships?*

In addition to the main research question, the following sub question is related to the experiences of the key housing actors in the formation and consultation of the resultant policies:

- *How were key housing actors consulted over the formation of the affordable housing strategies in Melbourne and Toronto?*

This research project aims to discover whether there may be any benefits from the social partnerships formed through consultation. An emphasis will be placed on the importance of ‘consensus building,’ using the Innes & Booher (1999) framework. It will assist to evaluate whether greater collaboration has led to a more beneficial outcome through the formation of shared meanings between differing stakeholders in each case study.

1.3 Research methodology and thesis structure

To provide background to the research question, a literature review was carried out (**Chapter 2**) on the role of deliberative partnerships in solving issues of housing affordability and the importance of consultation in the formation of a strategic plan. A brief overview of both *Homes for Victorians* and the *Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy* was also compiled.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology undertaken, as this research took subjective epistemology (that is, the answers sought will lie within subjects/the interviewees). The main method of gathering information was conducted primarily through semi-structured interviews (Bryman, 2016). A comparative plan analysis was conducted (**Chapter 4**) to

illuminate the context of consultation and targets utilized for each strategy, and evaluates their capacity to implement successful affordable housing strategies via partnerships.

Chapter 5 presents the findings from 6-8 semi-structured interviews from each case study. The actors who were interviewed included: local/municipal government planning officers; state/provincial planning officers; representatives from private housing developers; representatives from social housing providers; representatives from housing finance providers; and affordable housing advocates. The Melbourne interviews were face to face, while the Toronto interviews were conducted via Skype. The concluding research findings and analysis are presented in **Chapter 6**.

2. Literature Review

The literature review contextualises discussion on affordable housing strategies in both Melbourne and Toronto, by providing an overview of the issues surrounding deliberative partnerships for affordable housing. This will be followed by a review of the existing policies and governance in Victoria and Ontario, and their respective capital cities, Melbourne and Toronto.

2.1 Addressing housing affordability in Toronto and Melbourne

The terms affordable and social housing have been used interchangeably. Tomlinson (2017) describes affordable housing as an aspiration for all who are unable to enter the market for either rental or ownership of housing. Social housing is used as an umbrella term of affordable housing, which encompasses public housing and homes owned and managed by not-for-profit community housing providers (SGV, 2017a).

Changes in affordable housing circumstances impact costs to Government, both directly (e.g. a reduction in medical costs) and indirectly (e.g. an increase in personal satisfaction may result in less reliance of Government support agencies) (Phibbs, 2000; Witte, 2017). With fast-rising rents and surging home prices, the Royal Bank of Canada has identified Toronto as Canada's least affordable housing market, with housing unaffordability at its highest in 27 years (RBC, 2017). Mazzei and Spiller (2015) advocate that greater pro-active social and affordable housing programs are crucial to open up more living opportunities, especially for young people. This has exacerbated inter and intra-spatial inequalities, in metropolitan Melbourne especially, through rising housing costs and poor implementation of social infrastructure in the outer-suburbs.

Rowley and Phibbs (2017) argue that strong and sustained leadership is crucial to the successful implementation and delivery of a strategic housing policy. This strategy needs to be developed in active consultation with all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and relevant areas of government, to make sure all stakeholders are supportive.

Through this method, stakeholders have the best chance to find the most flexible and innovative solution to this ‘wicked’ problem.

2.2 Barriers to affordable housing in Melbourne and Toronto

The metropolitan governance institution in Melbourne was terminated by the State Government in the early 1980s. Spiller (2014) asserts that this was a part of the micro-economic reform processes undertaken to target bureaucratic duplication in the provision of infrastructure and services across the country under the progressive Hawke/Keating governments (p. 371). By then, the Melbourne CBD was known as a ‘dump’ – as private interests took advantage of weak political leadership and the lack of vision in planning for housing in the metropolitan area (Hambleton, 2014, p. 13). Presently in 2017, Melbourne has been dubbed the ‘most liveable city in the world’ for the seventh year running by *The Economist* (Lucas & Heffernan, 2017).

However, literature suggests that Melbourne’s liveability, competitiveness, sustainability, resilience and inclusivity present challenges to the growing socio-spatial disadvantages across the metropolitan Melbourne area (Randolph & Tice, 2014; Newton *et al.*, 2017). This research will also be based on Fainstein’s (2010) concept of a ‘just city,’ where intensification through strategic plans should focus on equity. Equity is defined as the “distribution of both material and nonmaterial benefits derived from public policy that does not favour those who are already better off” (Fainstein, 2010, p. 36). An affordable housing ‘market failure’ has occurred because of three reasons, as identified by Whitzman (2015):

- A policy failure at the federal, state and local levels due to the absence of consistent and integrated housing policy (Whitzman 2015);
- An integrated planning failure where integral infrastructure such as public transport or health centres have not kept up with rapid population growth, both into and within Melbourne. This has led to disadvantages on the socio-spatial scale, where there has been inadequate provision of social infrastructure upon Melbourne’s outer suburbs, which are currently experiencing the highest levels of population growth (Gleeson, *et al.*, 2012; Spiller, 2014).

- A governance failure where the absence of a metropolitan governing body to oversee a consistent strategy between local and state governments in Melbourne (Gleeson *et al.*, 2012).

Like Melbourne, Toronto was once managed by a metropolitan body from the 1950s, which was charged with the administration and operation of social housing. However, during the late 1990s, the forced municipal government amalgamations led to the province downloading all of their public/social housing stock and operation costs to the municipalities (Kipfer & Keil, 2002). The responsibility and administration of all social housing now lie with forty-seven municipal-government based service managers across the province (ONPHA 2017).

Whitzman (2015) found that the insufficient property tax base was a barrier to providing affordable housing in the City of Toronto. It was not enough to cover all of their portfolios, including public transport subsidies for new lines and social housing subsidies to keep up with new units and refurbishing the older stock. This had led to a governance and fiscal failure, as both provincial and federal governments have essentially been silent on affordable housing provision and their ability to subsidize affordable housing through their tax-bases.

