



Public Policy and Homelessness

#1 of 3 Slide Decks Prepared for Certificate in Working with Homeless Populations

January 24, 2017

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Acknowledgement

This slide deck is a modified version of a slide presentation I recently prepared in collaboration with my co-worker, Chidom Otogwu. That presentation was prepared for Calgary Homeless Foundation Annual Board Retreat.

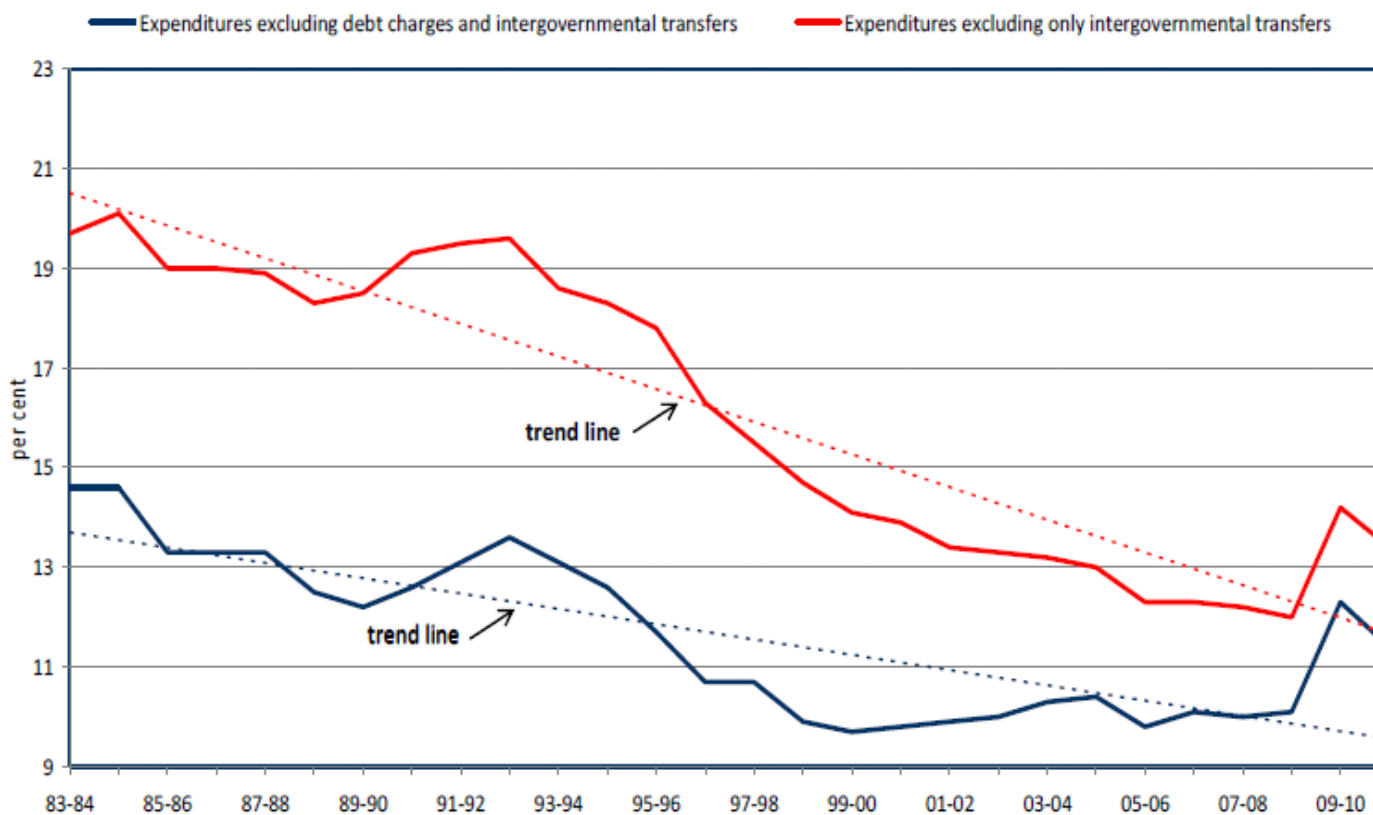
Three major contributing factors to the size of a city's homeless population

- 1. Macroeconomic factors** (e.g., price of oil, strength of US economy, Global Financial Crisis).
- 2. Public policy** (e.g., job creation, jobless benefits, social assistance benefits, availability of non-profit housing, rental supply).
- 1. System responses** (e.g. role played by System Planners such as CHF, Edmonton Homeward Trust, City of Toronto).

