



What we did
2008-2009



We provide, promote
and support quality
affordable and
accessible housing
primarily for consumer-
survivors, as well as
people with special needs.



Our barbecues "SMOKE"



Board of Directors:

Back row: Gord Muschett, Shabbir Causer (Treasurer), Gord Singer, Virginia Doolittle, Paul Reid (Vice-President).

Front row: Brigitte Witkowski (Executive Director), Rhoda Beecher (President), Cynthia Lavoie, Tracy Ewing, Thomas Lam

Absent: David Hoigh, Stuart MacFarlane, Marc McKenzie

Message from the President and Executive Director

With our partners, the Toronto Central LHIN, the Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto, we strive to provide quality homes and support so our chosen tenants, people living with serious mental illness, can reach their goals for a good life. Our challenge continues to grow out of our strength in helping formerly homeless persons succeed as tenants and gain confidence in their right to belong. When their horizon of possible futures expands, demand on us to do more expands as well. We continue to respond to our tenants' needs while seeking more funding and better approaches to service integration. This is important to the health of our members and our LHIN. I want to acknowledge the hard work of our dedicated staff and the commitment of our Board of Directors. The success of Mainstay is tied directly to the excellent collaboration between these groups and I look forward to continuing this excellent association in the coming year.

Rhoda Beecher, *President*

We continue to work together as board, staff, members, community partners, challenging ourselves to make Mainstay a good place to live. We continue to work with our members to strengthen their communities. We continue to intervene with timely, respectful support as our members need help overcoming obstacles to wellness. We continue to work with partners to create positive change from improving access to all supportive housing to developing standards for cultural competence to developing relationships able to deliver new housing. That we accomplished so much this past year is due to dedicated staff. I thank them and those who work with us.

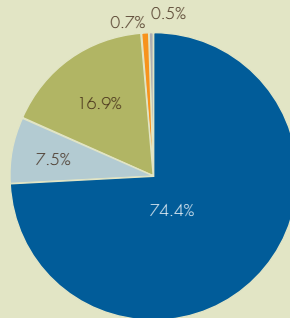
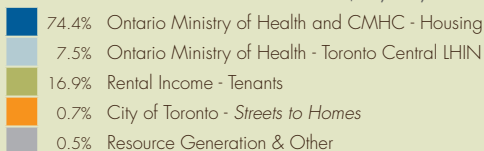
Brigitte Witkowski, *Executive Director*

mainstay HOUSING

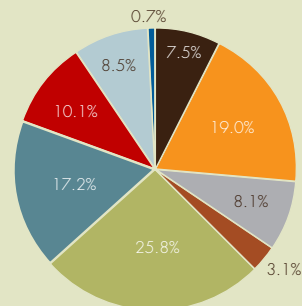
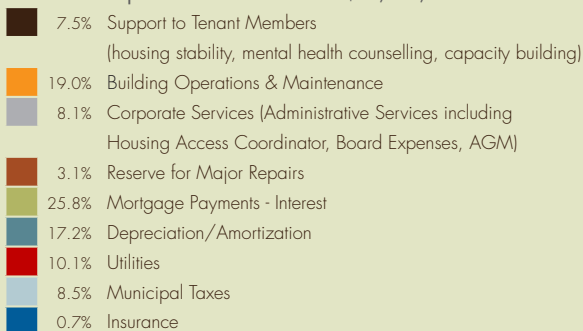
- Since 1982, developer of supportive housing solutions, property manager, support service provider, partner.
- 867 units in 41 buildings across the **City of Toronto** in **4 LHINs**, a portfolio valued at sixty-four million dollars.
- Housing and Support for **1,000 people** living in single, couple, and family with children households.
- Largest provider dedicated to people living with serious mental illness in Ontario.