2.3 Collaborative partnerships and affordable housing

The deliberative planning literature argues that the benefits of diverse partnerships go beyond specific strategies (Healey, 1997). These benefits overcome the barriers to collaborative work, contribute to consensus building and create necessary social infrastructure which can ensure partnerships can move beyond political cycles of strategies (Albrechts, 2010; Innes and Booher, 2002; Whitzman, 2014). Consensus building may not be effective in solving what its participants initially intended. However, Innes and Booher (1999) assert that an important consequence of consensus building is that it may result in the ability for a community to move towards an advanced level of social and environmental performance as key players have formed social infrastructure to work better together, and in turn, have developed “viable, flexible, long-term strategies for action” (Innes & Booher, 1999, p. 413)

Innes and Booher (2002) argue that collaborative planning can result in understanding and consensus building and authentic dialogue between a diverse and interdependent range of actors, which can help in solving wicked issues, such as affordable housing (p. 221). This stems from Habermas' work on communicative rationality (Habermas, 1981). Albrechts (2010) emphasises the importance of visioning on the collaborative journey, and not just focusing on outputs (strategies). This can eventuate into sustainable change that could outlast changes in government and agreements with mutual benefits (Whitzman, 2017, p. 4). It can also avoid any fragmented governance systems which can hinder the delivery of positive results (Innes & Booher, 2010). Albrechts (2010) also argues that transformative practices can compel partners to confront their key beliefs and think 'outside the box' in order to realise innovative solutions to issues such as affordable housing.

2.4 Importance of Consultation

The late Paul Mees (2003) who had critiqued the second predecessor to the current metropolitan Melbourne planning strategy, *Melbourne 2030*, highlighted that the lack of rigorous consultation with not only key actors but also the public community lead to the plan's ultimate demise. This strategy was also released without opportunities to comment on the draft document, with no opportunity for the envisioning or collaborative journey which is pivotal to a strategy's success beyond a political cycle (Yenken, 2001; Albrechts, 2010). The strategy lacked the ability of community will, as the strategy was effectively a "metropolitan community without a voice" (Spiller, 2013, p. 372). As such, lessons can be learnt for both Toronto and Melbourne from Mees in 2003. Mees advocated that consultation is integral to the formation of a strategy that can live beyond political cycles (Mees, 2003). This is because partners are able to envision the journey together through authentic dialogue to not only come up with innovative solutions to 'wicked' problems, but it will ensure that the strategy will be implemented by partners through their collective will (Albrechts 2010; Innes & Booher, 2002).

2.5 The Melbourne Context

2.5.1 Homes for Victorians

The Victorian State Government released its *Homes for Victorians* (HFV) affordable housing strategy in March 2017. It succeeds the then Department of Human Services' housing strategy, *Towards an Integrated Victorian Housing Strategy*, which was released in 2006 and did not have a cross-portfolio consensus across State government departments surrounding housing affordability (Department of Human Services, 2006). One week after the release of HFV, the state government also released its updated metropolitan planning strategy, *Plan Melbourne Refresh* (SGV, 2017b). Despite this strategy's intent to be a 'planning' strategy, Sandercock and Friedmann (2000) note that a 'metropolitan strategy' is "first and foremost a political, rather than planning, document" (Sandercock & Friedmann, 2000, p. 530). It is also notable that HFV had limited and targeted consultation with key stakeholders, and did not involve public consultation or the public-release of a draft for public submissions prior to its official release.

HFV recognizes that every Victorian is deserving of the "safety and security of a home" (SGV, 2017a, p. 3). In this document, the Victorian state government has promised to remove stamp duty concessions for off-the-plan properties for first homebuyers, and to implement an empty property tax on properties in the inner and middle-Melbourne suburbs, in an effort to free up more affordable housing. The introduction of a \$50 million shared equity scheme to assist first-home buyers to fund a mortgage and co-purchase 400 homes, known as *Homes Vic* (SGV 2017d). HFV is a political document that overtly calls for greater federal government representation in matters such as a national bond aggregator model, and its influence on taxation, population growth and income support policies (SGV, 2017a, p. 3).

The policy will allocate at least ten per cent of government-led urban renewal projects to first-home buyers (SGV, 2017a). It will also implement inclusionary zoning on major developments, in which some housing may be transferred to community housing associations to increase the amount of social housing (SGV, 2017a). A transfer of management responsibility of approximately 4,000 public housing dwellings to the community housing sector will also occur after consultation with the sector (SGV 2017a, p. 34). Some organizations within this sector

will be required to allocate at least 75 per cent of their social housing vacancies to those on the waiting list for long term social housing – known as the Victorian Housing Register (SGV 2017a, p. 35; DHHS, 2017a).

Additionally, an \$1 billion Social Housing Growth fund has been established to support innovative partnerships between government and social housing providers, private developers, not-for-profit and local government (SGV, 2017a). This Fund involves the delivery of new affordable housing supply on non-Victorian Government land and subsidized rental of private market dwellings. The annual plan for this Fund will be developed in consultation with the sector (DHHS, 2017a). A \$185 million Public Housing Renewal Program has been established to redevelop ageing public housing stock, to include a greater quantity of both public and private housing on existing public land, with the ownership of titles on these sites to transition to private ownership of the titles of the existing Public Housing Estates (Whitzman *et al.*, 2017).

Moreover, the *Planning and Building Legislation Amendment (Housing Affordability and Other Matters) Bill 2017* was introduced to amend existing state-wide legislation, to include for the first time, a definition of ‘affordable housing’. At the very basic level, “affordable housing” in the Victorian planning context can be defined as: “housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the needs of any of the following: a) very low income households; (b) low income households; (c) moderate income households” (Parliament of Victoria, 2017, p. 3).

2.6 The Ontario Context

Not unlike Melbourne, Metropolitan Toronto has seen various amounts of changes to its policy and governance contexts over the years. In 1952, the provincial government created Metro Toronto to manage growth and social housing within the metropolitan area (Boudreau *et al.* 2006). By 1997, Metro Toronto, which was now responsible for 75 per cent of service provision, including housing (which was downloaded from the provincial government), was amalgamated with its six local municipalities to form what is now the City of Toronto (Boudreau *et al.*, 2006; Whitzman, 2015). In 2006, the provincial government established the

Greater Toronto Area (GTA) consolidation boundary as part of its implementation of its *Places to Grow* regional plan (Whitzman, 2015). However, in the past decades, Toronto's governance and planning arrangements have ensued in a reduction in effectiveness and equity (Boudreau *et al.*, 2009). Currently, the GTA area comprises of five municipalities, with the City of Toronto serving 2.5 million inhabitants with the remaining regional governments of approximately one million residents each (Statistics Canada, 2017).

2.6.1 The Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy - Update

The update of the 2010 *Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy* (the "LTAHS") was released in December 2016, as the Ontarian government was updating their 2010 provincial strategy. The LTAHS presents a modernized framework, that continues a whole-of-government approach to implementing housing programs in the province, and directs funding to innovative and new ideas. This includes: funding more than \$17 million over three years to assist domestic violence survivors, the investment of up to \$2.5 million to support an 'Innovation, Evidence and Capacity Building Fund' to facilitate research, evaluation and capacity building initiatives; an Indigenous Housing Strategy – developed in partnership with Indigenous organizations; and over \$100 million to support housing and services (Ministry of Housing, 2016).