The Federal Picture



Federal government expenditures, as percentage of GDP, 1983-84 to 2010-11



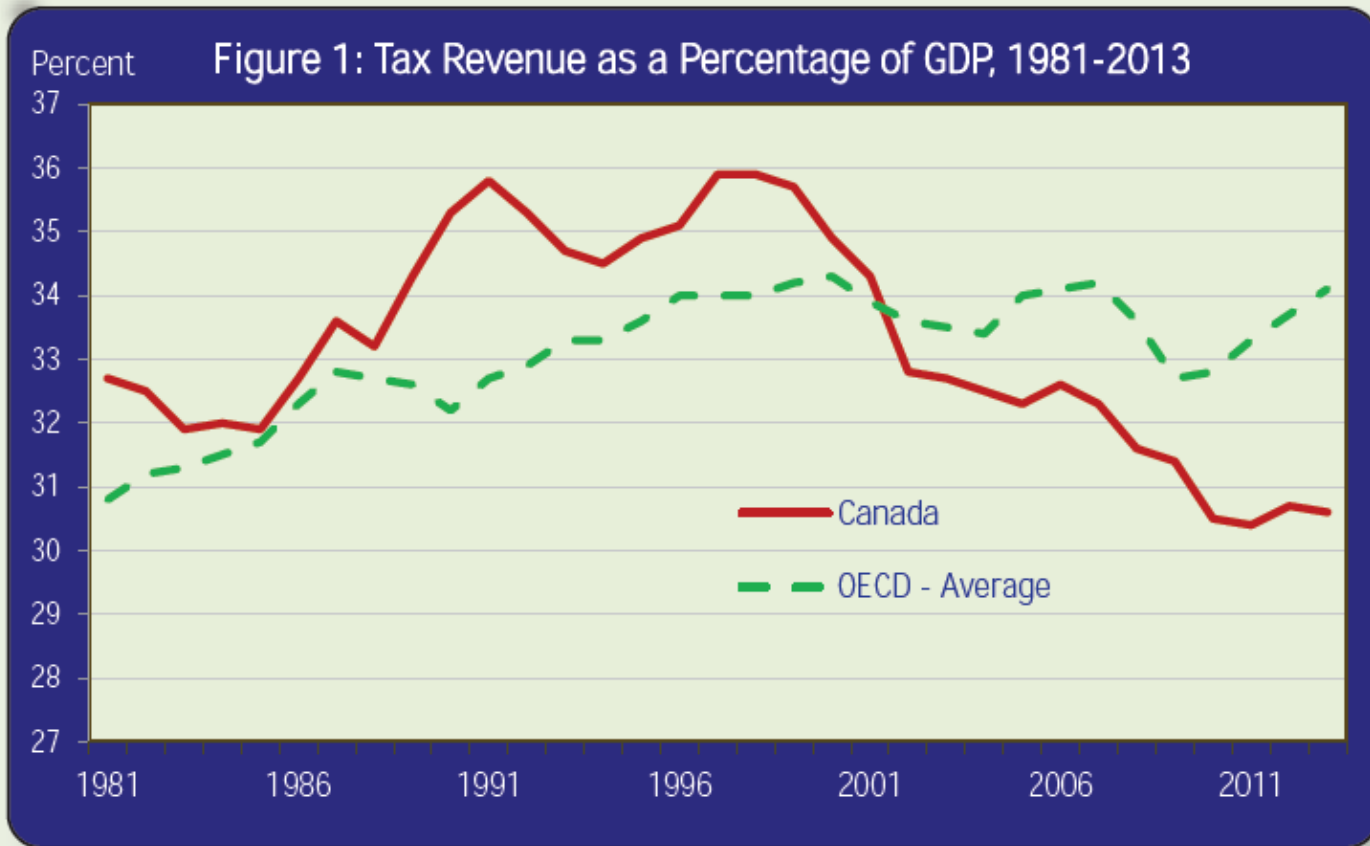
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Source: Mendelson, M. (2012). *Is Canada (still) a fiscal union?* Retrieved from Caledon Institute of Social Policy website:
www.caledoninst.org/Publications/PDF/998ENG.pdf.

Note: The above image has been copied and pasted directly from page 2 of the report.