2008-2009 Financials

Revenues 2008-2009 \$13,050,314



Expenses 2008-2009 \$12,630,091



Funders: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care - Housing; Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; City of Toronto Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative; City of Toronto Homelessness Partnership Initiative (*Streets to Homes*)

Donors: Thank you to our generous corporate and individual donors.


Audited Financial Statements available upon request.

Opening Doors for “Streets to Homes” housing first, plus compassionate, skillful support...



Sandra Mageau, our **Supportive Housing Worker**, is the point person for this transformative partnership between us, homeless, hard-to-house persons from the street and in conflict with the law; and the City of Toronto’s innovative Streets to Homes. Sandra is accessible. She meets tenants where they’re most comfortable – at a drop-in centre or a street corner. Gradually, tenant-members grow in comfort and trust working with Sandra and come to consider Mainstay as their home. “Addiction”, she says, “has historically threatened their ability to keep a home long enough to make a good life for themselves.

It’s not easy for people. I reassure them that their housing here at Mainstay is not automatically at risk because they are a user. From the first moment they meet us at intake, Marta Roller, Housing Access Coordinator, is open about drug use as a fact of life, particularly for someone who’s survived on the street. We don’t want new tenants to feel they have to hide”. Mainstay believes people living with serious mental illness and addiction can take responsibility for their lives – can live in a world beyond mental illness and addiction – can recover from homelessness and make better lives for themselves. Our job is to provide high quality support.



“Streets to Homes recognizes the significant achievements of the **Mainstay Yes We** of service that works for the clients that we serve... We are proud to continue our work



Andromeda

...So “Helen” can leave 12 years of living under bridges or in stairwells and take pride in paying the rent.

We had an idea for a pilot: match a peer intern with a staff person to see if the Streets to Homes population would have better housing outcomes. Dwight McBride is that **Peer Intern** and a tenant-member living at another of our communities.

Dwight offers practical support to improve their quality of life and housing stability. Having learned how to make the most of a dollar, Dwight accompanies tenant members grocery shopping, helping them take advantage of sales and bulk purchases so they eat nutritious food.

Dwight does a lot of listening, particularly about addiction, which, he knows, is the number one problem the new tenants have to live with. Dwight knows that the subject

of harm reduction can be a turnoff for users but he and Sandra put tenants at ease and help them employ safe practices. Using his training he offers harm reduction support. His other important job is helping the new tenants connect to the neighbourhood and begin to believe that they too belong. It involves accompanying them to the local food bank and to medical appointments; to government offices to secure personal identification documents; and, even getting a TV repaired. Dwight acknowledges the obstacles they face and knows from experience that a lot of small steps and encouragement make it easier to help people believe “Yes We Can” make a home for ourselves.

Can: From Homelessness to Housing Stability Project as a model with Mainstay in providing real options for clients leaving the streets.”

Bonnie Wakely, *Street Outreach Program Officer*



Partnerships & Collaboration

...working to create positive change



- HomeComing Community Choice Coalition, which we co-founded, had many successes, including the Ontario Human Rights Commission naming discriminatory NIMBY as a human rights concern in its report entitled *Right at Home*; and adopted by the City of Toronto's Affordable Housing Committee.
- Long-standing member of the Toronto Mental Health Supportive Housing Network's steering committee that is developing a transparent, one point of access system for suitable housing and support options in Toronto.
- Engaged in Toronto Central LHIN's Integrated Health Service Plan as co-chair of Partnerships for Service Improvement (PSI).
- "The Bedbug Resource Manual" published by the Community Bedbug Committee, convened by Woodgreen Community Services, including Mainstay (Volletta Peters and Ferreshteh Bahmani), Sherbourne Health Bus, Street Health, Central Neighbourhood House, Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre and South Riverdale Community Health Centre.
- Formal Support Service Agreements between Mainstay and 23 community and hospital based clinical and social service agencies to ensure quality support to their clients, our tenants.
- Member of Supportive Housing and Diversity (SHAD). Launched Best Practices Toolkit entitled "Home for All: What supportive housing agencies can do to be anti-oppressive and culturally competent."