The Government of Ontario similarly recognizes the need for greater affordable housing. Its own Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) further defines "affordable" in relation to ownership and rental housing as:

- (1) annual accommodation costs are not greater than 30 per cent of annual gross household income for both low- and moderate-income householders; or
- (2) when the purchase/rent price is at least ten per cent below the average purchase price of a unit in the regional market area (Ministry of Housing, 2005).

Subject to this definition of affordable housing, the PPS further requires planning authorities to allow for a variety of housing types and densities to meet the needs of residents. The current PPS accommodates the creation of targets for affordable housing and development

standards that minimize cost of housing, whilst at the same time, maintain appropriate levels of public amenity (Ministry of Housing, 2005).

TABLE 1: DEVELOPMENTS IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND HIGHER QUALITY HOUSING

	VICTORIA (MELBOURNE)	ONTARIO (TORONTO)
Core metropolitan planning strategy	<i>Plan Melbourne (2017-2050)</i>	<i>Places to Grow (2017)</i>
State/Provincial affordable housing strategy	<i>Homes for Victorians (2017)</i>	Ontario's Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy - Update (2016)

Source: Austin *et al.*, 2014; Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 2017; State of Victoria, 2017a.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research question

This research aimed to explore the involvement of key housing actors in the consultation process of affordable housing strategies in Melbourne and Toronto. A further focus on the importance on consultation with partners and the public when forming a successful strategy will be illuminated through this research.

This research uses qualitative methods, including a comparative plan analysis to draw an analysis of the Victorian policy, and to compare the Ontarian policy to it. This research method was considered adequate to answer the research question, given the requirement to examine contextual conditions surrounding each strategy's curation and to identify potential patterns that could not be predicted through quantitative methods (Jabareen, 2006). Further insights are gathered from key housing actors through interviews, which illuminate key reactions to the housing policy, and the level to which they felt adequately consulted in the policy-making process, and their thoughts on the pending success of each strategy through partnerships.

3.2 Significance of both case studies

The recent introduction of the abovementioned policies in both Melbourne and Toronto this year, provided the opportunity for a comparative study between each city. A comparison between the state (Victoria) and provincial (Ontario) governments' approach towards affordable housing strategies and the importance of adequate consultation to facilitate greater partnerships in affordable housing success will be illuminated in this research.

3.3 Comparative policy analysis

A comparative case study approach was used to analyse two comparative strategies released by the Victorian and Ontarian governments (Bryman, 2016; Yin, 2014). The justification for selecting these two case studies was due to recent announcements of affordable housing strategies, which provide the perfect natural experiment. Both cities are also comparable due to their similar histories of strong homeownership and domination by single occupancy homes until the 1970s; coupled with a history lacking social housing (public and non-profit) compared to cities in Europe (e.g. England, Germany, Sweden) and Asia (Singapore and Hong

Kong) (Whitzman, 2015). An analysis of affordable housing frameworks in both Melbourne and Toronto was also undertaken to understand the barriers and potential enablers of affordable housing in each case study.

A comparative policy analysis was used to gather an initial understanding of the resultant policies. Policy-making is an activity undertaken by governments, which relates to choices about whether and how public resources and authorities will be used to address problems (Vogel & Henstra, 2015). Public policy is the result of policy-making, and its tangible outputs include decisions, programs, and expenditures (Dunn, 2012). It was helpful to apply a comparative policy analysis in this research in order to extrapolate the factors and processes that underpin the similarities and differences between each policy (Vogel & Henstra, 2015). The policies were further evaluated to identify their specific strengths and weaknesses. Berke and Godschalk (2009) propose that this type of plan evaluation is essential, as it illuminates areas of improvement for housing strategies. They further emphasise that a plan quality evaluation offers an objective and valuable insight into the performance of plans. As such, a comparison of the proposed plans have highlighted the context behind the initial reactions of key housing actors, and what in particular they may be concerned or satisfied with their respective policies.

3.4 Interview method

Key housing actors were invited to participate in approximately 40-60-minute-long semi-structured interviews (via Skype for those based in Toronto). They were asked questions which are provided in Appendix A, below. This method of purposive sampling is justified, as the key housing actors selected are the most relevant to the research question (Bryman, 2016). The key housing actors are representatives of: local government planning officers; state/provincial planning officers; representatives from private housing developers; representatives from social housing providers; representatives from housing finance providers; and affordable housing advocates, from both Melbourne and Toronto.

This interpretive analysis approach was employed, by using meta-analysis tools seeking ‘insights not answers’ of housing actors (Wilkinson, *et al.* 2010). These insights would

contribute to future interdisciplinary explorations regarding the success of these policies in each case study. A narrative analysis approach was also used to gather the interviewees' sentiments towards certain issues, such as the extent to which they felt consulted prior to the resultant policies that were announced. The interviews were digitally recorded, and notes were made from the interviews. As soon as notes were made, they were sent back to the interviewee for their comment. Interviewees were given two weeks to make any changes or provide feedback.

3.5 Interviewees

TABLE 2: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Key Housing Actors – Representatives from:	Melbourne (Victoria)	Toronto (Ontario)
Planners at Local/Provincial Government Level	Moreland City Council	City of Toronto
Officers from State/Municipal Government Level	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)	Ministry of Housing
Social Housing Providers	Community Housing Federation of Victoria (CHFV); Common Equity Housing Limited (CEHL)	Ontario Non-Profit Housing Organisation (ONPHA)
Private Housing Developers	Property Council Australia (PCA); Urban Development Institute Australia (UDIA)	Ontario Home Builders' Association
Housing Finance Providers	Social Enterprise Finance Australia (SEFA); Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation	Community Forward Fund
Affordable Housing Advocates	Council for Homeless Persons;	Wellesley Institute

3.6 Limitations

One limitation that exists is that due to the small amount of experts being interviewed on this topic will mean that a large range of potential opinion and experience will not be collected.

This limitation will be alleviated by seeking the opinion of a range key housing actors, in each case study.

Further caution between the comparison between local/provincial government representatives was noted, as the cities of Moreland and Toronto may be considered an unfair comparison due to their differing size and considered influence within each of their respective State or Province.

3.7 Method justification

Despite the limitation of using semi-structured interviews, which made it difficult to eliminate bias in this research that data would normally circumvent. However, the method approach was justified as insights and opinions were sought from key housing actors, which is the most useful and essential method in solving the research problem (Bryman, 2016). It was also noted by the researcher that the bias sought through interviews would also provide particular insights that were integral to answering the research question. Further to this, a comparative plan analysis was essential to understanding the context and background behind each case study's approach to their resultant policies (Yin, 2014).

