

**The 2015 Pan Am Games Legacy Project:
The West Don Lands Athletes Village and
Affordable Housing**

by

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ABSTRACT

High profile mega-events such as the Olympics and Pan-Am Games are often the topic of much public attention and discussion due to their mix of sport, politics, and commerce. However, such mega-events are subject to large costs, controversies, and complex challenges that outweigh their benefits and often reinforce dominant social groups in society. In an attempt to justify the large expenditures of hosting an event, legacy projects that incorporate some form of social benefit are promised during the bidding phase. This paper presents a case study of Toronto's mega event experience of hosting the 2015 Pan Am Games and the incorporation of affordable housing into the Athletes Village development in the West Don Lands. The research tells a familiar story of missed opportunity to fulfill the promised affordable housing targets proposed during the bidding phase. Although the public has had a largely important and effective role in developing the planning framework for the West Don Lands Precinct and Athletes Village, the decision to reduce the final number of affordable housing units ultimately lacked public input. This paper intends to generate discourse on mega events as a neoliberal tool for growth by focusing on the missed opportunities to create much needed affordable housing. This paper explores the theories, relationships, and outcomes of Toronto's experience as a means to inform future decision-making on housing provisions.

FOREWORD

This Major Paper is the final document to satisfy the requirements of my Plan of Study in the Master of Environmental Studies Planning Program in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University. This paper is a case study on Toronto's mega event experience hosting the 2015 Pan Am Games which draws on the three components of my Plan of Study: 1) Urban Planning and Economic Restructuring, 2) Political Economy of Exclusion, and 3) Mega Events.

Component #1 'Urban Planning and Economic Restructuring' focuses on the transitions of urban form over time and how they are shaped by the relationships between land use and global patterns of development. Through my case study of the Athletes Village development in the West Don Lands I contribute to the learning objectives for Component #1 of my Plan of Study: to gain a comprehensive understanding of planning theories and practices, to comprehend the current planning discourses and literature in order to understand the reshaping of urban form, and to gain a basic understanding of regional planning in order to understand key issues of sustainability, transportation, and economic development.

Component #2 'Political Economy of Exclusion' is concerned with the role that economic structures play in decision-making processes at a local level through the influence of growth coalitions. My paper fulfills the learning objectives for component #2 of my Plan of Study: first to gain a fundamental understanding of theories in political economy, to become familiar with planning policy in order to reflect on more equitable ways to plan, and third to obtain a critical understanding of the causal forces that have produced social exclusion.

Component #3 'Mega Events' relates to the use of landmark events such as the Olympics or Pan Am Games as a significant way to enforce dominate social patterns. This paper completes the requirements that fulfill the learning objectives for component #3 of my Plan of Study: to gain knowledge on mega events and their impact on urban and regional environments, and to gain working knowledge of the socio-economic and political relations between mega events and urban environments.

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Introduction

International mega-events capture global attention and offer a platform to push forward growth-driven agendas that are made available through the hosting. These events are often seen as a window of opportunity to invest in infrastructure required for city building or redevelopment initiatives. In recent years, there have been increasing interests for mega-event related housing legacies. While some argue that mega-events can trigger the revitalization of derelict neighborhoods (Silvestre, 2009), others argue that mega-events have a more negative impact on housing and housing rights for marginalized groups (Silvestre, 2009). The huge public costs related to competition venues, infrastructure, housing, or the environmental cleanup of vast wastelands typically accompany the rights to host such an event and can increase the price of hosting well over a billion dollars. The large expense is often justified with some sort of promised public benefits such as affordable housing, however, in many cases the initial promises rarely materialize in the host cities.

This research examines the impacts of a particular mega-event on housing using the development of the 2015 Pan Am Athletes Village in the West Don Lands in Toronto as a case-study. When the City of Toronto was first awarded the rights to host the Pan Am Games in 2009, the initial proposal included the construction of 1,700 market-housing units and 400 affordable rental homes (Lysyk, 2016). However, the final housing numbers were reduced to 810 market-housing units and 253 affordable rental homes (Lysyk, 2016). This study investigates this reduction in

total units with the hopes that the experience of the Games sheds light on the pressing need to address systemic change for increased provisions towards affordable housing.

This paper focuses on the following question: How has the 2015 Pan-Am games experience influenced urban development policies towards improved affordable housing? In order to respond to this question, I specifically ask: How did affordable housing policies come to be incorporated into the development of the 2015 Pan-Am Games Athletes Village? In what ways do the urban processes associated with sport mega- events influence the policy-making of host cities?

This paper is divided into four sections. It begins by defining mega-events in contemporary literature, followed by the impacts that these events have on housing and the role of international sport organizations. The paper then profiles the 2015 Pan Am experience and the final sections examining the housing outcomes of the Athletes Village.

1. Defining Mega-Events

The actual phenomenon of mega-event can be dissected through a diverse range of disciplinary approaches connected through a vast amount of theoretical lenses. In academic literature, mega-events are often associated with events such as the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Summer Olympic Games and the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)'s World Cup. The term mega-event is also used to describe smaller scale events of size such as Toronto's

2015 Pan American Games, events with colonial roots such as the Commonwealth Games, and other non-sporting events like the World Expo. While mega-event discourse tends to agree on what qualifies as mega-events, there is less agreement with what a mega-event actual is. Mega-events are largely considered a one time, unique, high profile event (Hiller, 2000) that can put the host city on centre stage to a regional or global audience for a few short weeks while bearing long term consequences (Roche, 1994).

For this paper, mega-events can be understood as a rare moment of socio-spatial interaction where customary political practices are neglected, altered, or temporarily abandoned (Pentifallo, 2015). Since mega-events are seldom to return to a host city twice, the political, social, and economic processes that go into the preparation of such events are noticeably enhanced. Thus, seeking out large-scale events has become part of a deliberate policy strategy for promoting local economic growth and offers an unequivocal opportunity to combine development, desires, and change.

Urban Politics of Mega Events

While contemporary literature has debated as to what constitutes as a mega-event, the nature of urban politics also bears great importance towards understanding how such events function and interact with government processes and policy making (Pentifallo, 2015). Several key contributors have given insight on the forces of urban transformation and have applied their arguments to the study of sports mega-event. Harvey (1987) speaks to the shifts away from traditional Fordist

modes of production and accumulation to a regime of flexible accumulation where cities attempting to pursue compensatory measures seek competitive advantage through the development of new urban strategies different than the status quo. This shift in economic restructuring has pushed cities to pursue innovative measures to replace lost industrial capacity (Harvey, 1987). Yet, deeply imbedded within this transition is the manifestation of vastly uneven patterns of urbanization, leading to drastic polarization within social and spatial urban classes (Harvey, 1987).

Harvey (1989) describes this transition as “new entrepreneurialism”, where the erosion of many cities economic and fiscal bases coupled with the loss of federal funds discouraged old-style managerial approaches in local governance and promoted a more entrepreneurial strategy. According to Harvey (1989), the entrepreneurial city has three main characteristics: (1) public-private partnerships; (2) a shift away from rationally and coordinated development efforts; and (3) a particular focus on the political economy of place rather than territory or space. Such conceptions drive force behind strategies of speculative construction projects to raise the competitive profile of cities and prospect of economic consumption (Pentifallo, 2015). It is the competitive aspect of the entrepreneurial city that provides the ideological justification for “place-competitive re-imaging strategies” like sport mega-events (Harvey, 1989: 15). A great deal of literature attempts to consider the connection of mega-events as a mechanism for attracting mobile capital and people under the pressure of increased inter-urban competition (Pentifallo, 2015). Research argues that there is indeed a great correlation between mega-events and any strategy of economic regeneration, largely due to the sector’s

ability to generate employment, tourism, investment opportunities, and to redevelop underutilized lands (Hall, 1992). This argument is led by the ability of business to shift capital in order to take advantage of investment opportunities (Hall, 1992). It is not surprising then that strong links are often forged between transnational capital and mega-events that allows for the creation of local and transnational partnerships to develop. Hiller (2003) finds that the ability for mega-events to centralize and expedite planning practices, to increase involvement of private sector participation, and to loosen bureaucratic red tape has been successfully inserted into elements of entrepreneurial urban governance.

As a new form of urban governance, entrepreneurialism seeks to unite the powers of the state, civil society and private interests through inducing the formation of coalitions for the purposes of larger urban agendas (Pentifallo, 2015; Harvey, 2012). These groups, fall under the moniker of growth machines and coalitions (Logan and Molotch, 1987; Molotch, 1976) or urban regimes (Stone, 1989) are groups of actors working towards vested economic and political interests (Pentifallo, 2015). The notion of the city as a growth machine presents the argument that cities perceived as a “place” creates a market commodity capable of generating wealth and power for networks of diverse agents operating towards the allure of financial possibilities. As Logan and Molotch (1987: 50) write, “the city is a growth machine, one that can increase aggregate rents and trap related wealth for those in the right position to benefit.” Moreover, Molotch (1976: 310) identifies that growth as a theoretical basis acts as “the key operative motivation toward consensus for members of politically mobilized local elites, however split they might be on other

issues.” In arguing that the “very essence of a locality is its operation as a growth machine,” economic growth takes precedent in the city and acts as the uniting force amongst political and urban elites (Molotch, 1976: 10, see also Pentifallo, 2015).