Among developed countries, Canada's relative tax revenue is declining

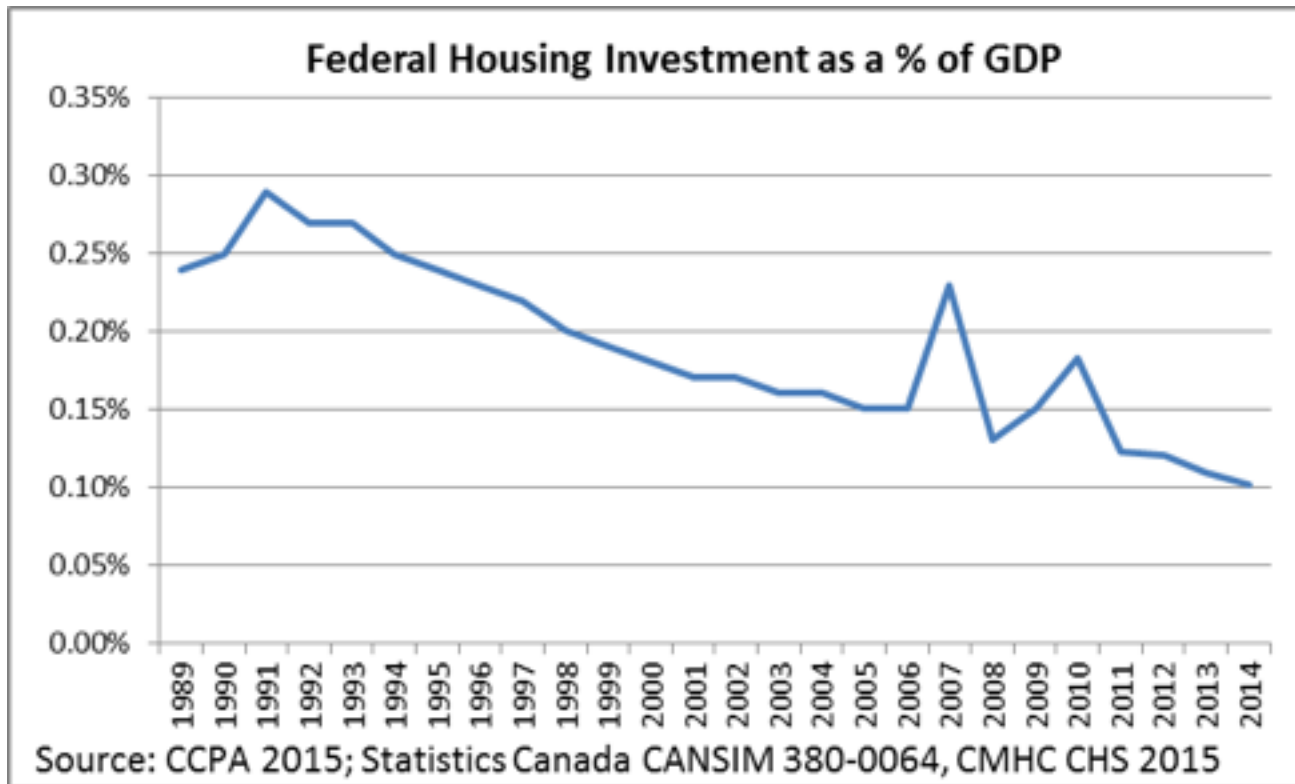


Source: OECD, Revenue Statistics, Comparative Tables, OECD.Stat

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Source: Citizens for Public Justice. (2015). *Taxes for the common good: A public justice primer on taxation* (Fact Sheet Series). Retrieved from Citizens for Public Justice website: <http://www.cpj.ca/sites/default/files/docs/files/Taxes-for-the-Common-Good-FINAL.pdf>