3.8 Time frame

Semi-structured interviews began once appropriate ethics approval was obtained from the University of Melbourne in May 2017. After conducting the interviews, relevant qualitative data analysis occurred, before thesis submission in October 2017.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Each interviewed party completed a written consent before the commencement of semi-structured interviews. After interviews were completed, participants were given a summary of notes of their interview, and had approximately two weeks to make any further comments. Participants are not named in this research to ensure that the identity or career of a key housing actor would not be jeopardized.

4. Comparative Plan Analysis

The chapter draws from an analysis of Ontario's *Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy* and Victoria's affordable housing strategy. It then compares *Homes for Victorians* based on the criteria developed by Berke and Godschalk's meta-evaluation (2009) of metropolitan strategies based on 12 US states. Berke and Godschalk (2009) focused on basic questions surrounding *internal validity* – i.e. whether the plans provide enough information about their identified goals and their implementation, costs, monitoring and evaluation – and *external validity* – i.e. cross-sectoral partnerships and integration with other levels of government.

The following questions and measures were derived from Whitzman *et al.*, (2017) and Berke and Goodschalk (2009) and were asked in order to evaluate the effectiveness of each strategy to yield positive affordable housing outcomes. The extent to which consensus building and capacity for partnerships have been integrated within was also considered:

- How have the vision and identified issues lead to clear goals and targets, and a monitoring evaluation framework within each strategy?
- Is there a process that incorporates partnerships with appropriate housing actors?
- Are there plan directions and mechanisms based on accurate data?
- Is there a selection of financial options based on the above analysis?

4.1 Vision, goals, implementation and evaluation

The Ontarian government have recognized the role for multiple stakeholders to be a part of the process. The LTAHS is guided by an overall vision to provide “every person an affordable, suitable and adequate home to provide the foundation to secure employment, raise and family and building strong communities” (Ministry of Housing, 2016, p. 3). Goals and the implementation of the strategy are also set clearly within the document (see Table 3, below).

TABLE 3: THE LONG TERM AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY

Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy	
Vision	Goals
<p>Every person has an affordable, suitable and adequate home to provide the foundation to secure employment, raise a family and build strong communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an appropriate and sustainable supply of housing • an equitable, portable system of financial assistance • people-centred, efficient housing programs • an Indigenous Housing Strategy • ending homelessness • achieving an evidence-informed system
Implementation	
<p>Consultation with stakeholders in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create an enabling framework to allow municipalities to implement inclusionary zoning • increase the supply of second suites • give municipalities more flexibility to finance affordable housing projects • improve the delivery and administration of social housing • require homeless population enumeration by Service Managers 	<p>Working with stakeholders to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Supportive Housing Policy Framework and Best Practice Guide • better client access systems and information on programs and services • a plan to modernize the Homes for Special Care program to better meet the needs of residents • a set of common outcomes-focused performance measures

Source: Ministry of Housing, 2016.

Whilst the preface of HFV calls for “affordability, access and choice” to underpin the strategy (SGV 2017a) there is no clear vision identified in the document. Whitzman *et al.* (2017) argue that the strategy lacks a number of numeric targets towards affordable homeownership or secure affordable income rental. The locations for the Inclusionary Zoning Pilot are vague, and there is no implementation strategy (timelines or instruments) for the \$1 billion allocated to the Social Housing Growth fund, which will underpin funding agreements for new social housing projects over the next five years using private investment (SGV, 2017a, p. 32). A framework for evaluation and monitoring is lacking, with no clear numbers to evaluate targets. To be fair, there is a commitment to revisit the Plan Melbourne Five-Year

Implementation Plan (which also covers the HFV initiatives) within five years (SGV, 2017e). This provides an opportunity for future governments to evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives and makes adjustments as needed.

It becomes quite clear that the LTAHS presents greater internal validity compared to its HFV counterpart, due to its clear announcement of vision, goals and implementation (Berke & Godschalk, 2009). However, clear evaluation plans for each strategy is lacking within each strategy.

4.2 Provision for Partnerships

The LTAHS allocates greater funding to the service providers of municipal government. However, there are no assurances that the forty-seven municipal service managers will be properly staffed or funded to implement the strategy. The LTAHS does however recognise the importance of multiple partners to come to the table to collaborate together to find new and innovative ways to solve this issue, positively boosting its external validity (Berke & Godschalk, 2009).

HFV calls for greater partnerships with the private and non-for-profit housing sectors, and emphasises their integral role to drive most of the delivery of new housing stock. In particular, the Social Housing Growth Fund will allow not-for-profit community housing providers to collaborate to access government funds (SGV 2017, p. 32). HFV also emphasises the importance of the federal government “coming to the table” to utilise their taxation levers to lighten the load and work with the Victorian government in delivering affordable housing (SGV 2017a, p. 3). However, the vague targets and actions only lessen HFV’s external validity.

4.3 Evidence-led Policy

The LTAHS has real results to compare, such as the amount of affordable units that have been replaced and repaired (14,700 since 2011), and assistance for approximately 30,500 families and individuals experiencing homelessness during 2014-15 (Ministry of Housing, 2016). As such, the LTAHS has reasonable targets and evidence in order to improve on their real results from the update of their 2010 strategy.

HFV is lacking any data justification for the amount of investment it proposes to solve the housing affordability issue. Albeit true that both federal and state governments have cut back on their funding for affordable housing research, reports such as Hulse *et al.* (2015) can be utilized as evidence for indicators and funding for policies. Whitzman *et al.* (2017) contend that *Plan Melbourne's* implementation strategy intends to “assess the existing capacity to accommodate more dwellings over the period to 2051... to identify the preferred locations for the delivery of medium- and higher-density housing” (SGVe, 2017 p. 13). However, HFV lacks clear data to thereby assign any meaningful targets that would contribute to adequate funding measures or community consultation, which adversely effects its internal validity (Berke & Godschalk, 2009; Mees, 2009).

4.4 Financing options and revenue streams

The LTAHS has not been legislated, as funding and revenue streams remain vague as the provincial government is still conducting consultation around its implementation. The strategy does allocate funds towards items that have never been funded before, including an established program for survivors of domestic violence (\$30 million over the next three years) and an Innovation, Evidence and Capacity Building fund (\$2.5 million over the next three years). There is contention by interview participants (see chapter 5) about whether this amount of funding is adequate for the next three years, which adversely effects the LTAHS' ability to overcome any fiscal or legal barriers.