This growth machine ideology is identified by Burbank et al. (2001) as a key instrument in part of a wider strategy for promoting economic growth. These pursuits are regarded in shaping both local patterns of growth and urban development in which mega-events become an integral part of urban re-imaging and place competitiveness strategies. Such competitive motivations is typically instrumental to gaining public acceptance for mega-event bids and legitimate rationale for the allocation of resources to fund projects and pursuing economic growth activities (Burbank et al., 2001) The allure of growth often results in expediting financing and developments for projects that would have ultimately taken much longer to come to fruition if not at all (Law, 1993). This enduring quality alone makes it very difficult for opposition or policy initiatives to challenge or even question decisions due to the popular and powerful symbolism of a mega-event.

Boosters of mega-events, i.e., the social and political elites, generally rationalize the hosting of mega-events with claims of global exposure, increased tourism and economic growth. However, too often many unforeseen contingencies such as cost overruns or false budget projections are not only silenced but also reduce prospects for economic growth. Despite evidence of limited economic benefits, the number of bidding cities has gradually increased. The symbolic appeal

of mega-events is so great that cities often bid for the hosting rights with full knowledge that the bid will be unsuccessful (Gold and Gold, 2010). These spectacles are now largely seen as legitimate survival tools for cities engaged in the fierce global market. Boosters, lobbyists, and political officials are usually adamant on the image changing characteristics that mega-events can bring and too often mega-events are pursued as an instrument through which the urban landscape can be transformed.

Neoliberalism and Mega-Events

Global inter-urban competition is not a new phenomenon as cities in colonial power centers fought for the control of resources, trade networks, and territorial rule. In the contemporary era, rapid globalization has required cities around the globe to compete to attract finance, corporate headquarters, and components of the central command functions of the global economy (Sassen, 2000). However, another systemic change has been even more influential in altering international order. Neoliberalism and its set of principles have effectively evolved into a dominating force for directing economic and political decision-making. Neoliberalism uses principles of 18th century liberalism as its ideal vehicle for the market to expand its functions (Smith, 2002), expanding on the notion of free, democratic, and individual self-interest, ultimately rendering a free market as an ideal environment for such virtues to exist. As Brenner and Theodore (2002: 2) explain, “the linchpin of neoliberal ideology is the belief that open, competitive, and unregulated markets, liberated from all forms of state interference, represent the optimal mechanism for

economic development". This belief has allowed neoliberalism to be the ideological foundation for competitive international economics, feeding into rhetoric and policy decisions for competitiveness and rapid growth. Under this system, the role of the state is to re-orient and create an environment that encourages capital accumulation (Harvey, 2005). Within this economic model, private interests have risen to a position of control that reinforces governments to facilitate open and competitive markets in order for the fruits of capitalist endeavor to trickle down for the whole system to enjoy (Harvey, 2011).

Neoliberalism operates through institutional structures, policy regimes, and regulatory practices that interact with pre-existing uses of space in search for ways to increase the accumulation of capital. The concept has been referred to as creative destruction, relating to "geographically uneven, socially regressive, and politically volatile trajectories of institutional and spatial change" (Brenner and Theodore, 2002: 2). This notion of creative destruction indicates two simultaneous processes that coexist within neoliberalism and particularly useful when applied to the mega-event host city. Similar tendencies occur in mega-event host cities that reflect creative destruction discourse, referring to the breakdown of existing governmental institutional arrangements alongside the development of new infrastructure to promote commodification and capital-centric rhetoric (Pentifallo, 2015). Eick (2010) goes further to highlight the conflicting tendencies by assessing FIFA and similar organizations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and argues that the mega-event itself encourages new pro-capital institutions and practices to dismantle existing structures of governance to allow structures of neoliberalism to

be produce even further. As the host city provides the necessary infrastructure required, the mega-event allows international organizations such as FIFA and the IOC to maximize profit through the vehicle of commercialization of the existing and created urban space (Eick, 2010).

The city serves as the playground for neoliberal policy experiments, and by extension the mega-event city is an experiment in which agents of global capital are able to manipulate urban space and social relations. This extension ranges from policies that focus on place-making and boosterism to social control, policing, and surveillance, all of which are direct outcomes to hosting the mega-event (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Pentifallo, 2015). Under neoliberal governance, there is a tendency to engage in models that provide large-scale urban redevelopment schemes. Mega-events provide an opportunity to start a development project that has long been planned, or initiate a policy that would never have been possible without the mega-event label swaying approval. However, influencing land development through the mega-event vehicle can bring with them prospects of gentrification or displacement or associated rhetoric of revanchist policies in the form of outlawing panhandling, criminalizing poverty or limiting the right to freedom of speech in order control those outspoken individuals against the mega-event (MacLeod and Ward, 2002). Evidence shows mega-event organizers using policies as a form of social control in an attempt to decide who has access to certain public spaces, either in the form of urban clearance or induced marginalization of undesirable population. Thus, it is interesting to dig further as to why many mega-event host cities incorporate affordable housing within the mega-event

development plans and even more enticing to think about the impact such decisions can have in projecting an image of the host city.

2. Mega-Events and Impacts on Housing

Mega-events often come with a housing envelope that might initially serves the sole purpose of the event per se but that is packaged as a key legacy of such event in a climate of social housing shortage. In order to understand the housing relationship of mega-events it is first important to review the international legal framework that applies to the housing impacts and more importantly, to mega-events. A study conducted by the Geneva-based Centre On Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) raises serious concerns relating to housing rights under international human rights law and the housing impacts associated with mega-events. National regulations differ in their ability to protect housing rights. Using international rules rather than national law provides a universal standard of reference that can harmonize national regulations. Human rights law is the only existing internationally agreed expression of minimum conditions that everyone should enjoy in order to live with dignity as human beings (COHRE, 2007). Such rights can provide guidance to stakeholders involved in the planning and hosting of mega-events on how to mitigate housing impacts, regardless of the host city or local culture.

Adequate housing as a right

Adequate housing is cemented into several international human rights legislations and is regarded as essential criteria to the well-being and dignity of any

individual. Housing rights have been essential components of the highest regarded international legislations, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966), and elaborated by the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (UNCESCR, 1991), which is responsible for monitoring governments compliance with the ICESCR and provides clarity of policy through general comments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights's General Comment No.4, initially adopted in 1991, focuses on the right to adequate housing. The comment interprets the right to affordable housing as "the right to live somewhere in security, peace, and dignity" (UNCESCR, 1991). This interpretation refers to something more than just a physical structure. This General Comment reaffirms that adequate housing means adequate privacy, protection against forced evictions, harassment and other threats, while also being provided basic infrastructure and close distances to job opportunities and social services, at an affordable cost. Paragraph 8 of the General Comment lays out the seven dimensions of adequacy to be taken into account when assessing efforts towards housing rights. They are:

1. Legal security of tenure;
2. Availability of services, material, facilities and infrastructure;
3. Affordability;
4. Habitability;
5. Accessibility;
6. Location; and
7. Cultural Adequacy.

Further to these seven dimensions, particular attention must be paid to vulnerable and marginalized groups which are susceptible to violations of their

rights such as women, children, minoritized groups, and people with disabilities (COHRE, 2007). All of these elements should be taken into context when preparing to host a mega-event, in particular when it comes to the treatment of minoritized and vulnerable groups.

Obligations to Housing Rights

Ultimately, the primary responsibility for the protection and promotion of human rights rests upon the government in charge. Under international human rights law, national governments have an obligation to protect housing rights of their population. This means that governments must ensure that the proper measures of set in place should landlords, developers, or corporations violate any housing rights, in order to mitigate and prevent further damage.

However, in regards to major sporting events, there are increasing expectations from the international community that other actors, such as international sports organizations behind the events/games and affiliated sponsors should respect international human rights norms and standards (COHRE, 2007). The increased power that these organizations have a serious impact on the population's housing rights and many non-state actors themselves have acknowledged that their increased power calls for increased responsibilities including respect for universal values, international human rights, and environmental standards. The corporate sponsors of mega-events, as well as the organizing associations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Federation Internationale de Football (FIFA), and Pan American Sports Organization (PASO), are no exception to this

trend. As entities associated with the construction and development of urban infrastructure in preparation of a mega-event, they are expected to uphold human rights responsibilities and must act to respect and protect housing rights.

The housing impacts from mega-events vary in many different forms. They can be direct or indirect, short-term or long-term, small scale or large scale. In most cases they affect the most vulnerable and marginalized sectors of society, often increasing “precariousness, vulnerability, and impoverishment” (COHRE, 2007, p.38). The COHRE (2007) report highlights the most common dimensions of housing impacts from mega-events (in no particular order):

- Displacement and forced evictions in order to pave way for mega-event related infrastructure development;
- Displacement and forced evictions related to redevelopment and gentrification that are brought on by mega-events;
- Displacement and forced evictions related to increases in housing costs due to the hosting of mega-events;
- Increase in housing costs, reducing access to affordable housing;
- Reduction in social and low-cost housing in the pre and post phases of the mega-event;
- ‘Cleaning operations’ to remove homeless people from sight during the mega-event;
- Increase in ‘special’ legislative policies to facilitate the development of the mega-event: for example, expropriating private property, increased police powers, restrictions in freedom;
- Limited transparency and participation over decisions-making affecting housing between the residents and public officials.