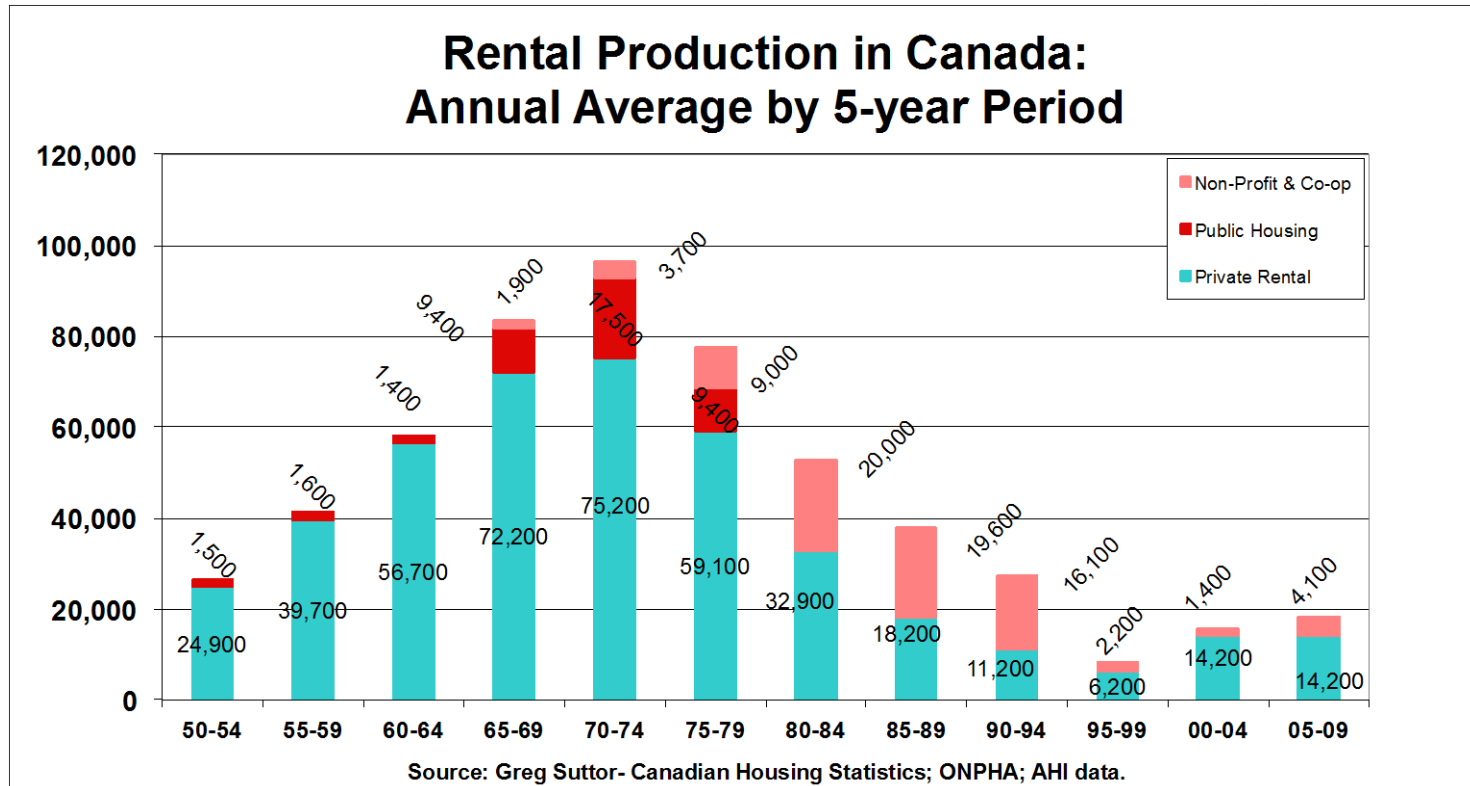
Note: "The data in the graph is OECD total revenue: it includes all levels of government" (M. Veall, personal communication, September 15, 2015).



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Source: Wellesley Institute. (2015, September 22). Access to housing – HEIA in the federal election. Retrieved from <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/housing/access-to-housing-heia-in-the-federal-election/>