A number of items have been allocated funding for the first time in HFV, including the \$1 billion Social Housing Growth fund which leverages private development financing to support 2,200 new social housing units over the next five years (SGV 2017a, p. 31). The Public Housing Renewal Program will redevelop up to 2,500 existing public housing dwellings and increase social housing properties by at least 10 per cent has been given the green light for \$185 million (SGV 2017a, p. 33). A recent Registration of Capability by the state government (SGV 2017c) towards the provision of \$185 million towards the Public Housing Renewal Program has called for partners to undertake redevelopment of social housing, private housing and commercial land uses on existing public housing estates (Whitzman *et al.*, 2017).

4.5 Towards a 'Just City'?

Mees (2011) argues that policy failure occurs in metropolitan strategies when there is an absence of social justice rhetoric that is backed up by implementation actions. Based on Fainstein's (2010, p. 85) analysis of metropolitan strategies, and the Just City concept, rarely do metropolitan-level indicators address intra-urban inequalities that have been worsened by intensification. For example, through the Public Housing Renewal Program, the state government will receive the proceeds of eventually selling off private housing and commercial land uses on the land. As it appears that the transfer of title would transition to the purchasers of the private housing and commercial developments on that subject site, thereby, selling off public land (Whitzman *et al.* 2017). This begs the question as to whether selling off public assets is Fainstein's is equitable, and whether it favours those who were already worse off (Fainstein, 2010, p. 36). Drawing from the above analysis of both affordable housing strategies in both Toronto and Melbourne, it has been made clear that each strategy is not perfect. Toronto's strategy does produce a clearer vision, goals and ways to implement these, whereas HFV is lacking in these items and is internally invalid (Berke & Godschalk, 2009).

5. Interview findings

This chapter presents the main themes from interviews undertaken with affordable housing actors in Melbourne and Toronto. The interview questions were intended to discover the extent and quality of consultation that occurred in each case study, and whether participants were optimistic or pessimistic about affordable housing partnerships moving forward within each of the resultant strategies.

5.1 How were housing actors consulted?

In Ontario, affordable housing actors were heavily consulted in the development of the update of the LTAHS. From April to July 2015, the government had consulted with major housing and human services stakeholders, and the general public as part of the strategy's update. Consultation methods included the attendance of workshops, responding to drafts and one-on-one meetings with the drivers of LTAHS at the Ministry of Housing. Representatives from the provincial and municipal levels of government corroborated that all municipalities in Ontario were invited to contribute their input into the strategy's update, this included submissions from members of the public. Feedback and advice from over thirty stakeholder meetings and 113 formal written submissions were received (Ministry of Housing, 2016, p. 11).

Representatives from the Ontario Non-Profit Housing Organisation (ONPHA) and Ontario Home Builders Association confirmed that non-profit and private housing developers were heavily involved with consultation of the LTAHS. It was confirmed that submissions, and online surveys were used to reach remote as well as metropolitan areas. Notably, this process of consultation for the LTAHS led by the provincial government was transparent, as submissions from municipal governments and other key housing actors were easily accessible online, and the timelines for consultation were also made clear to the public before the draft release of the proposed legislation in 2016 (Ontario Ministry of Housing, 2017).

The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Housing Action Lab was another platform designed to bring together a cross-section of planners and interested parties to focus on 4-5 key housing policies and proposals that were eventually to be included in LTAHS. The Lab is half-funded

by the provincial government, with the balance of funding provided by the private market (Housing Finance Provider, Toronto, 30 August 2017). Some projects, such as the Tower Renewal Project, receives federal funding. This project involves a diverse range of partners to retrofit some ageing public housing towers into more vibrant and viable economic communities (Evergreen, 2017b). Surrounding the LTAHS consultation, around 30 stakeholders within the GTA Housing Lab were involved in the process which engaged around specific areas, including: how to improve partnerships on the design of municipal incentive programs within the strategy; and how to maximize subsidies to deliver affordable housing within the strategy (Housing Finance Provider, Toronto, 30 August 2017).

An inter-departmental committee was formed at the state government of Victoria to drive the HFV strategy. Various representatives from state departments were able to represent the views of their respective departments. Representatives on the committee concurred that the support and collaboration that occurred, both formally and informally amongst those involved, was “a rare thing, to have cross-government forward thinking and cooperation” (State Government Representative, Melbourne, July 14). The ability to have so many departments, who were so entrenched in housing, represented at the table led to “a constructive and informed dialogue across departments,” where progress and consensus building could be seen by those who contributed (State Government Representative, Melbourne, July 19).

The consultation from the state government with housing actors was not publically advertised, and the inter-departmental committee minutes and submissions for the strategy were not made available on a website (Community Housing Representative, Melbourne, August 26). There was an absence of active consultation by state government with local councils, the development, community housing and property sectors, and the public in the development of this strategy (Local Government representative, Melbourne, 25 August). This included no clear timelines for the release of the strategy, which contrasts the Toronto experience. A lack of consultation with local government greatly contrasts with the Toronto consultation experience with municipal councils. This is significant since there “continues to be a strong sense in the affordable housing space that relates to local government being able

to engage with the community and to represent the ‘local’ interests” (Local Government representative, Melbourne, July 10).

A representative from the community housing industry noted that “there were two whole years of waiting and nothing” between the election of the Andrews government in November 2014 and when the strategy and *Plan Melbourne* were both released in March 2017 (Community Housing Representative, Melbourne, August 26). It was known that an affordable housing strategy was imminent, given it was an election promise, however no release dates were published online, which resulted in no formal or active consultation with the state government, according to interview participants.

Despite this negative feedback and lack of public or key partner input into the strategy, a representative of the state government argued that many different players within the affordable housing market fail to understand the complexity of approaches in HFV. The representative asserted that there seems to be a lack of understanding by the different players about how each section of the strategy connects to each other:

“People don’t read beyond the main chapter which they perceive directly affects them” (State Government Representative, Melbourne, July 19).

Due to the secrecy surrounding the formation of HFV, housing actors felt that their existing relationship with the state government feels “constrained,” as “trust doesn’t exist right now, because of the way government has behaved previously” (Social Housing Representative, Melbourne, August 26). This could have effects on the policy moving forward, since much of HFV relies on the participation of the key housing actors (e.g. developers and community housing groups) that were not consulted from its onset.

Notwithstanding the lack of active consultation by the state government, opportunities for collaborative partnerships between housing actors, including local government were numerous – which reflects the recognized need by housing actors to collaborate and partner together to solve this wicked issue. The *Transforming Housing* action research project is community-university funded, albeit previously received state government funding, and provides a transdisciplinary, heterogeneous and highly entrepreneurial platform for housing

actors (Whitzman, 2017). The members of the initiative include private sector institutions and philanthropic organisations, who work together in a partnership approach, with the aim to overcome barriers to more affordable housing in metropolitan Melbourne (Whitzman, 2015). There has also been growing interaction through the *Affordable Housing Industry Advisory Group*, which comprises of representatives from Victoria’s residential development industry. The Advisory group continues to call for greater partnerships between government and the development industry (UDIA, 2016).