Many cultural, sporting, and political mega-events have been characterized by these negative impacts. The number of people displaced or forcibly evicted from event sites ranges in the thousands. At least 300,000 people were evicted in New

Delhi for the 2010 Commonwealth Games, 18,000 people were evicted and 400,000 people relocated in Shanghai for the 2010 World Expo, and the recent 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil resulted into 250,000 forced evictions (De Paula, 2014). The numbers are staggering and expose serious ethical questions about mega-events and the benefits that they are intended to provide to host cities. These negative impacts are more than just an unfortunate side-effect of hosting a mega-event, they are violations of international human rights law, ranging from the right to adequate housing, to rights to participation and information (COHRE, 2007). Preventing these violations from occurring rests on all entities involved in the organization of the mega-event, including governments, host cities, event organizers, and corporate sponsors.

Increasing Responsibilities Towards Housing Provisions

International sports governing bodies, such as the IOC and FIFA have failed to hold any accountability or any host city accountable for human rights violations during one of their mega-events. These governing bodies set out the terms and rules that all public actors must follow in the staging of the mega-event, highlighting ideals of integrity and sustainability embedded within their internal bidding processes. However, when it comes to ensuring respect for human rights are maintained in practice, these organizations are lacking. As some of the most prominent mega-event organizing bodies in the world, the IOC and FIFA should lead in the implementation of policies that other mega-events can be modeled after. Instead both organizations have been criticized for their lack of transparency to

ensure protection of housing rights. The billions of dollars earned by the international sporting organizations through their trademark mega-events limits any urgency to change course, and with popularity for their events appearing to be higher than ever (support for the 2020 Summer Olympics Bid between Tokyo, Istanbul, and Madrid were respectively at 92 percent, 83 percent, and 91 percent), advocates for more housing provisions may not be heard.

While these sport governing bodies have failed to hold any accountability or impose severe sanctions for violations, there have been promising new changes to its bidding process. Largely as a direct result of negative international attention, for example, bid proposals for the IOC under the 2020 Candidature Procedure and Questionnaire require prospective host cities to submit an environmental impact assessment and to explain how their proposals and legacy plans can contribute to sporting and social development (COHRE, 2007). Additionally, the IOC has established an Olympic Games Knowledge Management Program and an Olympic Games Impact Study to measure and acknowledge potential effects of the games on the host city, region, and country, their environment and citizens. If taken seriously, these programs provide an additional platform to transfer knowledge and best practices for future host cities that hopefully foster positive practices regarding housing rights.

FIFA follows a similar platform in regards to environmental impact studies but like the IOC, the organization has not yet established any formal procedures to address violations of the right to housing. However, the positive development

towards acknowledging and studying potential damaging effects to the public of hosting nations brings optimism for procedures that emphasis on housing rights for low-income and marginalized communities.

As previously stated, beyond international human rights law, there are no specific regulations, guidelines, or procedures binding on host cities to prevent forced evictions, to protect against the rising cost of housing, to ensure no reduction in social housing stock, or to engage with affected residents. For example, the IOC has no mechanisms or procedures in place to prevent or mitigate negative impacts for host cities (COHRE, 2007). Instead, what has occurred is a greater focus on legacy and using mega-events as a way to promise some sort of public benefit. This strategy has prompted organizational bodies such as the IOC, FIFA, and PASO to incorporate demands for social commitments into the bidding process that speak to greater contributions that the event will make to the region's wider economic, social and environmental legacy (PWC, 2012). However, once a bid proposal is chosen there are rarely any requisite structures in place to ensure that such commitments are followed through.

Housing Experiences of Past Mega-Events Host Cities

The discussion that follows describes the experiences of host cities that demonstrate the clear and subtle impacts on housing from the staging of a mega-event. The negative impacts felt by these host cities have largely affected the poorest residents of urban areas and questions the social distribution of newly created

housing for mega-events. In many mega-event experiences, key decisions were made that influenced how post-event housing would be delivered.

During the bidding process of the Barcelona Olympics of 1992, political leaders and mega-event organizers routinely used the promise of subsidized housing to gain support to host the games. When Barcelona eventually won the bid to host the Olympics, the vision of a housing legacy of affordable housing slowly dissipated as the games drew nearer. Eventually only 76 of the 6,000 units built for the games were reserved for subsidized housing (Lenskyj, 2008). In addition, the neighboring areas experienced increases in land prices which eventually led to the displacement of existing residents. Lenskyj (2008) notes that between 1986 and 1992 housing prices in Barcelona increased by 250 percent and similar increases in rents. Although the Olympics in Barcelona were extremely successful from a financial standpoint as reports suggest that the games generated US\$16.6 billion in the Spanish economy (McKay and Plum, 2001), the individuals that benefited the most from the games impact on housing were the upper and middle class who saw their housing value increased.

Similarly the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City experienced many broken promises in regard to the affordable housing that was intended to be delivered through the games. Housing targets were reduced from 360 to 156 affordable housing units in the period leading up to the games (Lenskyj, 2008). In addition, the post-game housing legacies have been tied to forced evictions, rent increases, a rapid increases in gentrification of surrounding areas that have

threatened to undo years of grassroots community work for homeless and low income citizens.

Closer to home, the 2010 Vancouver's Olympic experience is similar to other host cities in regard to leveraging the games for a larger growth mandate. The Olympics were seen as an opportunity to develop the 'vacant' strip of land called South East False Creek (SEFC) (the same way that the World Expo 1986 previously redeveloped the north shore of False Creek) by building the athletes' village on the site. The City of Vancouver contracted Millenium Development Company to complete the construction of the village housing project. Millenium was intended to design, finance, and build over 800 market housing units, an additional 252 city-owned units of social housing, a community centre, and a childcare facility (Scherer, 2011). However, after the 2008 economic crash, Millenium was refused further funding to complete the rest of the athletes' village and had their loan agreement broken with New-York based hedge fund Fortress Investment Group (Scherer, 2011). This unforeseen situation led to the City of Vancouver having to advance CAD\$100 million public money to cover the company's cost overruns (Scherer, 2011). In an attempt to reduce cost expenses, the number of affordable units decreased from 252 units to 126, with the remaining 126 units being sold for market rent. It was initially believed that the high price tag associated with the market housing in the village would help indirectly subsidize the affordable housing units (CBC, 2010). However, this plan did not play out the way it was intended. Vancouver experienced difficulty selling the remaining units and looked poised to lose over CAD\$230 million, eventually selling the remaining units to Aquilini Group

for \$91 million (Lee, 2014). Reports have also surfaced about the discomfort experienced by social housing tenants living in the Olympic Village. Media reports have noted that low-income tenants were forced out due to the high costs of utilities. Moreover, they were actively discouraged by the condominium corporation from forming a tenants association to better advocate for themselves with the city (Vulliamy, 2013).

Although these experiences range in time period and place, they tell a similar story where social benefits of affordable housing are used as a key safeguard in two different ways. Firstly, by attaching social benefits to the legacies of the games, they can gain acceptance and momentum for the bid from many members of society. Secondly, by attaching social benefits of affordable housing, the host city has the opportunity to reduce the total unit numbers, often justified as an action to limit cost overruns. Therefore, without any mechanisms in place to ensure that bid promises follow through, it is extremely easy and indeed beneficial for actors leading the preparation of the games to reduce affordable housing promises.

Mega-Events Funding Social Housing

Access to adequate and affordable housing is an essential component to thriving and equitable communities. In Toronto, it has been a challenge to handle the affordable housing shortages that has crippled so many marginalized individuals. In the well documented *Three Cities* study, Hulchanski (2006) makes it clear that Toronto is becoming increasingly polarized between different income levels and essentially is losing its middle class while increasing its lower and higher

classes. This trend, along with increasing austerity measures for social housing and lack of political will has painted a dire situation for the future of affordable housing in Toronto.

Affordable housing at a minimum measure serves a critical economic function by supporting productive workforces in large urban centres where concentrations of poverty, income polarization, and homelessness are ever present (Cote and Tam, 2013). In Ontario, the vast majority of housing is privately owned. Of the 4.5 million Ontario households, roughly 70 percent is privately owned and 30 percent rented with only 5 percent representing affordable housing despite a waiting list for affordable units that continues to grow each year (Cote and Tam, 2013: 1). With the ghastly monthly increases in housing prices, along with increases in precarious working and living conditions, many individuals are left with little to no stability for their future. Toronto's situation will only be amplified as the city is expected to exceed over 6 million by 2025. This housing predicament calls for a rethinking of strategies before the situation is beyond irreversible.

It is apparent through existing research that hosting a major event naturally comes with some opportunities to development of the physical infrastructure (Ali, 2012). A major event like a Pan Am Games had tremendous potential to investment in urban infrastructure and provided an opportunity to align these new investments with long-term needs of the city. Hosting of these types of events can also be an avenue of funding from higher levels of government to support large-scale development projects (Vanwynsberghe et al., 2013)

In the case of Toronto, a major sport event presented an opportunity to invest in one of the city's most desperately needed and vital concerns - affordable housing. As part of the City's *Housing Opportunities Toronto-An Affordable Housing Action Plan 2010-2020*, the City has not lived up to its commitment to build 1,000 units of affordable housing annually between 2010 and 2020. Despite some promising results in 2011 and 2012, fewer than 800 units were opened from 2013 to 2015, while the number of households on the active waiting list for social housing since 2010 has increased by 16,966 households (City of Toronto, 2015). In addition, while a decade-long housing boom brought considerable economic benefits to the Greater Toronto Area, it has exploited structural problems within planning policies.

