

Thank you to you all for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. Your continued input and support is crucial to making this project a reality. Those who indicated they would be interested in attending a focus group meeting (and left contact info) will be contacted. If you have not heard from me by Tuesday October 8, 2002, please call PARC at 416 462 1010 and leave me a message. Thanks again, Germaine Fraser.

**FINAL REPORT
HOUSING VISION QUESTIONNAIRE
COMPILATION OF SURVEY RESULTS**

Youth from the Summer Youth Groups, Network, and Creative Youth Enterprises either answered the survey or participated in lead discussions of the survey. As well, CAST and CCAS workers answered the survey and/or participated in discussions of the survey. In total 35 youth completed the questionnaires and 20 youth participated in discussions. There may be some overlap as some youth who participated in discussions may have also completed questionnaires and vice versa. Four CCAS workers attended a discussion and 4 surveys were completed. Two CAST workers attended a discussion and eight surveys were completed as either an individual or joint effort of a Long-Term Care team. (CAST questionnaire did not have check-boxes, just short answer questions.)

WHO IS THIS HOUSING FOR?

Which youth do you see living in this building? (More than one maybe checked.)

Ages: Of the youth answers (surveys and discussions):

- 36% 16 and older**
- 19% 18 and older**
- 16% no answer**
- 13% 15 and older**
- 13% 17, 19,20 or any age**

Younger youth tended to answer 15-16 years old while older youth tended to answer 18 years and older. Among the youth responses, the highest cap on age is 30; among workers it is 25 years of age.

- No couples or families

Of the CAST LTC answers: 100% 16 and older

**Of the CCAS LTC answers: 50% 18 and older
25% 16 and older
25% worded answer
Younger youth and youth 16-18 who are in urgent need**

Should the housing be PARC youth only, any youth at risk, young parents, families regardless of involvement with CAS/CCAS, other?

Youth answers:

- 69% PARC youth only**
- 38% any youth at risk**
- 30% young parents**
- 11% families**
- <1% other or no answer**

CCAS Worker answers:

- 100% any youth at risk**
- 75% young parents**
- 25% PARC youth only**

In error, CCAS workers were asked this question but CAST workers were not.

How would youth be selected to live there?

Youth answers:

- 38% needs-based selection**
- 27% interview with PARC staff or a "Housing Coordinator"**
 - a list/first come first served or voting
 - Nine surveys had no response.

The majority of CAST/CCAS workers responded that it should be needs or merit based with emphasis on the youth having the skills to succeed at living independently, as well as youth who are high-risk not just PARC youth.

TYPE OF HOUSING MODEL/LENGTH OF STAY

How long should youth be allowed to live there? (Short-term, transitional, permanent, mix of three, other ideas?)

Youth survey answers:

- 38% permanent**
- 30% mix of three**
- 19% transitional**
 - youth should be allowed to stay as long as they needed without a predetermined limit or until they reached individual goals that would allow them to move on
 - In discussions: a set number of years regardless of the age at which the resident entered the housing
 - with support to leave at a predetermined level of self-sufficiency
 - stay as long as they are doing something productive
 - some emergency short-term units available for use once predetermined criteria met
 - Long term and short term emergency shelter units

Some youth were concerned that without a preset number of years there would be no motive for youth to move on. Successful youth would be forced to leave and being allowed to stay housed would reward youth that failed to succeed.

In general both CAST and CCAS workers felt the housing should be short-term or transitional ending at a certain age, after x years or when certain goals met (permanent housing, completed post-secondary education). The workers envisioned this to be a stepping stone on the path to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

CAST responses:

- "There are clearly some very marginalized youth or youth with particular challenges who may require long term community supports. While we might have a role in assisting these youth in a transitional manner; we did not see a role in providing long term supportive housing or other levels of support. Clearly for these youth we would need to try and work in concert with other community based organizations and agencies who could provide longer term adult support to these youth."
- We really need a variety of housing options for different ages/levels and needs
- More semi-independent housing including Life program and Life apartments
- Transitional units from semi to independence - RGI
- Supported independent living for lower functioning non-COTA youth
- Longer term housing for kids in school
- Low cost or subsidized housing - permanent
- Not rent to own

If the housing is not permanent what type of supports should there be to help youth move on to more permanent housing? Should there be support or encouragement to save for buying a house?