There was also a sense that housing actors had to go to state government themselves, instead of waiting for the active consultation process to occur. A housing advocate described that their only way forward was to:

“Offer their solicited opinion to government through a variety of ways, including public platforms, through media, and directly through one-on-one conversations with public servants and various political staff [of the Ministers involved in driving HFV]” (Housing Advocate, Melbourne, August 6).

It is also notable that in the Melbourne case study the commonwealth government has remained silent, and have yet to come to the table regarding the levers they hold within this space, such as taxation reform. Conversely in Ontario, there has been much activity from the federal government, especially though their new commitment to the continuation of their existing housing policy, and their promise to cost-match many provincial costs going toward affordable housing (Housing Advocate, Toronto, 6 September). The federal government is also seeking the advice of the GTA Housing Action Lab for their Federal Housing Strategy (Housing Finance Provider, Toronto, 30 August). The experiences of a collaborative approach in the GTA Housing Lab for consultation towards the LTAHS has translated into a willingness to assist affordable housing strategy at the federal level.

5.2 Will the plans achieve their intended goals?

When the LTAHS was released, the interview participants asserted that unclear funding guidelines which are yet to be put into legislation have since made the strategy’s implementation vague. Many of the interviewed housing actors stressed that funding

towards the strategy is integral to the LTAHS being successful and achieving its intended goals - “releasing a strategy is one thing... But the most important part is legislation and funding is to ensure LTAHS’ success” (Social Housing Provider representative, Toronto, August 22). Without such funding measures, the LTAHS’ success beyond the upcoming election remains delayed and uncertain.

The LTAHS promises to look at the housing affordability problem as comprehensively and holistically as possible through its modernised framework. This framework “will free members from an environment than inhibits innovation” (Social Housing Provider representative, Toronto, August 22). Since the strategy’s release, the government has failed to link back to a budgetary framework or commitment that would support most of its ideas. The lack of legislation to back the funding of the strategy has caused some doubts upon whether the strategy was “more intention than reality” (Housing Finance Provider representative, Toronto, August 23). Furthermore, the complexities behind the strong role of service managers within a municipality to implement policies on the ground hinder the strategy’s success. This is due to some municipalities that are understaffed, as a representative from Social Housing Provider suggested that a “local services re-alignment” should be considered to ensure that municipalities are given the correct set of tools they need to implement (Social Housing Provider representative, Toronto, August 22).

Despite this, the existing partnership infrastructure formed through the GTA Housing Action Lab provides a continuing opportunity and momentum for partners to constantly collaborate and ensure that the strategy goes beyond the political cycle. Many of the interview participants have also identified that the provincial government have kept their promise to update their strategy from the 2010 version, and have appreciated the progress made to update the strategy and involve partners from diverse backgrounds.

In Melbourne, HFV is the first affordable housing strategy where: there has been a cross-governmental common view of what the housing affordability problem is; a common conceptualisation of what is meant by housing affordability and how to measure it; and it recognises the limits of government action and how ‘wicked’ the issue is to fix (State Government Representative, Melbourne, July 19). The release of the strategy brings the

“largest investment secured by a Government towards homelessness and social housing in Victoria, and nationally” (State Government representative, Melbourne, July 19). The representatives from the state government have asserted that it will implement a multi-provider model that is designed to involve for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. It is also a ‘game-changer’ for the affordable housing sector, as its comprehensive strategy will go across portfolios, and those involved in the inter-departmental committee “felt secure to be able to endorse all of the strategy findings” as “everyone feels like it was their idea and their work” (State Government representative, Melbourne, July 19).

The strategy’s success remains unclear as a representative from the community housing points out that “at the moment, there is no clear sense of how these principles are coming together; nor are there any commercial principles set out” (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22). For example, it remains unclear to social housing providers how they will have to allocate 75 per cent of their social housing to those on the public housing priority list, in relation to their commercial outcomes based on rental profits from their customers. This uncertainty leads to social housing providers being unable to brief their board members, which highlights the lack of communication towards the key housing actors about the workings of the strategy thus far (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22). A shared social housing waiting list has been the case in Ontario since 2012 (ONPHA, 2017), and it might be useful for Victorian community housing providers and some lessons could be learnt from their Ontarian counterparts regarding their experience and management of housing for those on the social housing waiting list.

5.3 On collaborative relationships moving forward

In Ontario, the provincial government asserts that the LTAHS is designed to broaden and increase the involvement of a number of actors, in addition to service managers (municipalities), housing advocacy groups and private developers. According to a representative from the City of Toronto, the implementation of the LTAHS will occur through the municipal government level, while the provincial and federal levels of government continue to work together on funding methods and levels:

“When there are good funding programs, partnerships can be strengthened” (Municipal Government Representative, Toronto, August 6).

The comprehensive approach announced through the LTAHS has seen greater momentum towards a collaborative legacy in consensus building. The federal government has expressed interest in forming a national housing strategy based on the collaborative building framework seen in the formation of the LTAHS. This momentum sees other players getting involved, including philanthropists, who have “found a window into the process” (Housing Finance Provider representative, Toronto, August 30).

Despite the transparency of consultation in Toronto, a Social Housing representative emphasised that the government needs to “take a step back” in the policy implementation, and trust non-profit groups to implement the strategy and achieve success:

“The government here is still convinced that it can solve everything itself. It needs partners to do this [implement LTAHS]. You have to trust that the non-profits will do the right thing. They will have to as it’s in their mandates to do so.” (Social Housing Provider representative, Toronto, August 22).

A housing advocate in Toronto has also highlighted that there “needs to be a commitment to organisation infrastructure to bind all stakeholders to ensure that they continue to be supported” (Housing Advocate, Toronto, August 31).

In Victoria, the announced HFV strategy does permit greater responsibility for the private development and social housing industries to deliver more affordable housing through closer partnerships – both with the state government and other partners. A representative from the state government asserted that there is still “a huge amount of work” to be done, which will “take a lot of patience, because it’s difficult, new and requires a lot of actors to work together” (State Government representative, Melbourne, July 19). This participant also argued that actors will need to work together constructively, rather than critically:

“How can these actors be constructive, rather than critical. Instead of asking ‘what are they doing,’ they should instead ask, ‘what are we doing together?’” (State Government representative, Melbourne, July 19).