Rental Housing Production

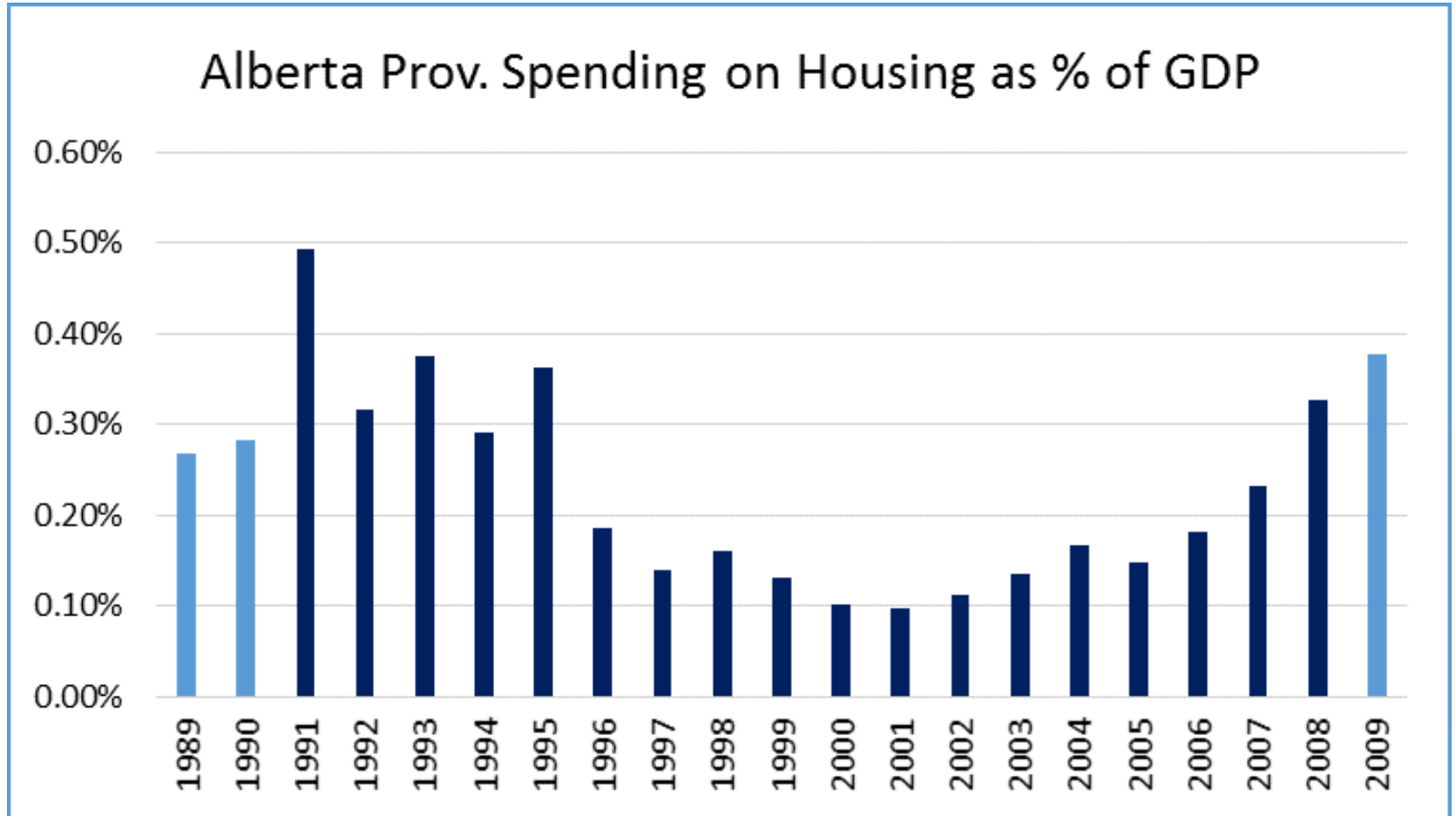


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Source: Pomeroy, S. (2013, May). *The fundamentals of housing policy & governance: A condensed, one-day course*. Carleton University, Ottawa.

Note: This slide has been copied and pasted directly from Mr. Pomeroy's slide deck. It appeared as Slide #24 in his deck.

The Alberta Picture



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Source: Statistics Canada. CANSIM Tables 385-0002 (1989-2008), 384-0047 (2009-2014) and 384-0038 (GDP data).