A report produced by TD Economics (2015) argues that the strength of the housing market has concealed growing challenges that have been lingering under the surface, of which include deteriorating affordability, weak diversity of housing choice, and a transportation system that is failing to keep up with demand. Ultimately, the drastic increase in housing prices has caused 1 in 5 households to struggle to find and keep an affordable home (Gaetz et al., 2014). For many Toronto residents, the precariousness of housing security and finding affordable housing presents significant barriers to improving their quality of life and ultimately have a critical negative impact on their ability to participate in society. Research shows that over the past 25 years investment in affordable housing from the federal government has decreased by over 46 percent while Canada's population has increased by nearly 30 percent (Gaetz et al., 2014). In fact, federal funding for affordable housing continues to decline. In 2012, the City received approximately

\$161.3 million from Ottawa, by 2017 that will decline to \$33.4 million and reach zero by 2031 (City of Toronto, 2015). There is therefore a significant shortfall in funding required to achieve Toronto's housing goals and objectives. Thus, when Toronto won the rights to host the 2015 Pan Am Games, it represented an opportunity to leverage government funds towards the City's affordable housing targets.

3. Pan Am Games in Toronto

For three weeks in the summer of 2015, Toronto hosted the Pan Am Games, welcoming approximately 10,000 participants and officials from over 42 North, Central and Latin American and Caribbean countries across 17 different municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area (Toronto, 2015). The Pan Am Games are held every four years. Usually hosted in the summer, these games make use of national Olympic committees and represent Olympic values and standards, albeit at a smaller scale. The countries that participate in the Pan Am Games must be recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and there are currently 42 countries with National Olympic Committees recognized by Pan American Sports Organization (PASO), the overseeing body of the Pan Am Games.

In terms of scale, the Pan Am Games are usually larger than Winter Olympics but smaller than Summer Olympic Games. The Pan Am Games in Toronto were twice the size of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics and the largest sporting event ever held in Canada. From a comparison, the 2015 Pan Am Games had 31 venues, 51 events, and 7,666 participants (not including officials), while the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics had 9 venues, 20 events, and 3,072 athletes (not

including officials) (Lysyk, 2016). Although the events were spread out throughout the Greater Toronto Area, all 10,000 athletes and officials were housed at the Athletes' Village in the West Don Lands on the Toronto waterfront. The event was deemed as a success and was seen as having a lasting and significant legacy in the minds of many Torontonians based on its share size alone. Although the full impact and lasting legacy of the Games are beyond the scope of the research for this paper, analyzing the development process of the Games can inherently aid in future complex projects, specifically in providing affordable housing on Toronto's waterfront and potentially influencing affordable housing policies that expand beyond the boundaries of the waterfront.

Pan Am Games and Social Housing

As mentioned, social benefits like affordable housing are attached to the submissions of bidding cities as a measure to leave behind some sort of lasting legacy. Toronto's quest to host the Pan Am Games was no different. When The West Don Lands was identified as the potential site of the Athletes Village by the bidding team, they were able to align the progressive affordable housing policies of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan to the games legacy. When the Toronto City Council approved the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan in 2003 it represented an aggressive bid towards community development objectives for a more equitable and inclusive future city. In response to a severe affordable housing crisis and homelessness disaster (highlighted by a number of governmental and non-governmental reports), Paragraph 39 was included in the Central Waterfront

Secondary plan to focuses on affordable housing requirements for all residential development in the area. This section reads:

The overall goal for the Central Waterfront is that affordable rental housing and low-end of-market housing comprise 25 percent of all housing units... To the extent possible, and subject to the availability of funding programs and development cross subsidization, the greatest proportion of this housing will be affordable rental with at least one quarter in the form of two-bedroom units or larger. Senior government funding programs to assist in the delivery of affordable rental housing will be aggressively pursued, and appropriate opportunities identified to take advantage of such programs (City of Toronto 2003: Paragraph 39).

The approval of the policy has proven to be very difficult for those in the development community to accept, thus the entire Central Waterfront Secondary Plan is subject to ongoing appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board over the last ten years (personal communication, City of Toronto, 2015). The objectives of Paragraph 39 are intended to be produced slowly assigning lands slated for affordable housing. Then, as time and money permit, those lands will be developed as either affordable rental or ownership. In the case of the West Don Lands, almost 90 percent of the lands were publicly owned, which allowed for the construction of the Athletes Village to be developed under the policies of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan without lengthy opposition from private owners. Also, it is clear that the high profile nature of the Pan Am Games was a key factor to obtain the availability of funds

towards affordable housing “because it was the Pan Am Games, the province paid for the land and the cost to construct the building... the province has directly subsidized the affordable housing” (personal communication, City of Toronto, 2015). As a City’s representative went on to explain, there is an indirect relationship between the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and the development of the Athletes Village. The West Don lands proved to be an ideal location to develop the Athletes Village, and while the lands were subject to the affordable housing requirements of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, it matched the objectives of the Pan Am Games in producing some sort of social benefit.

The West Don Lands and Waterfront Revitalization

The 80-acre parcel known as the West Don Lands is located to the west of the Don River and north of Lake Shore Boulevard and the Gardiner Expressway. The land is provincially owned by Infrastructure Ontario, a provincial landholding agency (Bunce, 2011: 289). This site has experienced a mix of uses throughout its history. Historically the area formed a large public park in the Old Town of York (City of Toronto, 2013) and was gradually re-designated for industrial purposes in 1813 (West Don Lands Committee, 2000). When the land was sold in the 1830s to finance the construction of a new city hospital, the area transformed into one of Toronto’s major industrial hubs (City of Toronto, 2013). The site experienced a mix of industrial uses ranging from food packaging operations, a resin storage company, a slaughterhouse, to an oil company occupying the site (Toronto Waterfront Joint Venture, 2005).

By the 1980s, the manufacturing industry began seeking cheaper land and no longer relied on the port as an essential component for their operations. Thus, many waterfront's industrial uses began experiencing an economic restructuring that saw the retreat of industry, leaving large parcels of highly contaminated lands that were often left vacant for decades with limited interests from public and private sectors. This was the case for the West Don Lands, after having been used for industrial purposes for over a century the site was vacated and despite being used to support the underground Canadian film industry (personal communication, 2015), the site largely laid derelict for years. In addition, like most of the waterfront, years of heavy unregulated industrial uses left the soil highly contaminated and very costly to remediate (Lu and Desfor, 2011: 245), which impacted the potential for the site to be repurposed. In the same period, planning in the City of Toronto had adopted an entrepreneurial stance and a rise of social movements that included antiracism, women's movement, queer politics, and antipoverty. In addition, Toronto experienced a reform towards ecological modernization that encompassed urban intensification, soil remediation and new urbanist planning. (Desfor et al., 2006). From these influences the City of Toronto in partnership with the Province of Ontario were interested in redeveloping the site into a residential neighborhood similar to St. Lawrence Market Area in an attempt to create social housing and remediate the site. The parties involved developed a plan named the Ataratiri Plan aimed to create 7,000 new units of public sector's affordable housing. The Ataratiri Plan was adapted from the Toronto Olympic Commitment Plan that was created for Toronto's unsuccessful bid for the 1996 Olympics that proposed the creation of

2,500 units of new housing as part of a larger Olympic Media village (Toronto Waterfront Joint Venture, 2005). However, the plan was scrapped after feasibility reports revealed the development was unprofitable by a combination of a declining real estate market, expensive environmental cleanup and the proximity to the flood plain of the Don River that required flood protection cost of \$1 billion (City of Toronto, 2013). Consequently the site laid vacant once again and resulted in the provincial government unsuccessfully attempting to sell the West Don lands to private developers (Ali, 2012; West Don Lands Committee, 2000).

As a strategy for urban renewal, redeveloping the waterfront became a primary goal for those who wished to increase Toronto's competitive image on the global playing field (Lehrer and Laidley, 2009). By a combination of encouraging major capital investment in the built environment and new political regimes, a case for waterfront development began to generate momentum (Lehrer and Laidley, 2009). In 1989, the federal government appointed The Royal Commission headed by former Toronto Mayor David Crombie to provide suggestions on courses of action to revitalize the waterfront. Through these efforts, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust was created in 1992 to coordinate waterfront development, hosting a variety of workshops and consultations that brought together public and private interests (Lehrer and Laidley, 2009). The trust focused their attention on the West Don Lands and in an attempt to provide a strategic global catalyst to the redevelopment (personal communication, 2015) of Toronto's waterfront, they pursued a bid for the 2008 Olympic Games under Toronto's Bid Committee (TOBid).

Toronto's Bid Committee (TOBid) appointed John Bitove Jr. as CEO with the task of reigniting Toronto's hopes for the 2008 Summer Olympics. During this period, Bitove's primary objectives became: (1) "to win the competition"; (2) to secure "tri-government level support to clean up the waterfront"; and (3) to "increase the funding for amateur athletes" (Bitove cited in Oliver, 2008: 227). Essential to the success of the bid was ensuring that the 2008 Olympic Games could be viewed as an opportunity to stimulate waterfront redevelopment. In order to facilitate Olympic uses, the City rezoned portions of the waterfront as mixed-use areas, opening up former industrial lands (including the West Don Lands) to new opportunities (Lehrer and Laidley, 2009). In 1999, drawing from this idea, then-City of Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman released a report entitled *Our Toronto Waterfront! The Wave of the Future*, a vision statement for reimagining the city. An integral component to the report was the proposed formation of an intergovernmental waterfront task force, eventually materializing into the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Task Force in 1999 (Ali, 2012). Although Toronto lost the 2008 Olympic bid to Beijing, China, the bid for the games left a rejuvenated interest in waterfront redevelopment, transforming Toronto's competitive strategy from a 'city that works' to the 'city that astonishes' (Lehrer and Laidley, 2009). This interest resulted in the Government of Canada, The Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto to declare support for the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (TWRC) to assume the responsibility of the waterfront's renewal (Waterfront Toronto, 2016) and endorsing \$500 million each towards Toronto's new waterfront vision. The Corporation was subsequently renamed Waterfront Toronto in 2007.

