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Equilibrium™
Communities
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOR
A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Regent Park Revitalization (Toronto Community Housing)

Image courtesy of Toronto Community Housing



Regent Park Revitalization is a project selected under the Equilibrium™ Communities Initiative, a \$4.2M collaborative sustainable community demonstration initiative of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) under the Government of Canada's ecoACTION initiatives.

Research Objectives

Natural Resources Canada

- NRCan's CanmetENERGY works with communities to reduce their energy consumption by understanding the synergies between building design, urban form, transportation and land use, and assisting with the development of integrated community energy system concepts.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

- Improved environmental performance of residential, mixed use neighbourhoods;
- Integration of housing and community infrastructure such as energy, transportation, water and waste water; natural environment;
- Built examples, technical analysis and supporting information that is of use to developers and municipalities.

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Natural Resources
Canada

Ressources naturelles
Canada

Canada





The EQUilibrium™ Communities Initiative provides financial assistance for technical activities and showcasing the performance of selected neighbourhood development projects which, through their planning, design, implementation and operation, will provide measurable improvements over current approaches in the areas of energy and water consumption, environmental protection, land use planning, sustainable transportation and other features. Capital construction costs are not funded through the initiative.

Toronto Community Housing is leading the Regent Park revitalization, a \$1-billion plan that will transform Canada's oldest and largest social housing community into a mixed-income community for 5,100 households in Toronto's east downtown. The Project is for Phase I, which is to include 670 market condominiums and 360 affordable rental units, for low to moderate income residents in a mix of townhouses and high-rise apartments. About a third of the new housing units in Phase I are already occupied. The mixed-use community features two daycares, community agency space, a learning centre, employment hub and over 2,500 m² of retail and commercial services space, including a bank and a large grocery store.

With exceptional access to public transit, jobs, civic amenities and daily destinations—all within walking distance—the high quality pedestrian environment is designed to make this a very walk-friendly project with pedestrian connections within, through and beyond the site. Despite the high density, the design features new public realm tree canopy coverage, green roofs and high quality public open space amenities connected to the pedestrian network.

Energy consumption is targeted to be 40 to 50 per cent lower than building to the Model National Energy Code for Buildings (MNECB). This is to be achieved through energy-efficient building envelopes, lighting, appliances and mechanical systems. Connection to a community energy system that allows use of commercial waste heat for residential heating will also contribute to energy savings.

The project targets a maximum runoff volume of 50 per cent of average annual rainfall through strategies such as green roofs and porous pavers. Strategies for reducing potable water use include low-flow fixtures and water-efficient landscape design. Water and energy use is to be regularly monitored and communicated back to occupants as part of an education program to encourage sustainable consumption behaviours.

Affordability is a central theme in this community: 35 per cent of homes are targeted for rental, all with rents lower than the area average or are rent-g geared-to-income. An affordable homeownership program also makes housing affordability a central theme.

Given that the project is partially built, initiative support focuses on expansion and upgrades to the energy systems, including phasing in of renewable and waste energy sources to power the district energy system. Funding is also provided for showcasing Phase I performance, for example through an interactive information kiosk with updates and education on water and energy consumption.

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For more information about the EQUilibrium™ Communities Initiative, and winning projects, visit: www.ecoaction.gc.ca/equilibrium-eng.cfm