

# Priority housing

**T**he Ontario ministry of housing should treat plans to replace crumbling Cheyenne Avenue apartment buildings in London with a co-op housing complex as a priority item and authorize provincial financing for the project.

Given the province's massive and growing debt problems, new spending should be allocated on a priority basis only; replacement of the four over-crowded and neglected apartment buildings, which have become a blight on London's social landscape, surely qualifies.

Local approvals granted earlier this week for the project mean that demolition could proceed as scheduled next March if provincial financing is granted. The need seems clear, particularly given the likely amelioration of family and other social problems which are allowed to fester in such inadequate housing.

Under the plan, the four buildings containing 80 units would be replaced by seven buildings holding 97 units. The new buildings would be managed by the tenants as a co-operative, presumably giving residents a vested interest in their proper maintenance.

A senior ministry official has toured the existing buildings and is to report to Housing Minister Evelyn Gigantes. A decision regarding provincial involvement must be made by Oct. 31 if the deal to transfer the property from private hands to co-op management is to be preserved. It should be.

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