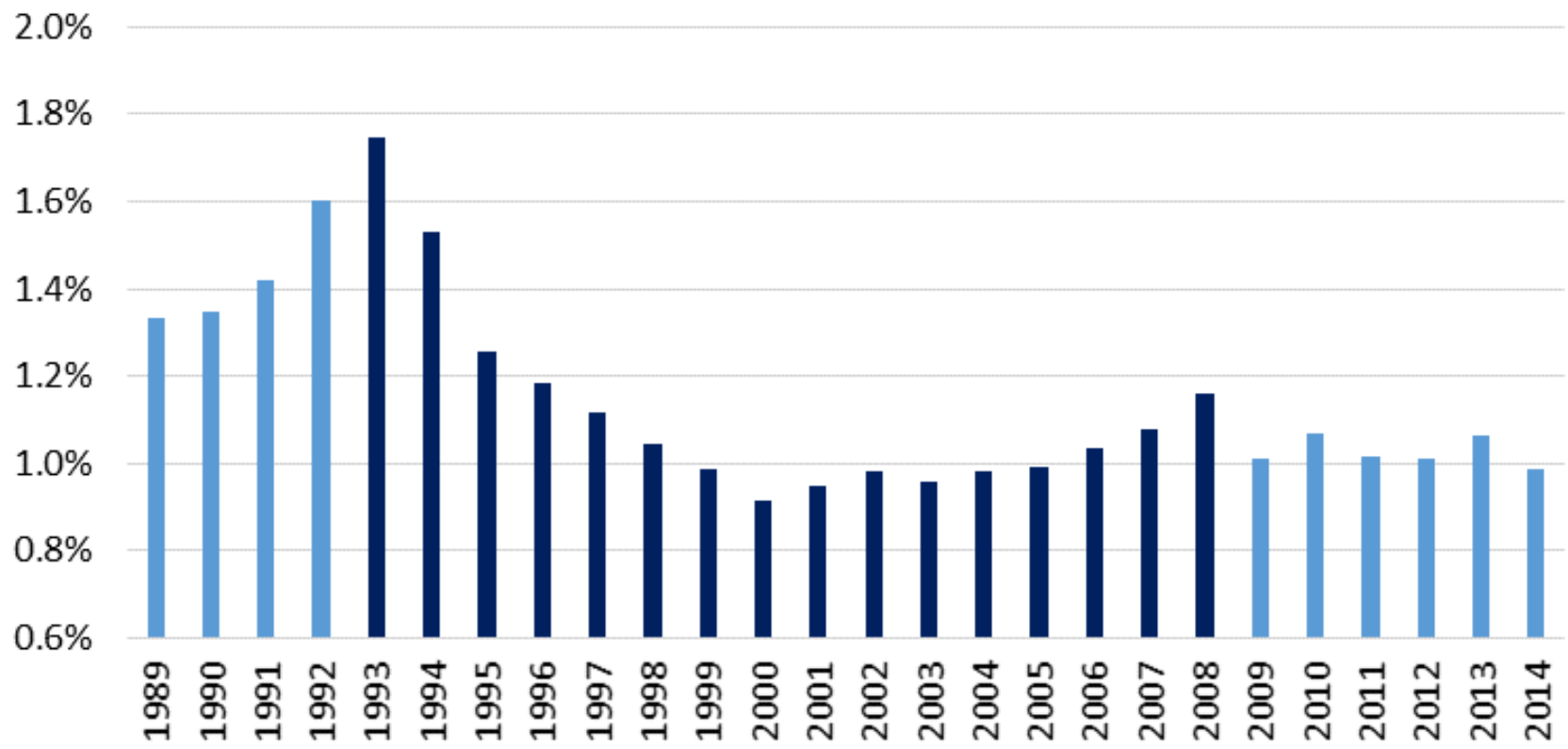


Social Assistance

- In 1993, the Alberta government brought in strict welfare reforms.
- Several researchers (including Ron Kneebone) have written about how difficult provincial officials made it for people to qualify for social assistance in the province.
- And as you'll see shortly, the annual value of benefit levels for those who did qualify for social assistance eroded over time.