Youth responses:

- Make the units rent-to-own
- Provide structured support so that the youth work on leaving from the first day of moving in i.e. support to move on instead of incentive not to succeed
- Use words such as "loft", "condo" to encourage youth to envision (home) ownership as a desirable possibility
- Portions of the tenant's rent put aside in a savings account so that they may save for home ownership
- Support in applying for other affordable housing
- Support around education, better jobs and childcare so that they can move on
- Support group for saving for a home or condo

- Youth should not have to leave until they have found a new place but there should be a deadline for the youth to meet
- Stability is an asset
- This housing should be permanent!!!

CAST responses

- Support applying for other housing, buying furniture to be used in house and to be taken with them; youth could pay rent based on % of earnings up to market rent limit, encouraging transition to permanent housing
- Highly skilled staff to provide full time permanent support that is dependent on the level of functioning; youth "peer" support (higher functioning youth) i.e. the self-expectations youth completing post secondary education as inspirations/examples to others; permanent maintenance staff
- House parent to provide non intrusive support; support in developing better life skills; connecting them with other resources to help plan/envision their long term housing e.g. Habitat for Humanity
- Shared accommodations
- Support for motivated youth by way of Housing Support Workers
- Residents should have a goal and specific plan to seek more permanent housing. To include: information/resources/referrals, accompaniment to interviews, if required, recommendations (letters) if compliant with rules, safety net -specific amount of savings (1st/last rental payment) as initial goal. Workshops on job/apartment hunting, interview skills etc could be held (mandatory for residents?)
- "We... see the need to encourage youth to move on to community based housing since there will never (be) sufficient housing resources for all our youth and new youth will be always coming through the system who will require some level of transitional housing support and therefore there has to be a flow through the system to create space for new youth in need."

How should the building be managed? Should the building be a co-op? Or should it be run like PARC housing or the LIFE program? Should there be staff on site?

Youth responses:

- with staff attended weekly house meetings
- as rent geared to income without staff so that it is like any other RGI building

- as a co-op so the tenants can get involved and take responsibility for themselves and the building
- with a superintendent like any other building
- a co-op LIFE program run like PARC housing with staff on site
- no staff only an emergency contact
- staff on site, to monitor and help in situations
- superintendent as quasi-live-in-mentor but more independent than the LIFE program
- let youth 18 or older live in the building and make PARC's current housing suited to 15-18 year olds
- completely youth managed with no staff on site
- PARC staff on site only if needed

CAST responses:

- Staff visiting daily at different times but more like a co-op instead of the LIFE program
- Staff on site for support not "policing"
- Role model concept
- "We ...did not necessarily see PARC as having overall organizational support or management of a housing network or housing system. Clearly they have some experience and expertise in this area and perhaps their services can be expanded in some areas. The concern is that for some youth they are not necessarily open to service from PARC and if involvement in housing was contingent on involvement in PARC then some youth might choose not to make use of the housing option."
- LIFE is a good model: a mentor in each unit, and support staff, when required; could include youth on Board of Directors/Housing Committees with possibility of being hired as staff
- Co-op with agencies maintaining ultimate responsibility for mortgages, etc land trust/management co-op
- Support to help youth establish communal co-operative living skills
- Practical support to help deal with shortfalls; independence building
- Weekly house meetings

CCAS responses:

- Staff on site 24/7 with more support for 16-18 year olds and less for 18 and up
- Regular meetings
- Mentoring/counseling program with/by older youth
- Staff on call

Which is best?

Youth answers: 44% 100% RGI
41% Mixed RGI and market rent
13% no answer

- maximum rent \$500 for single youth and young parents, \$600-\$700 for youth 21-24
- less than market but still subsidized

CCAS responses: 50% 100% RGI
50% Mixed

- cheaper than market for young parents and those with special needs

CAST responses:

- mixed market and RGI
- housing for young parents
- housing for retired CAST workers who could act as mentors or supports
- start as RGI but gradually increase to market rent as an incentive to move on to independent living
- small units
- RGI with part/all rent saved for the youth for moving on to independence

What kind of support should be available to the youth to prevent evictions or help deal with other tenants?

Youth answers: 50% Peer support from other tenants
30% Mixed RGI and market rent
16% no answer
13% other

- Hire someone with experience working with youth in/from care as the landlord; complaints from other tenants would handled by a meeting with the worker and landlord if other tenants safety is threatened
- Let the tenant handle their own problem and or chose who they want to help them
- General meeting to deal with complaints

CAST responses:

- 24/7 support staff to deal with all problems

- formal process involving mixed staff - youth review panel
- co-op board/committee to set up prevention procedure, mediation and conflict resolution protocols
- access to Legal Aide - housing representative periodic workshops with appropriate resources; post information in units/offices
- regular staffed house/apartment meetings to air feelings before they escalate
- monthly co-op meetings

CCAS responses:

- youth outreach worker, staff on call to assist with youth
- peer support from other tenants with staff help

How much input should there be from tenants/youth into the management of the building?