West Don Lands Precinct Plan

As a tri-governmental organization, Waterfront Toronto is mandated to lead the planning and redevelopment process of the City's central waterfront. Right from the onset, one of the first major components of the revitalization plan was focused around the redevelopment of the West Don Lands. According to Bunce (2011: 289), "Waterfront Toronto's vision for these lands is the creation of a high-density master planned sustainable community with both residential and commercial uses and LEED Gold sustainable building design." Waterfront Toronto introduced the precinct-planning concept as a strategy for developing waterfront neighborhoods during the formation of the City of Toronto's *Making Waves* Plan in the early 2000s (Bunce, 2011: 292). Waterfront Toronto's intent towards using a precinct planning process was tied to the sustainability objectives desired for the waterfront, specifically reducing the high volumes of vehicular traffic, promoting low impact development and impactful mixed use designs. Following a collaborative approach between community representations, municipal staff, and other key stakeholders the precinct plan was created and the West Don Lands Precinct Plan was adopted by City Council in May 2005. The Precinct Plan provided important framework to generally determine the built form development, public realm, parks and open spaces, sustainability measures, transit, public infrastructure, and phasing and implementation initiatives for the area (City of Toronto, 2010). The West Don Lands Block Plans were later approved in 2006 and went one step further to define the height and massing of development, setbacks and stepbacks, and the scales and character of building facades (City of Toronto, 2010). The Precinct Plan further

detailed the broad principles addressed in the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan created and approved by the City of Toronto in 2003 (City of Toronto, 2015). The Precinct Plan features 6,000 new residences, including 1,200 affordable homes based on a target of 20 percent of all new residential units to be affordable rental upon completion (City of Toronto, 2013).

When Toronto's quest to host the 2008 Olympics fell short once again in 2001, the City of Toronto prepared a bid to host the 2015 Pan American Games resulting in the creation of BIDCO – the Pan Am Games Bid Corporation (Ali, 2012). Toronto's 2015 Pan Am Games bid emphasized the West Don Lands as an ideal location for development and more specifically for the Athletes Village. The bid detailed all of the work that already went into envisioning and planning the proposed site including the LEED buildings, sustainable design, density, walkability, home affordability, and diverse community uses (Toronto2015, 2009). The bid specifically highlighted that the Athletes Village located on the West Don Lands site would act as a trigger to accelerate the remediation and redevelopment of the site 10 years earlier than expected, and potentially build momentum towards redeveloping other facets of the waterfront. Notwithstanding all the challenges that would go into remediating the site, part of the rationale behind selecting the West Don Lands as the potential Athletes Village was due in part to the previous precinct planning work and planning approvals that were well underway for the site (Toronto2015, 2009). Waterfront Toronto made very clear the intent in using the West Don Lands "for the Pan Am Games Athletes Village means a significant increase in the pace of transforming the former industrial lands into a beautiful,

sustainable, mix-use neighborhood” (ULI event, 2015). The site also reduced risk of meeting tight deadlines by already having a master plan and many development applications already in the works. Both BIDCO and Waterfront Toronto promised that more than half of the planned community would be developed prior to the start of the 2015 Games.

Toronto won the bid for the 2015 Pan American Games and the West Don Lands was constructed on time and on budget for the games, serving the needs of 10,000 athletes and officials taking part in the event (City of Toronto, 2013). A large part of the successful integration of the Athletes Village into the larger vision for the West Don Lands area is due to the previous planning work done on the Precinct and Block Plans. Having those plans already in place exponentially increased that pace of development and made it easier to align the Athletes Village objectives with those already established for the area. Although the Precinct Plan strategy adds another layer to the municipal planning process, Waterfront Toronto suggests that the plans allow for a smoother planning process, provided more certainty for private sector development (Bunce, 2011:295). The development appears to be a success for its role in servicing the Pan Am Games, however, some financial challenges and restructuring of the final development ultimately impacted the proposed housing legacies attached to the Games.

Promised Affordable Housing

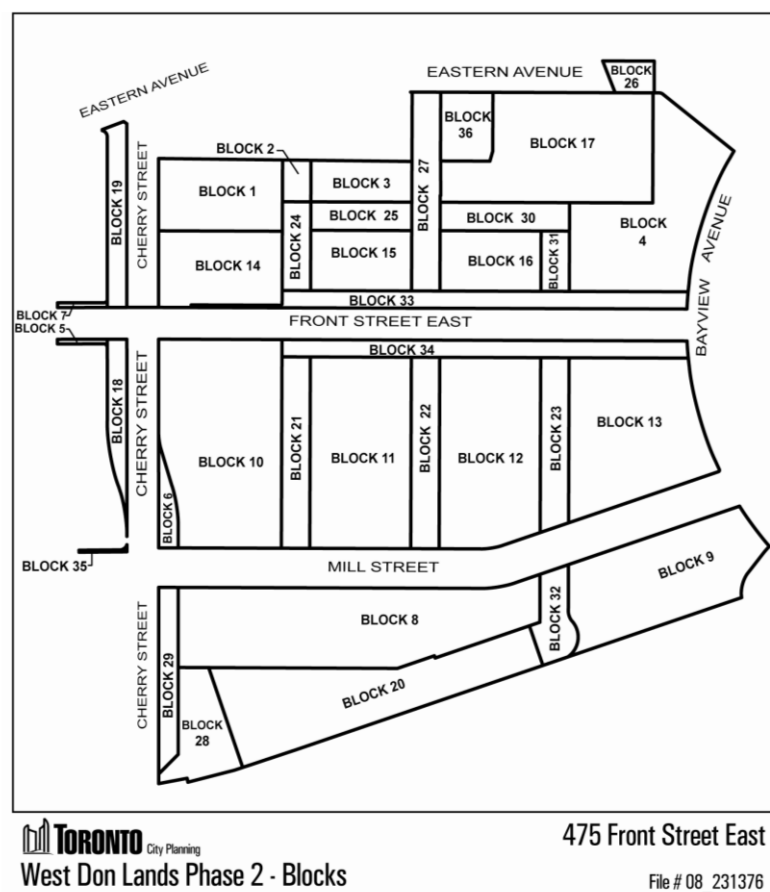
Throughout the whole bidding process it was declared that the games would accelerate the revitalization of the West Don lands. These claims are consistent with

strategies used by host cities of mega-events to help generate support for staging of an event. Hall (1992) argues that mega-events are often exploited and used to rejuvenate or develop urban areas through the construction and development of new infrastructure, road and rail networks, airports, sewage and housing. This strategy was central in Toronto's mega-event experience, as Waterfront Toronto and Infrastructure Ontario suggested that the Games would allow for new sources of finance and political support to be attained to fast track redevelopment efforts of the waterfront and specifically the West Don lands.

In addition to these accelerated aspirations for redevelopment, many different actors including the West Don Lands Committee and Waterfront Toronto believed that the Pan Am Games could act as a catalyst for development of affordable housing. George Smitherman, local MPP and Minister of Infrastructure at that period, assured the parties involved in the bidding process that winning the right to host the Pan Am Games would be a way of achieving a significant level of affordable housing (quoted in Ali, 2012). As previously mentioned, bid proposals that accommodated some sort of public goods from the hosting of the games not only reduced public backlash but also appealed to the unwritten requirements of games governing bodies in awarding the games. This meant that generating a portion of the redeveloped West Don Lands as affordable housing was not only a goal of the West Don Lands committee, who represented -- albeit only to an extent -- the communities voice throughout the duration of the bidding process, but also to the coalition of actors involved trying to win the bidding rights.

The original predicted timeline for the redevelopment of the West Don Lands was originally going to take 10 to 15 years. Early depictions of the Athletes Village were revealed in highlighted the layouts that conformed to the West Don Lands Precinct Plan. The original plan for the Athletes Village had 2,100 units that would be converted into market and affordable housing (Infrastructure Ontario, 2010). Particular areas, referred to as Blocks 3, 15, 16, were identified as affordable housing, while the remainder of the blocks are reserved for market housing, including 100 units of affordable ownership (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: West Don Lands Blocks



Source: City of Toronto, 2010

The affordable housing units were designed to cater to different types of household needs, including larger bedrooms; 5 percent of the units are 4-bedroom units and 15 percent are 3-bedroom units. Based on specifications of the West Don Lands Precinct Plan, all the buildings were required to achieve LEED Gold and LEED Neighbourhood Development (LEED ND) standards (Pella, 2013).

Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of a project the size of a mega-event Athletes Village normally does not fall on the shoulders of a sole agency due to a multitude of financial and liability reasons. More importantly, the projects are so large that they usually require many responsibilities to be split between different agencies in order to deliver the project in time for the games. The development of the Athletes Village was no different and often at public events the parties involved reminded the public that “it takes a village to build a village” (ULI event, 2015). In order to organize the roles and responsibilities between all the different parties involved, a multi-party agreement was signed among the Province, the Federal Government, the City of Toronto, the Canadian Olympic Committee, the Canadian Paralympic Committee and the Ontario 2015 Pan Am Games Bid Corporation upon the announcement of Toronto winning the 2015 Games (Ali, 2012). The multi-party agreement provided details related to contractual arrangements, financial contributions, legal responsibilities, and legacies associated with the games.

The major agencies involved in the development of the Athletes Village included Infrastructure Ontario, Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto.

Additionally, the Pan Am Organizing Committee (Toronto 2015) was created as the successor organization to BIDCO and was responsible for orchestrating the games delivery. However, the committee had a minimal role in the development of the Athletes Village other than ensuring that the development met the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) technical requirements for Athletes Villages (Jailal, 2012).

As the municipality, the City of Toronto regulates development by approving applications that conform to planning guidelines within secondary plans, precinct plans, and zoning by-laws. The Athletes Village was developed in accordance to the City's approved Precinct and Waterfront Secondary Plans by Waterfront Toronto. Prior to the start of the development, the City approved the Draft Plan of Subdivision and the site plan for each building in accordance with section 41 of the Planning Act (Jailal, 2012). The City also issued building permits, undertook inspections, and assumed any road conveyances and public components such as Corktown Commons Park. The City's Waterfront Secretariat played a vital role in coordinating the planning and development activities to ensure that the project was headed in a timely manner (Ali, 2012). Additionally, City staff accelerated development approvals for all the projects in time to help meet the 2015 deadlines. The City of Toronto also worked with the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to develop a housing strategy to determine the private operators of the affordable housing and how the housing would be sustained over the long term built out (Ali, 2012).

The development of the site was managed by Infrastructure Ontario, which was responsible for procuring and overseeing the construction of the Athletes Village. As a public agency, part of Infrastructure Ontario's mandate is to generate revenue by modernizing and maximizing value of public infrastructure to support provincial objectives (Infrastructure Ontario, 2016). To minimize the public's risk on the project, Infrastructure Ontario delivered the project through an alternative financing and procurement project delivery model. Infrastructure Ontario received and reviewed three competitive bids for the project. Infrastructure Ontario's most challenging responsibility was selecting a proponent that would ensure the Village would be completed on time and on budget (Ali, 2012).

The winning bid was announced in September 2011, selecting Dundee Kilmer Developments Limited as the successful proponent with a total development and construction cost of \$871 million (Ali, 2012). The development team was tasked with the full design and construction of the Athletes Village and post-games development. Construction began in December 2011 and was mostly completed and turned over to TO2015 in January 2015. Athletes and officials used the site for the duration of the games in July and August 2015. The site was then returned to the development team in September 2015 for conversion to its permanent use.

During the development, Waterfront Toronto provided guidance to Infrastructure Ontario in the designing and developing the site. As the key agency responsible for waterfront development their role was to ensure that Dundee Kilmer Developments Limited was developing the site in accordance to previously

approved and award winning Precinct Plans developed by Waterfront Toronto. Having Waterfront Toronto involved with the development was another measure to help integrate the Athletes Village into the larger vision of the waterfront community.

As a valuable contributor towards the development of the area's precinct plans, the West Don Lands Committee are considered a well-informed and well connected group representing the area's constituents. The West Don Lands Committee played a large role providing public input around issues that concerned the community and were influential convincing the parties involved to prepare a special request for qualification procurement process to select the affordable housing operators. Additionally, as a representation of the area's constituencies, their members needed to be satisfied with any development approached taken throughout the construction of the village.

Toronto2015 also acted as a short-term tenant working collaboratively with Dundee Kilmer Developments Limited to assist with required technical specifications. Dundee Kilmer Developments comprised a larger team that included Dundee Realty Corporation, Kilmer Van Nostrand Company Limited, EllisDon Construction, Ledcor Design Build (Ontario) Inc., Brookfield Financial Corporation, Architects Alliance, Kuwabara Payne Mckenna Blumberg, Daoust LeStage Inc., and TEN Arquitectos (Architects Alliance, 2012).

Table 1 below highlights the roles and responsibilities of each agency involved in the delivery on the Athletes Village and offers good indication of how these agencies worked together to not only achieve individual agency goals but also

the primary goal of project completion. The lead agency (Infrastructure Ontario) and the developer (Dundee Kilmer) have an objective to generate profits or create a return on their investment. The objective of economic growth directly challenges the objectives of the proposed social benefits for the community, primarily the affordable housing that was included in the winning proposal for the Pan-Am Games. The City of Toronto was required to accelerate the time required to review development applications in order to ensure that the Athletes Village would be completed on time.

**Table 1: Role and Responsibilities of Different Actors
In Developing the Pan Am Games' Athletes Village**

Agency	Role in Developing Pan Am Athletes Village	Goal
Province of Ontario Infrastructure Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed and lead the coordination and implementation of development. Procured work and selected proponent Ensured budgets did not exceed original estimates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep cost of games low Create value for investment
Waterfront Toronto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led any related land use planning work. Oversaw the development of the site to ensure the Athletes Village conformed with the requirements of the West Don Lands Precinct Plan and the vision of the Waterfront 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee community development to respect precinct plan
Toronto 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managed the Athletes' Village site during the Games period. Worked with IO/Kilmer Dundee to make sure the buildings met Pan Am facilities requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the requirements of the IOC's technical manual on olympic village.
City of Toronto Various Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported the development of the site by fast tracking approvals Waterfront Secretariat worked with all parties to ensure the development was on time. Worked with Provincial government (Ministry of Municipal affairs and housing) to determine criteria for selecting affordable housing operators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the development meets criteria for affordable housing, sustainable building, mixed uses, and public realm.
West Don Lands Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represented the public's voice throughout the whole planning and development of the site. Monitored the developments compliance with the community consulted West Don Lands Precinct Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the West Don Lands Precinct Plan comes to fruition as promised.
Dundee Kilmer L.P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructed the neighbourhood including all servicing and road infrastructure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a return on investment Increase corporate profile Ensure economic longevity

Source: Various planning documents and interviews by the author

Upon reviewing the roles and responsibilities of key actors involved in delivering the Athlete's Village, it becomes easier to think of them in relation to the

regime and growth machines theory. Burbank et al. (2001) use this framework to analyze urban politics of mega-events. They argue that regime theory is about building coalitions and emphasizes the local government's power of social production, stating, "fundamentally, an urban regime is a mechanism for overcoming obstacles to exercising power at the local level" (Burbank et al., 2001: 24). The authors explain that without coalitions, no bid for a mega-event would ever occur. Toronto's many attempts to bid for a mega-event is a reflection of numerous bodies of coalitions trying to make use of the West Don Lands site. However, these coalitions experienced many challenges that ranged from a declining real estate market, to high interest rates, to limited public support, and a juxtaposition of numerous government agencies that made planning on the waterfront dysfunctional.

What is most compelling about the failed bid attempts is that they were successful in generating discussion about the future of the waterfront and eventually after the failed bid attempt for the 2008 Olympics the foundations were laid for a restructured planning focus through the development of Waterfront Toronto. Moreover, once the public agency was created it was able to align their planning initiatives with that of growth coalitions aiming to secure a mega-event on Toronto's Waterfront. Using Stoker and Mossberger's (1994) focus on symbolic regime may be more appropriate to explain the mega-event case. A symbolic regime is growth-oriented, but only under certain conditions; it perceives a need to change the city's image and is a more inclusive, process-driven, and dependent on external resources (such as grants) in order to meet goals. For Toronto's Pan Am Games

experience, a major reason why the winning bid by the bid team BIDCO was selected was due to the previous planning work for the West Don Lands, which allowed for the Athletes Village to fit into the larger vision for the waterfront redevelopment. Additionally, other factors generated a lot of support including: the provincial ownership (through Infrastructure Ontario) of the site; the already funded and approved applications for supporting infrastructure was underway; and the existing precinct plans acted as blueprints for development. All of these conditions also tied into the idea that if the West Don Lands were developed into the Athletes Village for the Pan Am Games, it would act as a catalyst to open investment opportunities to the rest of the waterfront, specifically the East Bayfront and the Port Lands. This is because redevelopment of the West Don Lands would be the initial measure for flood protection and community development for the area. Redevelopment created a mutual level of cooperation between all actors, including all levels of government, residents, and developers towards similar objectives of growth. Burbank et al. (2001: 168) note, “[a] mega-event is sought not because it is appealing in a narrow cost-benefit sense, but because the event fits into the larger purpose of an urban regime’s desire to promote growth.” Moreover, regime theory suggests that large development projects are guided by dominant groups of business actors whose interests align with political decision makers (Ali, 2012; Burbank et al., 2001). Applying this thought to the hosting of the Pan Am Games, it is evident that the hosting of the Games had a larger intention of not only accelerating the redevelopment of the waterfront but also to promote growth through the use as a catalyst project. This is why the multi-party agreement was important as it ensured

that government-business networks and partnerships were developed to provide the authority and resources for redevelopment associated with the Games so that no mistakes or delays were to occur. Some ways that this streamlining occurred was through committee meetings with all actors ensuring open lines of communication, fast tracking of all approvals, allowing for construction to occur on time, and through a financing model that sought to leverage the financial responsibility onto the developer while also awarding development rights to additional sites.