AB Prov. Spending on Soc. Assistance as % of GDP

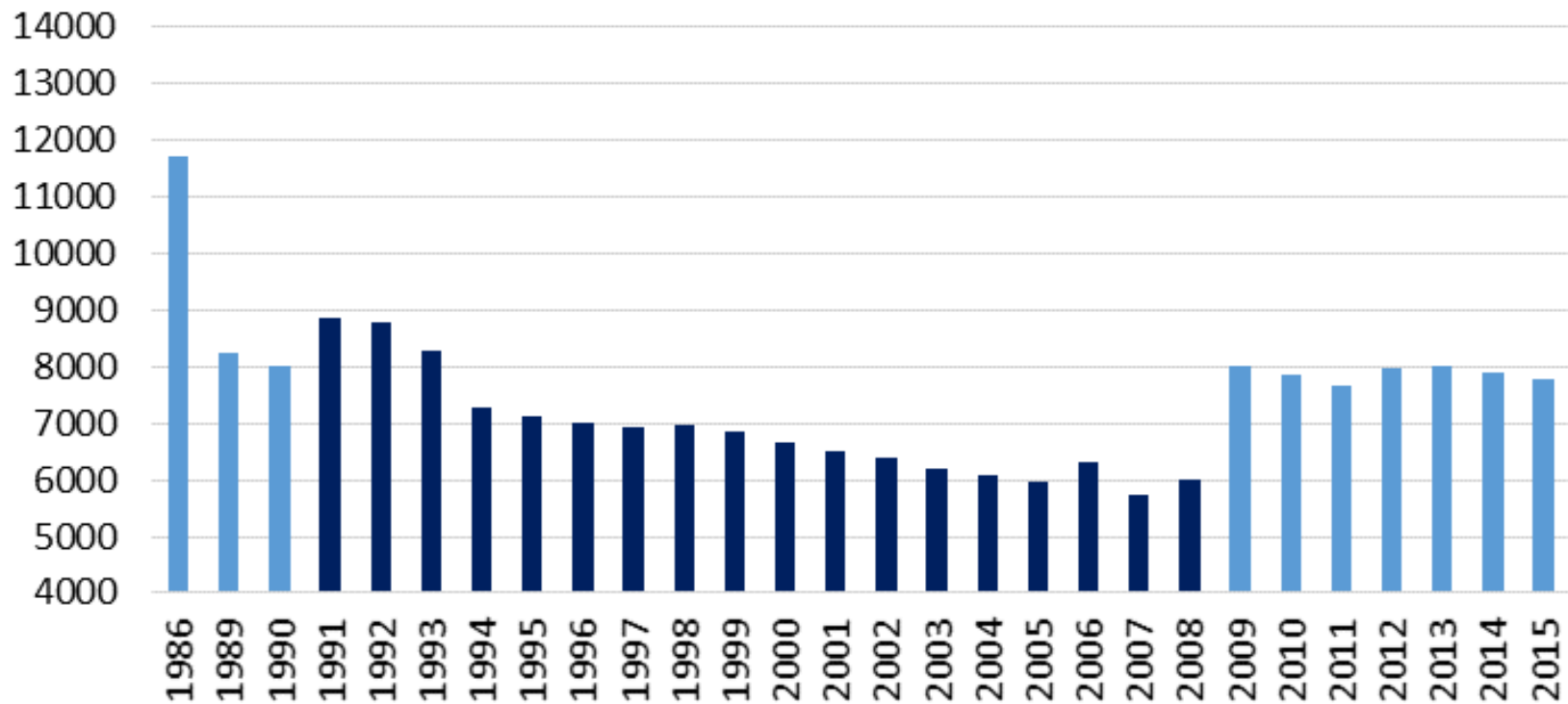


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Source: Statistics Canada. CANSIM Tables 385-002 (1989-2008), 384-0047 (2009-2014) and 384-0038 (GDP data).



Total Welfare Income, Single Employable Person, Alberta (2015 \$)

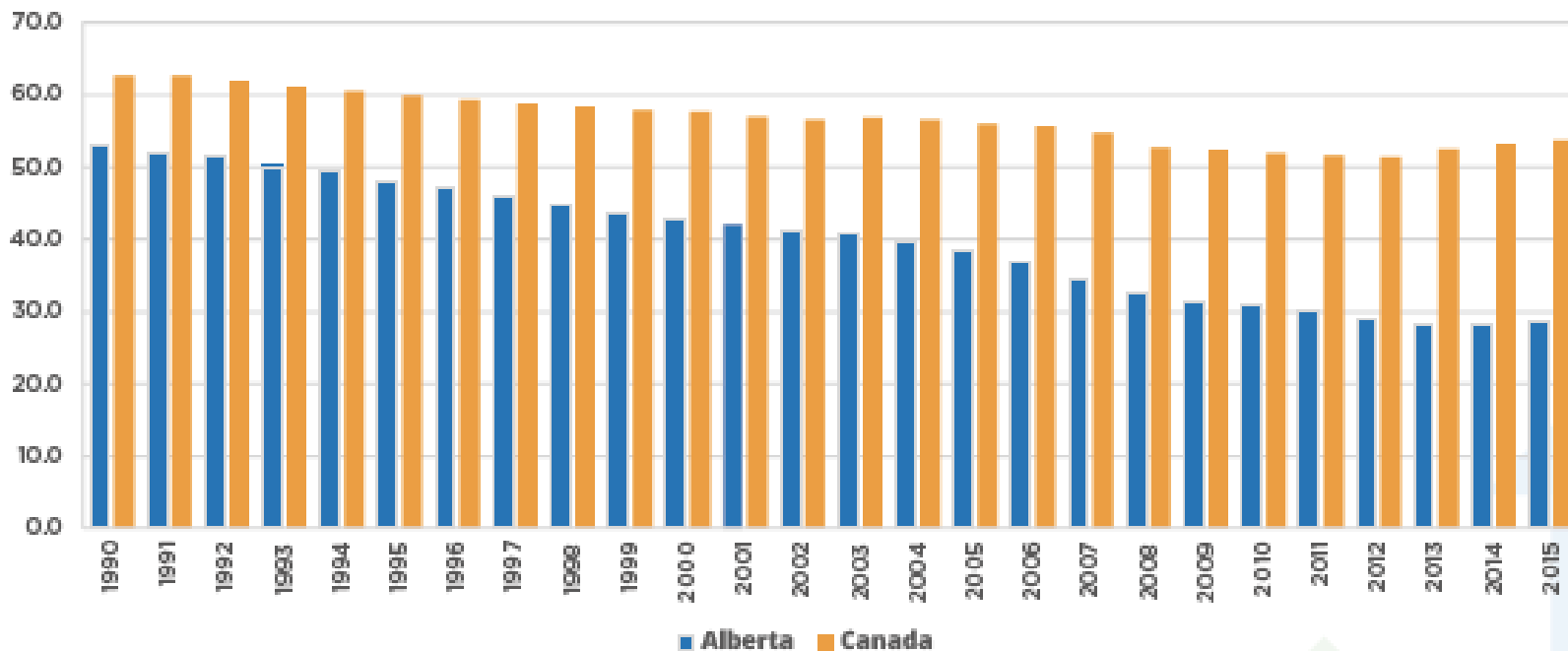


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Source: Tweddle, A., Battle, K., & Torjman, S. (2016). *Welfare in Canada, 2015*. Retrieved from Canada Social Report website: <http://www.canadasocialreport.ca/WelfareInCanada/2015%2Epdf>