Youth responses: 36% 100% youth input
47% 50% or more youth input
16% no response

- tenants should not have a say just a Board that takes a role in running the building

CCAS responses: 50, 80 or 100%

CAST responses:

- a lot of youth input if there is a small building, co-op type if larger
- ideally they should be involved at every level with true decision making along with staff support
- set hierarchies
- youth input on committees (recreation, security, conflict resolution) and meetings
- youth input to share feedback, assist in planning, identify their own needs and concerns
- written rules/philosophy; youth on co-op board

HOUSING DESIGN

What should the housing look like? How many units? High rise, low rise?

Youth responses:

- Low rise, 5 floors, many units
- High rise; 20 floors, 8 apartments each
- 3 floors, 3 rooms, house
- 30 unit high rise

- **100-110 units**
- **creative design like Woodgreen Model on Pape south of Queen**
- **One floor for young parents**

CAST responses:

- **multi-design, 3-4 room house, 1-2 bedroom apartments**
- **low rise 3 floor maximum with 2 bedroom apartments**
- **6 plex type 2 bedroom apartments**
- **25 unit low rise or town homes**
- **whatever would be accessible to the highest number of youth while providing some degree of privacy/autonomy (own bedroom/storage/fridge space)**
- **mix of high rise, low rise, town homes, condos and lofts**
- **as many units as possible**

CCAS responses:

- **low rise would be safer**
- **"Don't reinvent the wheel, keep the idea simple: limited to student dormitory type, affordable housing so that the youth are off the streets and out of dangerous situations."**

What should the units look like?

Youth responses: **30% bachelors**
55% one bedrooms
41% two or more bedrooms
22% shared units

- **two or more bedrooms for siblings or single parents**
- **mixture of all units but no larger than 2 bedrooms**
- **no shared units - too many problems youth need to learn independence anyway**
- **if bachelors and one bedrooms there may be problems deciding which youth get what**
- **lots of windows**

CAST responses:

- **only 6 small bachelor apartments, 2 bedroom apartments and small house for 3-4 residents**
- **Boys Home model - lower floor more support, top floor less on-site support**
- **Separate phone lines, bedrooms with locks and mini fridges**
- **Dishwashers to reduce conflict in kitchen**
- **Furnished with necessary items i.e. furniture, pots, pans, dishes, cleaning utensils**
- **Mini bachelors and jr. one bedrooms**

CCAS responses:

- **combination of types of units so that youth have choice of sharing or living alone**

What should the shared facilities look like? How many laundry rooms, common rooms? Roof-top garden? Balconies?

Youth responses:

- **Balconies in all units a must!**
- **1-2 large laundry room, free of charge**
- **Area for meetings**
- **Common living rooms**
- **Roof-top garden good idea**
- **No common room - some PARC youth don't like each other**
- **Share responsibilities for common areas**
- **Have an company pay for advertising space in front of the building or have a company sponsor the building and their logo will be mounted on the building wall**

CAST responses:

- **Common kitchens, living and dining rooms**
- **Build practically - focus on needs: kitchen, bedroom, bath, laundry.**
- **Common rooms could be booked for special events**
- **Garden and balconies would be dependent on the number of youth**

CCAS responses:

- **Laundry rooms should be central so that youth may bring their laundry regularly. If they are located too far, they won't do it.**
- **Laundry rooms depending on the number of tenants**
- **Every building should have balconies and gardens**
- **Let youth decide**
- **Meeting room**

Should there be inside or outside recreation facilities? (Pool room, meeting room, rooftop patio?)

Youth responses:

- **Yes to all, if affordable**
- **No party room**
- **Playground**
- **Outdoor swimming pools**
- **Facilities for tenants only, booked in advance to avoid conflict**

CAST responses:

- **No inside or outside recreation facilities**

- **Dependent on space/budget**
- **Focus should be on philosophical approach i.e. youth participation in decisions**
- **Day care**
- **Swings**
- **Esoteric/recreation rooms**

CCAS responses:

- **would be helpful in developing a community**
- **pool would be problem for tenants to maintain**
- **indoor facilities are more conducive to weather**

What things should be nearby? TTC, shopping, schools, recreation?