Financing and Development Agreement

An alternative financing and procurement model was used to deliver the Games. The financing and procurement model is a frequently used approach for public-private partnerships towards the delivery of major projects in Ontario. Under these agreements, private-sector businesses deliver large infrastructure projects and the various partners allow for a share in the responsibilities and business risk (Infrastructure Ontario, 2014). Although, the detailed analysis of the financial cost for delivering the Athletes Village lies beyond the scope of this research, it is still important to understand the financing model that was implemented to develop the West Don Lands. Under the financing and procurement model, the Province of Ontario established the scope and requirements of the project. A private sector agency was then selected to finance the construction work. This process was pursued as a protective measure to limit the risk for the public sector and instead transfers the pressure to the private sector who must complete the project on time and on budget (Ali, 2012). In 2011, Dundee Kilmer Development Limited was

selected to take on the development of the West Don Lands and had the responsibility to design, build and finance the Athletes Village (Infrastructure Ontario, 2011). This project included the construction of the new residential community (including the affordable housing units), roads and services, all of which needed to maintain the environmentally sustainable criteria laid out in the Precinct Plan for the area.

To develop the site, a fixed-price contract was signed between the Province of Ontario and Dundee Kilmer Development Limited in the amount of \$514 million (Infrastructure Ontario, 2012). The contract was paid out in three installments during the development of the site for the Games. In December of 2011, the first installment of \$21 million was paid to prepare the site for development with new roads and services. In April 2013, the second installment of \$100 million went to completing the facilities including the market and affordable housing projects and student residence. Finally, early in 2015 the last installment of \$393 million went towards completing the last portions of the redevelopment and converting the facilities into their permanent post-Games state (Infrastructure Ontario 2012).

The Village Development consisted of eight blocks, of these only five blocks (stage 1) were required for permanent buildings for the games. The remaining lands (stage 2) were included in the Request for Proposals process and were transferred to Dundee Kilmer Development Limited at a cost of \$10 in an attempt to reduce total development costs to the province (Lysyk, 2016). The stage 2 lands are estimated to be valued at \$48.9 million. As part of the development agreement, Dundee Kilmer Development Limited is expected to develop these blocks between 2019 and 2021

at its own cost, and is entitled to all the revenues from them (Lysyk, 2016). The contract was structured in a way to ultimately benefit Dundee Kilmer Development Limited as the development company was given the development rights for market housing on additional blocks. This structure allowed the price of the contract to be reduced by leveraging the potential sales of the market housing. Adding to that benefit, the contract did not include additional affordable housing units to be contracted beyond what was needed to be built in time for the Pam Am Games (Ali, 2012). Not only did the structure of the contract benefit the developer, but it also has potential impact on the future plans of the area. An agency like Waterfront Toronto is dependent on recovering funds from the sale of remediated land to private developers to assist in their larger planning initiatives (Lysyk, 2016). The revenue that was lost through the transfer of the stage 2 lands could have gone back into the area for future initiatives instead of being transferred into the pockets of the developer.

The development agreement for the Village also included safeguards that intended to provide security to the province. However, upon further analysis these safeguards ultimately benefited the developer. To limit the risk to the province, the project agreement required the developer to provide letters of credit that the government could draw on should the developer fail to fulfill the scope of work. The agreement also stated that for every day after the target date, the developer was also required to pay \$100,000 to the province. These safe guards did provide protection to the province and shifted the responsibility to the developer. However, the province still made public resources available should the developer require

financial assistance, as provincial loans were made available to also reduce the risk faced by the developer. Private lenders generally do not advance construction loans to developer until at least 75% of the units have been sold. If Dundee Kilmer Development Limited experienced slow sales, then the group may have had to seek more costly bridge financing. To avoid this, the province made a \$230.7 million loan available should the developer have required financial assistance (Lysyk, 2016). The structure of the agreement was designed to work within the parameters of a growth coalition, which is designed to allow all parties to work towards similar objectives of economic growth. The province was able to reduce the risk of the development onto the private sector, while the private sector was able to greatly benefit from additional future market rate developments. The only actor that does not benefit from this arrangement were those that advocated for affordable housing, as they had limited say in any decision making process.

Housing Legacy?

In January of 2012, significant changes to the original proposed 2009 Athletes Village plan were announced by Infrastructure Ontario (Infrastructure Ontario, 2012). In the initial plan, it was reported that approximately 2,100 housing units would be required to support the 10,000 athletes partaking in the Games which would later be converted to affordable and market housing. However, Infrastructure Ontario realized that the cost of building the Athletes Village would exceed the initial projected estimations. In an effort to reduce costs, Infrastructure Ontario opted to reduce the total number of units to be contrasted for the Pan Am

Games. From the original 2,100 units proposal, only 1,140 were constructed in time for the games. The difference identified in Table 2 (below) shows a change of 890 market-housing units and 147 affordable rental units. The Province’s decision to reduce the amount of affordable housing was triggered by the need to financially reduce the overrun costs to construct the Village “since the province will bear the cost of the subsidized units, Infrastructure Ontario recommended a reduction in affordable housing targets in the Village because it does not offer the Province added value for money” (Ali, 2012: 29). This decision significantly reduced the original construction of 400 affordable rental units to only 253 units, continuing a trend of mega-event host cities not fulfilling bidding promises associated with dedicated affordable housing.

Table 2: Affordable Housing Outcomes

Affordable Housing Goals and Outcomes	
Central Waterfront Secondary Plan	Approved by council in 2003, the overall goal for the Plan was to have affordable rental housing and low-end-of-market housing to comprise 25 per cent of all housing units
West Don Lands Precinct Plan	Approved by council in 2005, full build-out of the community is estimated to be 6,000 new residences of which 1,200 are intended to be affordable rental, representing 20 per cent of the total
Pan Am Athletes Village Development	<p>Original Proposal in 2010 Market Housing: 1700 Units Affordable Ownership: 100 Units Affordable Rental 400 Units</p> <p>Completed in 2015 Market Housing: 810 Units Affordable Ownership: 100 Units Affordable Rental: 253 Units</p>

Source: Various planning documents and interviews by the author

Infrastructure Ontario was able to accommodate the 10,000 athletes with fewer units through design changes to the original plan. In an effort to reduce costs, Infrastructure Ontario put pressure on the development and design team to find a more compact and less costly way to accommodate the participating athletes (personal communication, 2015). Dundee Kilmer Development Limited was able to put more athletes into each unit by replacing the kitchen space of each unit with more beds. Even though Infrastructure Ontario was able to reduce the cost overruns of the project, the result translated into fewer overall numbers of available market and affordable housing units.

4. Outcomes and Impacts of the Athletes Village Development

Based on the above review of the Athletes Village development, lessons can be learned from the hosting experience. As the housing units of the Athletes Village have now transitioned into the market, the legacy of the event and Athletes Village will begin to be questioned. However, it is still too early to determine the overall negative or positive impacts of Athletes' Village on social housing in Toronto.

Still, the Pan Am Games exposed some realities and contradictions in securing affordable housing that may provide insight on future solutions for Toronto's Waterfront. As well, the experience of the Athletes Village development may offer the momentum needed towards increased provisions and cooperation in the housing models to provide affordable housing.

Less than Expected

While the Pan Am Games have proven to be successful in creating some new affordable housing units, the final number of units was significantly less than initially expected during the early bid and development stages of the Athletes Village. Since the details of the initial agreement with Dundee Kilmer Development Limited were extremely vague towards the affordable housing commitment, no firm number was ever agreed upon, which allowed for more flexibility and leverage for the developer to honor the agreement. The agreement with Dundee Kilmer Development Limited stated that they must develop 20 percent affordable housing in proportion to the overall build-out for the Games. However, because of the ambiguous language in the agreement, time and financial pressures, the developer was able to significantly reduce the final number of affordable housing units from the initial proposal (as seen in Table 2). Despite slashing more than one-third of the proposed units, all of the parties involved in delivering the Games continued to claim that the development of the Athletes Village honored the initial promised commitment.

Uncertain Housing Outcomes

During the development of the 2005 West Don Lands Precinct Plan, there was a tremendous amount of public consultation; this process was to ensure that the plan reflected the desires and values of the existing community. During this time the West Don Lands Committee played a large role as a key public stakeholder. Thus, when the West Don Lands were selected as the location to house the Athletes

Village, there was concern that the development of the Village would deviate from the previously developed precinct plan.

As previously mentioned before, the delivery of the Athletes Village involved numerous actors, each with their own agendas and roles. While partnership agreements were necessary and an inevitable aspect of delivering such a large-scale event, it led to a situation wherein it was difficult to determine who was actually leading the delivery of the housing legacy. It was clear that the redevelopment was a shared vision among all the parties involved, but it was far less clear who, if anyone, took the role of lead advocate of housing legacies. Moving forward, without a champion monitoring and guiding the development of post-Games housing in the central waterfront, the affordable housing commitment quickly became at risk of representing only a vague aspiration.

When Infrastructure Ontario was made the lead agency in charge of the Athletes Village, concerns arose considering that Infrastructure Ontario focused on the construction of buildings and not communities, which meant the agency lacked the sufficient experience to plan for a post games experience. As Table 1 and Table 3 indicate, each agency had different primary goals. Infrastructure Ontario's primary goal is to maximize a return on their investment, which suggests that the leading agency tasked with leading the redevelopment did not make affordable housing a primary goal. This is why the involvement of The West Don Lands Committee was important to monitor the scenario, ensuring that commitments were maintained and followed through.