We went to listen and learn...

- “Emergency Response,” sponsored by the City of Toronto, to improve and update our Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- “Tackling energy poverty in Canada through energy efficiency”, sponsored by Green Communities Canada, to inform our green strategy.
- “Creating a Modern Housing Policy: A Legacy for Tomorrow’s Leaders,” sponsored by CHRA’s Tri-Country conference, to connect us to international trends.
- “Strategic planning for evolving future” to find better ways to manage assets and do capital planning, sponsored by ONPHA Large Provider Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee.
- “Working with People who Have Experienced Trauma: The Challenge for Community Case Managers,” attended

by Tenant and Member Services staff at the OFCMHAP AGM and Workshops, offering practical strategies for their daily interactions.

- “International Recovery Perspectives”, leading edge approaches in mental health recovery.
- “Social Housing and Homelessness for Service Managers and Shelter Providers”, by OMSSA, that promoted collaboration and discussion on policy issues and program administration.

We went to share our evidence and knowledge.....

- “Preventing Evictions – a pathway to recovery,” by Volletta Peters and Marta Roller at PSR Canada National Conference, Winnipeg.
- “How to Handle Landlord & Tenant Board Behavioural Cases,” by Volletta Peters, at ONPHA Conference, Ottawa.

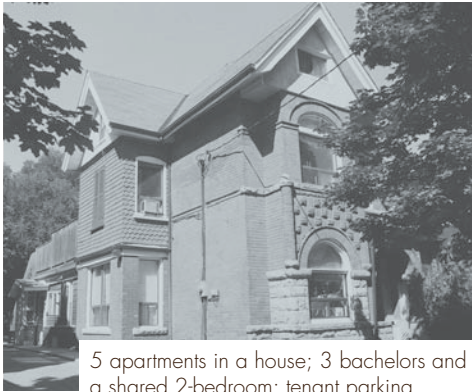
- Mainstay's "Beyond the Key to the Front Door" – a guide to helping tenants keep their homes" workshop, by Brigitte Witkowski and Mainstay members Gord Singer, and Linda Chamberlain, to 100 people from mental health and social services agencies in Ontario.
- "Eviction Prevention," by Volletta Peters, Director of Tenant and Member Services, and,
- "Helping People with Complex Needs Succeed as Tenants," by Brigitte Witkowski, at Supportive Housing for Persons with Complex Needs conference - St. John's, Newfoundland.
- "Recovery is more than an Address," by Brigitte Witkowski, CMHA National Conference, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.
- "Housing First, High Quality Support, and, the Client's Right to Risk: Ingredients for the Good Life in the Community for People Living with Serious Mental Illness," by Brigitte Witkowski, Capital District, Nova Scotia Hospital.



Knowledge Transfer
raises the bar of...
performance,
practice, and
productivity



Virginia Doolittle, member, and Stephen Gray, Supportive Housing Worker, wowed as co-presenters of "Recovery-Oriented Community Development," at ONPHA Conference, Ottawa.



5 apartments in a house; 3 bachelors and a shared 2-bedroom; tenant parking.



25 unit apartment building; 12 two-bedrooms, 10 one-bedrooms, 3 bachelors; common room, tenant parking; Building Services workshop.



25 unit apartment building; 22 bachelors, 2 2-bedrooms, 1 1-bedroom; hearing impaired units; common room.



70 unit apartment building; 30 1-bedrooms, 11 bachelors, 9 2-bedrooms, 10 3-bedrooms, 10 4-bedrooms; wheelchair accessible units (3); common room; tenant parking; site office.