The introduction of Action 19 within Plan Melbourne (SGV 2017b), specifies that Metropolitan Partnerships will directly facilitate greater partnerships between the community, state and local governments. A representative from Victorian state government emphasised that the Metropolitan Partnerships will “focus on what the actual problems are and what the state government can actually do” (State Government Representative, Melbourne, July 14). As such, according to representatives of the development industry, it is in their “best interests to play a role in the affordable housing problem” and to understand their role in partnering with the government to solve it (Housing Advocate, Melbourne, August 14).

HFV allocates a large role to the community housing sector to take over the management of existing social housing and to drive more accommodation for those who are on the growing waiting list for public housing. However, housing advocates and community housing representatives remain hesitant about the future of their partnerships with the state government. This is mostly due to their lack of consultation towards the creation of the strategy, and the lack of clarity behind various funding tools and measures, mentioned in HFV. A Social Housing Provider representative remarked, “there needs to be a greater degree of trust to be created to facilitate conversations early, it would be a useful way in implementing this strategy” (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22).

There is now some traction between partnerships with the state government regarding the tools and implementation plans that were outlined in the strategy. However, it remains consistent across the affordable housing advocates and community housing representatives that the implementation of HFV remains unclear: “what’s been released is very high level, and there’s chunks missing to clearly state what will happen on the ground” (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22). An Industry Engagement Plan released by DHHS (2017) creates a calendar which shows that “much of the consultation has already been thought out”, and that the industry must respond to certain activities (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22).

These players are also pushing for change. The main success identified by all players within five years' since HFV has been implemented is to securely and properly house people in highly-accessible locations, with reasonable access to jobs. The physical construction of more social housing is also at the top of many actors' bucket lists:

“As things stand, there’s a social housing system that’s in terminal decline and is unviable as it stands. The funding commitments from the Victorian government are pretty significant, if this can be turned around to be a growing system, that would be a success” (Housing Advocate, Melbourne, August 14).

In addition to many players pushing for change, cultural change is also needed across all workplaces to emphasise how partnerships can work in the most impactful way. Currently, the Victorian state government’s hierarchical decision-making structures have caused little faith and confusion across key housing actors as to how their role in the housing industry will be affected by the strategy. As the implementation process progresses further, further trust and faith will be needed to support these key players, such as developers and community housing providers, in playing a much more complex and risky role (both at the financial and development scale), while still maintaining their core commercial values. This is due to the present thinking that “there is little faith that the existing hierarchical decision-making structures both at state and local levels can actually meet the challenge of what HFV sets” (Local Government Representative, Melbourne, 10 July).

6. Discussion of results

The purpose of this research was to discover the initial reactions from key housing actors towards the recently released affordable housing strategies in Melbourne and Toronto, and whether the actors felt that the partnerships formed would result in the successful implementation of the strategies. The research also utilised a mixed-methods research methodology, which included a plan analysis and interviews with key representatives from the Melbourne and Toronto housing industry. The plan analysis was used to test the validity and rigor of the resultant policies within each case study. The interviews with key housing actors in the Victorian and Ontarian housing sectors were used to understand the consultation and collaboration experiences of the key partners that may not have been revealed in the plan analysis of the strategies alone.

The research illuminates the benefits of rigorous active consultation, consensus building and discussion surrounding alternative futures for solving the affordable housing issue. The Melbourne case study, uncovered the absence of transparent and active consultation with key housing actors outside of the state government, which led to uncertainty and a sense of mistrust amongst stakeholders. The strategy also lacks a clear vision, and information on how the actions will be implemented by the key partners, such as social housing providers. Conversely, in Toronto, the clear and active consultation has led to a more positive outlook from the interviewed actors on the strategy's future. Moreover, a clear vision outlined in the LTAHS to ensure the strategy lives beyond political cycles, will more than likely be achieved due to the strong social infrastructure formed through partnerships.

6.1 Stop: are the strategies “more intention than reality”?

The strategies provide an important first step in attempting to plan for affordable housing in Toronto and Melbourne. The LTAHS provides a guiding and modernized framework, which allows key housing actors to think more holistically about how different actions and pieces within the strategy are put together. Instead of targeting one main issue, the strategy appears to be open, and systems-fashioned. The strategy provides systems-guidance, as it easily communicates to readers and key housing actors alike what are the different components the

make up the provincial housing system. Moreover, the transparent and collaborative consultation process has ensured that different housing partners are on board with the strategy, and there already exists infrastructure to incubate further partnerships, including with the Federal Government.

Despite these positive attributes, however, the LTAHS does not link back to a budgetary framework or commitments to a fiscal plan that would support the main goals of the strategy. Moreover, there has been little to no funding allocated towards aspirational goals highlighted in the strategy, such as the Innovation, Evidence and Capacity Building Fund which aims to support research, evaluation and capacity building initiatives (Government of Ontario, 2016).

HFV provides groundbreaking levels of investment and absolute game-changing fundamentals for the affordable housing industry in Melbourne. It shifts responsibility towards the private and not-for profit community housing sector to actually deliver further social housing. For example, the Social Housing Growth Fund will encourage both actors to collaborate to secure public funding (State Government of Victoria, 2017a, p. 31). Additionally, *Plan Melbourne* offers the opportunity for Metropolitan Partnerships to become a platform for the community to pragmatically convey their needs and wants (SGV, 2017e). It also provides a focus on what the actual problems are and what the state government can actually achieve, and there is a commitment to revisit the implementation plan (SGV, 2017b).

Progress is weakened by a lack of visions and aspirations, which has transpired into set targets or statements regarding what would be a reasonable level for housing targets. A Social Housing Provider representative indicated that “there’s been no rhyme or reasoning behind [the strategy]. All of it has been shooting from the hip thus far” (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22). The lack of clarification of the funding mechanisms and the clear role of various housing actors in delivering this strategy and accessing the funding also hinders each strategy’s success.

The secretive consultation for HFV with key housing actors outside of state government bodies and the IDC has created uncertainty within the market and affected the trust of the key housing actors. As abovementioned, Mees (2003), who critiqued *Melbourne 2030* - the

second predecessor to the current *Plan Melbourne* metropolitan planning strategy, adds that the lack of rigorous consultation led to the plan's demise. As the final strategy was released without being preceded by a draft or consultation, the preceding consultation program meant "the die had already been cast" and had no influence at all on the substantive outcome (p. 296). This resulted in a strategy that lacked any public legitimacy, as the strategy was coined as a 'sham' consultation process (Mees, 2003), which ultimately died "because it deserved to" (Mees, 2011, p. 7). The absence of any consultation with key housing actors for the HFV strategy led to housing actors are questioning its validity. A Social Housing Provider indicated that "there has been no co-design in this" (Social Housing Provider representative, Melbourne, August 22), which echoes what occurred in the poor consultation and implementation of the failed *Melbourne 2030* metropolitan planning document, and does beg the question as to whether the plan is more "intention than reality" without a shared consultation with key implementing actors of the strategy.