The West Don Lands Committee acted as a watchdog to ensure that key principles and the integrity of the precinct plan were maintained. Regular meetings were held between 2009 to 2012 by Waterfront Toronto and Infrastructure Ontario with the West Don Lands Committee and local residents to provide updates on the Village development. Despite these meetings, it was not until the design renderings were released in 2012 did the Committee find out about the reduction in market and affordable housing produced in the Athletes Village (Ali, 2012). This meant that the residents were kept out of the discussion when the decision was made to reduce the number of total housing units. Having an open and transparent dialog with the public is key to ensuring that any planning or development is truly a reflection of good planning principles and an inclusive public process. The under-estimation of the development costs for the Village ultimately led to the reduction in total units. However, the fact that information was deliberately withheld from the public prior to finalizing site renderings suggests that key decisions for the development of the Athletes Village were made on business cases and not made in the public's best interests. Even though the Committee played the "watch dog" role, they do not have any real power and could not prevent the reduction in the final count of affordable housing units. Thus, the affordable housing objectives of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan remain in limbo until a major player commits to leading the delivery of affordable housing along the waterfront.

Table 3: Role in Providing Affordable Housing

Agency	Role in Providing Affordable Housing
Province of Ontario Infrastructure Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured agreement with Dundee Kilmer to develop 20% affordable housing units in porportion to overall build-out. • Province subsidized the affordable rental units and provided funding for the affordable ownership assistance program
Waterfront Toronto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnered with IO to ensure that affordable housing was a component in the athletes village
BIDCO/Toronto 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal role in delivering affordable housing, however, affordable housing was a public benefit promised during the bidding of the games
City of Toronto Various Divisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked closely with Ministry of Affairs and Housing to come up with RFQ requirements on deliverying affordable housing.
West Don Lands Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed RFQ process to IO, this allowed for a more closely guiding delivery of affordable rental units and sufficient selection of proponents.
Dundee Kilmer L.P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built the affordable housing units. • Provided unique affordable home ownership program with funding from the Province.

Source: Various planning documents and interviews by the author

Despite the reduction of promised affordable housing units, it should be acknowledged that 253 below-market and rent-geared-to-income homes were created through the Pan Am Games. This number signifies a good step forward in a long and challenging road ahead to address Toronto's desperate need for affordable housing and final completion of the West Don Lands site. However, since the completion of the Pan Am Games, there has been little activity in regards to the next steps to fully develop the West Don Lands site (Webb, 2016). Members of the West Don Lands Committee expected Waterfront Toronto to initiate the next steps of planning, with hopes that the West Don Lands Committee would work collaboratively on outstanding issues such as location and format of the remaining affordable rental housing.

Recommendations

Based on previous mega-event literature and Toronto's 2015 Pan Am games experience, recommendations that could start addressing some of the marginalizing social issues of mega-events are:

1) International Mega-Event Organizations need to find solutions to guarantee commitments for social benefits that are tied to their events.

A social benefit trust fund could be created as a requirement of winning bids where a portion of funds be allocated and only used on projects directly related to the promised social benefits. International mega-event organizations would contribute a percentage towards the trust fund.

2) Should Toronto obtain additional mega events, opportunities to invest into affordable housing must have set targets and outcomes.

The ambiguity of the affordable housing component in the contract between Infrastructure Ontario and Dundee Kilmer allowed for flexibility to reduce the total number of affordable housing units, while meeting the affordable housing target of 20%. In order to avoid vagueness and increase accountability, contract agreements have to have set unit targets and goals.

3) Planning for the delivery of a mega-event must have complete representation and consensus in the decision making process.

To ensure that the planning process of the mega-event is open and transparent, there must be full representation and consensus among all parties involved in

decision making. Decisions that affect the promised social benefits for the games should not be economically motivated. All stakeholders must have equal power to decide how a development may occur.

4) Mega-events should be hosted in a policy environment that encourages affordable housing.

The aggressive affordable housing policies of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and West Don Lands Precinct Plan provided housing advocates (albeit to a limited extent) with a louder voice at the table. This ensured that affordable housing for the Pan-Am Games were not reduced beyond the 20% target, which is consistent with the objectives of the two policy documents.

5) The same momentum that is harnessed to acquire a mega-event should to be harnessed into the social needs of the public regardless.

Pursing a mega-event should not provide the justification towards investing in the needs of people. The same amount of effort, preparation, and cooperation that go into acquiring resources, strategizing solutions, and aligning similar goals should be harnessed towards the creation of a healthy and vibrant city for all.

Conclusion

Now that the 2015 Pan Am Games are finished and the Athletes Village competed, what is the legacy of this mega-event? This is a question that will be analyzed for many years to come with no simple answer. But, before anyone can begin to answer the legacy question, I believe that the story of the experience must

be understood first. I hope that more can be learned from the affordable housing experience of the Games towards policies than the actual produced outcome. The development of the Athletes Village did produce affordable housing, but in less significant amount than initially planned. This paper intended to answer key questions: Why was the West Don Lands site chosen? Who were the stakeholders involved? How truly involved was the public in decision making? Why was the number of affordable housing units reduced? Who truly benefited from the Pan Am Games? Although the story of the 2015 Pan Am Games may have uniquely positioned Toronto to the international scene, the story of the Athletes Village is not new. Whether it takes place in Barcelona, Salt Lake City, Vancouver, or Toronto, there are similarities in each story that furthers discussion about injustice within mega-event discourse.

By focusing on the story of the 2015 Pan Am Games, one can feel ambivalent towards the mega-event. This is because as the Games are awarded, one can only hope that the momentous amounts of money will truly deliver for the host city and benefit the public. However, knowing that without radical reform, host cities of major sporting events will continue to have similar stories where the most disadvantaged in our societies are marginalized at the hands of urban and economic growth for the very few. These struggles are seen time and time again, most noticeably in larger events such as the World Cups and Olympics, with the most recent 2016 Rio Olympic Games possibly representing the most socially damaging games in an already unequal and divided city, and being dubbed the “Exclusion Games’ (Sriskandarajah, 2016).

This mega-event tragedy derives initially from the selection process of the games. International sports organizations like the IOC, or FIFA, currently wield absolute power. Vast amount of money flow through these organizations and they have tremendous financial influence the highest level of politics. Every mega-event has similar stories about wealthy business and political elites benefiting from development or new laws being introduced for the event to prevent political protest, essentially legitimizing state violence and eroding civil liberties (Sriskandarajah, 2016). It is only until the interests of the public are put at the heart of the selection process and only when a voice is given to the people will the corruption and the unequal distribution of benefits hopefully begin to fade. With public pressure continuing to mount for institutional change towards the selection process, the IOCs and FIFAs of the world have at least agreed to review the host city selection process. One can only be hesitant to think much change will truly occur. If true change is to occur, host city bids must include clear obligations relating to human rights and guaranteed public benefits, with strategies to reduce local community impacts towards issues like displacement. Most importantly, mega-events should not be seen as a panacea for all urban issues, but with more of an open and transparent decision making process, it should at the very least not exacerbate them.

The message of the anti-Olympic Games bid in Toronto in 2008 was 'Bread not Circuses', the slogan was intended to highlight the true legacy benefits or lack thereof the games (Srishandarajah, 2016). This message represented a fight towards representation and increase equity. When Toronto won the rights to host the 2015

Pan Am Games, this message was initially infused within the key social benefits and largely within the final plan for the Athletes Village. But somewhere down the road, the message lost traction and Toronto eventually missed an opportunity to set an example for the entire world to see. Governmental stakeholders were not committed to delivering on their promises, the public's voice was left out of key decisions, and the development consortium was the main beneficiary. Again, this is the same old story seen countless times. As such, the focus of the Athletes Village development was towards a forceful strategy to facilitate waterfront development, representing a way to align the interests of growth coalitions with the political agenda of the city, and not the true interests of the people (Andranovich et al., 2001).

Now I may be naïve to think that something good will come from this experience, but I think it may. The experience of the Athletes Village has generated a fair amount of discussion on affordable housing among housing advocates of Toronto's continuous and dire need to supply it. For years municipalities all across Ontario have been advocating for new strategies towards supplying affordable housing from higher levels of government. Only until recently has there been significant progress made in the affordable housing discussion that has not been seen for quite some time. To highlight a few, with their current powers, the City of Toronto has taken the initiative to promote the "Open Doors" program to encourage a business case for development that includes affordable housing (Toronto, 2015). The provincial government has also introduced the 'Promoting Affordable Housing Act' which intends permit municipalities to create inclusionary housing zones, areas

in which all new development would be required to include a percentage towards affordable housing (Gallant, 2016). Finally, the federal government has announced that it is working towards a national housing strategy set to be in place by the end of the year (Stueck, 2016). Although these significant steps are not directly related to the story of the Athletes Village, I do believe that there is an emerging connection.

The 2015 Pan Am Games experience may have profiled the affordable housing discussion; however, it was the reduction of the produced affordable units in the Athletes Village that exposed the real challenges that need to be addressed. These challenges are the pro-growth coalitions, the tightening austerity measures, and the limited voice of the public. I can only hope that the Athletes Village experience fuels a progressive fight for change. Maybe the true legacy of the Pan Am Games will not be the affordable housing that was produced, but perhaps when looking back in history, the true legacy of the 2015 Pan Am Games will be identified as a critical moment that contributed towards a reform of housing policies, finally aiding in the social benefits that was once promised.

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