All responses:

- **Yes to all and convenience stores**
- **Parks**

CAST responses:

- **Close to CAS**

CCAS responses:

- **Medical/hospital facilities**
- **Libraries**
- **TTC so that youth can access other resources as well**

Should there be space in the building for a storefront for youth initiatives? (Community Economic Development? Space for PARC?)

Youth responses:

- **PARC should be downstairs, for sure**
- **No to all**
- **Great idea**

CAST responses:

- **Only if this would not mean fewer apartments/units are available to youth in need. Focus on housing/employment/education/resource/referral services**
- **Available creative space that could be used many ways - training, art gallery, store, crafts, rent to community organization that would benefit the community as a whole**
- **Another 9-5 resource person/referral system outside of PARC is needed**

CCAS responses:

- **No storefront for youth initiatives**
- **If possible**

Describe your ideas for handicapped access/accessibility for youth that have different physical needs. (Wheelchair accessibility? Services for the Blind, Deaf)

Youth responses:

- **There should be accommodations for youth who have special needs**
- **They should have first pick of the main floor**

CAST responses:

- **Adjusted counter heights; flashing lights to indicate someone at the door; seeing eye dog accommodation**
- **Braille and beeping on the elevators**
- **Visual supports for phone use**
- **Space reserved on the main floor; the units must be accessible to all youth in care**

CCAS responses:

- **Must be accessible because it would give the people with disabilities a chance to reside at PARC**
- **If possible - this would be great - set aside some units for wheelchair accessible - might be trying to do too much**

Should there be provisions for environmental concerns (Bike racks, bike paths, limited parking, solar lighting, energy efficient heating, low flush toilets, recycling and composting)

Youth responses:

- **Yes to all but not mandatory**
- **Charge for the parking**
- **Garbage shoots on every floor**
- **Doesn't matter**

CAST responses:

- **Of course**
- **Visitor parking permits**
- **Ideal if possible**
- **Only if budget allows; priority is: housing people in need**
- **Not a high priority given the types of high risk kids we are talking about**

CCAS responses:

- **Yes -if new building with choice especially energy efficient heating - no electric heating!**
- **Bike racks, energy efficient heating, recycling, low flush toilets would not be helpful because they may clog more - especially with male youth! I went to camp and I know these things**

CONCLUSION

Are there any other ideas/concerns/comments?

Youth responses:

- **Carpet in some of the apartments**
- **"I hope this happens!"**
- **Security at front lobby a must**
- **No staff snooping around, let people live their own lives**
- **"Give me one. I want a place."**
- **If people move in to an apartment to create a family, income must be declared**
- **Tenants should not have others move into their unit**
- **The CYE group would like to cater the focus group**

CAST responses:

- **Where it would be built? - a lot of youth outside of the city and choose to stay there as they get older. Have we done any tracking about where the kid(s) are who need housing e.g. Bowmanville, North York, Scarborough, Brantford**
- **For the 18-21 year olds living outside of Toronto use PARC's current housing model of SHOP housing and agreements for units in building, this would accommodate the fewer youth living in rural areas**
- **Single mothers (parents) have a particularly difficult time locating affordable/appropriate housing - they should have special priority**
- **There is a group of youth that we cannot reach - those who are not read to be independent in the community, yet they don't want to have anything to do with CAS, PARC**

CCAS responses:

- **Ensure that there are a lot of lights around the housing units and some emergency phones**

Would you be willing to attend a 'focus group' meeting in August/September with other youth and CAS staff to share ideas on the model and make recommendations?

Youth responses:

- **22 youth indicated that they would be interested in attending**
- **Network members said the entire group would attend**
- **Network suggested have a pledge**
- **The CYE suggested payment for attending would be incentive for youth to attend the meeting**

CAST responses:

- **Five workers are willing to attend focus group with one indicating September as a better time**

CCAS responses:

- **One worker said they would be willing to attend**

Would you like to stay involved in planning for this housing project and assisting with it becoming a reality? What skills could you bring to the project?

Youth responses:

- **9 youth indicated that they would like stay involved**
- **Among the skill sets offered: contribute ideas and very interested in listening to other ideas**
- **"I am a youth who would benefit from this housing."**
- **Give ideas and help out in anyway possible**
- **"I am fair in accepting the opinions and thoughts of others and I have a lot of ideas for this project"**
- **Interpersonal and facilitation skills**

CAST responses:

- **Four workers are willing to stay involved and would offer the following skills**
- **Past work in community development as well as non-profit housing experience**
- **Strong management skills, and project planning implementation experience**

CCAS responses:

- **No workers indicating willingness to stay involved**