6.2 Collaborate: solving complex and 'wicked' issues

Both case studies illuminate how integral it is to collaborate with partners when solving complex and 'wicked' issues such as affordable housing. In Toronto, collaborative partnerships were formed between various actors, including the provincial government, social housing providers and philanthropic actors. The GTA Housing Action Lab was formed within a philanthropic organisation, the Evergreen Foundation (Evergreen, 2017). The Lab is partly-funded by the Ontario provincial government, and brings together a broad cross-section of planners and interested parties in the Greater Toronto Area to solve issues surrounding housing (Housing Finance Provider representative, Toronto, August 30). Certain projects have also received Federal funding, such as the aforementioned Tower Renewal Project. The Lab has provided an impetus for collaborative legacy in Ontario, as it has provided permanent infrastructure in the industry to keep this collaborative activity going. It has also provided a window for other actors, such as the philanthropic sector, and even the federal government, to be involved in solving this complex housing and to interact in this deliberative (coming to a collective decisions) and collaborative (working together to implement an initiative) consultation process.

It is clear that the collaborative legacy of consultation for the LTAHS will continue to effect positive change at both the local and metropolitan scales, given that the partnerships could outlast changes in government and work inter-dependently. Any uncertainty behind the implementation of the strategy was mitigated because the release of the LTAHS and its actions was not a surprise due to its transparent consultation and communication of timelines. This resulted in the willingness of key actors to ensure that legislation and funding is finalized so that they can deliver on their shared values that were identified through consultation and the resultant LTAHS strategy.

‘Collaborative rationality’ was coined by Innes and Booher (2010), who argue that in complex governance systems, power can be fragmented, so that powerful institutions are unable to produce the results that they want. This was seen in the Melbourne case study, as the main ‘delivery arms’ of the HFV strategy, such as social housing providers and private housing developers, still remain unclear on whether the strategy would actually provide diverse communities. This is because the lack of consultation between housing actors prior to the strategy’s release resulted in uncertainty over how it will be implemented, and as such, each actor’s role within this. For example, community housing organisations were unable to brief their boards on the announced strategy, as they remain unsure of how to access certain funding streams or mechanisms in the HFV strategy. This highlights that the absence of any collaborative planning (Innes & Booher, 2002) or development of shared values (Whitzman, 2017) between delivery arms (such as social housing providers) and the policy-makers could cause further uncertainty, thereby hindering the strategy’s success.

Additionally, Yenken (2001) asserts that a strategy would struggle to live beyond a political cycle due to the lack of community consultation, or input from key housing actors into the formation of HFV. The intrinsic benefits, such as an increased likelihood for a strategic outcome that is responsive to community concerns, and benefits for citizen empowerment, would struggle to stem from the consultation observed in Melbourne. This echoes Albrechts (2010), who emphasises the importance of envisioning on the collaborative journey and not only focusing on outputs. This is because actions cannot be confined to single actors, as it’s a collaborative process. Mees (2003) highlights that citizens, developers, and local

governments would find it difficult to feel any “ownership” of the strategy, or cooperate in its implementation without consultation (p. 294). A large mistake was observed in the Melbourne case study as the state government implementers of the strategy failed to learn from past Victorian mistakes and have tried implement the strategy, without firstly forming a high sense of trust with the key delivery actors or inventing shared values through a collective and collaborative experience (Albrechts, 2010).

6.3 Listen: next steps for partnerships and affordable housing policy

It is clear from this research that it is imperative for strategic plan markers in Toronto and Melbourne to actively listen to their residents and key implementing partners for affordable housing strategies. There are strong views regarding the positive outcomes of collaborative partnerships when dealing with ‘wicked’ problems such as affordable housing (Head and Alford, 2015). But it is envisaged that this research will illuminate the benefits that collaborative partnerships and consensus building towards an integrated approach that can bring towards implementing affordable housing strategies in both of the Victorian and Ontarian contexts.

Despite vague targets and funding measures underpinning both strategies, it has become clear that the more involved and legitimate consultation processes that occur between a diverse and interdependent range of actors, the greater chance that it will result in a more integrated approach (Innes & Booher, 2002). It was found that partnerships for the provision of affordable housing Toronto were active and ready to hit the ground running, compared to partners in Melbourne who were uncertain about the policy and lacked a high level of trust of the state government.

That being said, it is difficult to know for certain the best way to address the market failure of affordable housing in Australia and Canada. With the absence of the commonwealth and federal governments coming to the table to provide much more stable financing and/or stronger regulation, partnerships may not be as effective until this involvement occurs. Despite this, there is already partnership infrastructure and momentum in place within both

case studies – in Ontario this involves the GTA Housing Action Lab; for Victoria this involves the Transforming Housing partnership and the Affordable Housing Industry Action group.

Ongoing research into evaluation of the plans as they are implemented, and the beneficial impacts of collaborative partnerships can help to better understand the intricacies in increasing the supply of affordable housing in Victoria and Ontario. Further research into the importance of forming mutual trust and values between key housing actors could also be undertaken. This could inform how future housing strategies can be put together by demonstrating the positive value of collaborative planning and visioning in strategy implementation.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. Can you briefly describe your current role or position in your organisation?
2. How long have you been working in the affordable housing sector and in what kinds of jobs?
3. Have you been consulted around the [Affordable Housing Strategy (Melbourne)] [Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy (Toronto)]? If so, can you tell me in what ways (attending workshops, responding to drafts, one on one meetings)? Do you feel you were consulted adequately and listened to? Why or why not?
4. Have you been consulted around the [Apartment Design standards (Melbourne)] [Growing up project (Toronto)]? If so, can you tell me in what ways (attending workshops, responding to drafts, one on one meetings)? Do you feel you were consulted adequately and listened to? Why or why not?
5. What do you like most about these two strategies? What do you like least?
6. Do you feel the two strategies are complementary or contradictory? In other words, are adequate apartment standards part of an affordable housing strategy or do apartment standards need to be balanced against affordability needs?
7. What would you consider a success in the implementation of the Apartment Design Standards in 5 years?
8. What would you consider a success in the implementation of the Affordable Housing Strategy?
9. Do you think these strategies will facilitate greater partnerships between key housing actors like local and state governments, developers, social housing providers and investors? Why or why not?
10. Is there anything else you want to say about these strategies
11. Is there anyone else you feel I should speak to about consultation on quality and quantity of affordable housing?