- Committed \$870,342 on capital improvements to repair and upgrade our buildings - from new kitchens and bathrooms to flooring and balconies.
- Invested in security system upgrades at 4 buildings.
- Invested in professional engineering studies to develop Building Condition Audits for all 41 properties as foundation for our next five year capital plans.
- Launched "First Annual Cleaning Survey" to hear from our tenants about our services and to set the baseline for improvement. 126 households responded. Survey says: 36% completely satisfied, and 35% mostly satisfied.
- Responded to 3,438 work orders from tenants who played their role in keeping us informed about what needed to be done.
- Created comprehensive bedbug strategy and tenant information package which was adopted by the Community Bedbug Committee, composed of several community mental health and housing agencies in Toronto.

Good
Places
to Live...
through strategic
action and
investments



Strong Communities...

places for people to belong, have voice, and be responsible for what they want...



Conflict Resolution Committee, made up of members and staff

Our recovery-oriented community development approach encourages the people we house to work together to create “the good life” – however they define it.

Capacity building for improved self-esteem, leadership, problem-solving...

- Membership Policy ratified by members at 2008 AGM.
- LARC engaged 40 members each month in leadership development and action, through...
 - education sessions
 - > Relaxation
 - > Tenants’ Rights and Responsibilities
 - > Tenant Content Insurance
 - > Black History Month
 - summer picnics drew 105 members out to the parks.
- Gardening clubs at 21 buildings engaged 112 members to create beautiful places.

- Monthly community meetings at 19 buildings where staff and members work on building based issues.
- Food security groups at 4 buildings engaged 93 members to improve nutrition and health.
- Coffee groups drew 74 members at 10 buildings to share news of the day.
- Seasonal Party drew 167 members and their families to celebrate.
- AGM drew 66 members to conduct business of the corporation.
- Invested fundraising dollars from The Opportunity Fund to support members on their journey to work through education or deepening a hobby.

In memorium for members who passed away this year: Jason Jean, Marcelino Lopes, Lenard Peckham



Good Place to Work...

Fostering a culture of
mutual respect,
learning and team.



Previous President, Cindy Maule
recognizes Jane Edwards, Bookkeeper
10 years of service at AGM 2008

- Ratified three-year Collective Agreement with OPSEU, Local 540.
- Sponsored in-house training for all staff on Diversity and WHMIS.
- Developed on-site Training Centre for Caretakers and Maintenance Workers to enhance skills and support professional development goals.
- 10 year employment milestone reached by Randy Baldwin, Agustin Barahona and Garfield Barrett.
- Placement opportunities for students from Ryerson University and George Brown College.

Mainstay staff:

Marian Adan, Claudia Alvarado, Mario Araya, Teresita Bagorio, Ferreshteh Bahmani, Randy Baldwin, Agustin Barahona, Garfield Barrett, Scott Barrett, John Battye, Juliet Baynes, Afroza Begum, Wayne Bisnath, Kevin Blackwood, Arun Bryson, Medardo Cabebe, Melissa Consunji, Michael Deans, Son Do, Jane Edwards, Beth Elenzano, Kimberley Ellsworth, Jimmy Eshesh, Mark Finch, Ray Fortune, Stephen Gray, Andrea Gutowski, Paul Hale, Olimpia Lauriston, Mel Logan, George Luzio, Sandra Mageau, Desmond Marrett, Dwight McBride, Nelly Melo, Parvin Merchant, Alireza Mikanik, Randolph Ouimet, Volletta Peters, Math Radfar, Teresa Rivas, Marta Roller, Katherine Salinas, Uma Sivasuntharum, Nancy Sugar, Sharon Williams, Jennifer Windrem, Brigitte Witkowski, Tony Yu.

Student Placements: Kadi Arbaoui, Abigail Davis, Cuneyt Kuskaya, Naomi Wilson.

www.mainstayhousing.ca

mainstay HOUSING

Building Futures.
Creating Communities.

761 Queen Street West, #301
Toronto, Ontario M6J 1G1
Tel: 416-703-9266
Fax: 416-703-9265
TTY: 416-703-9267

Charity no. 119258440 RR0001