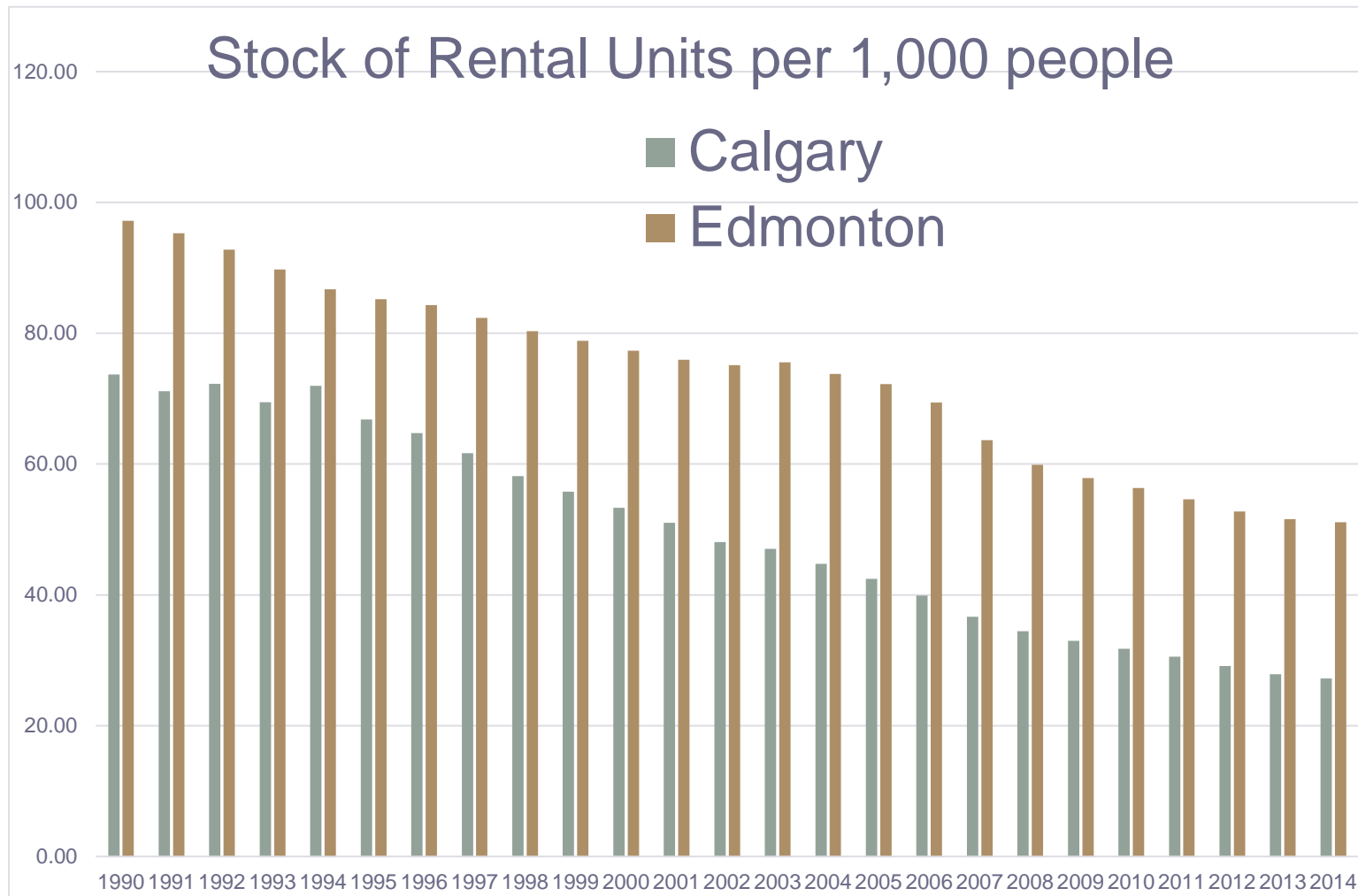
STOCK OF APARTMENT RENTALS PER 1,000 PEOPLE (1990-2015)



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Source: Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2016). National Housing Strategy Brief. Retrieved from Calgary Homeless Foundation web site.

Note: Visual has been copied directly from Appendix 3 of brief, where all data sources are listed.

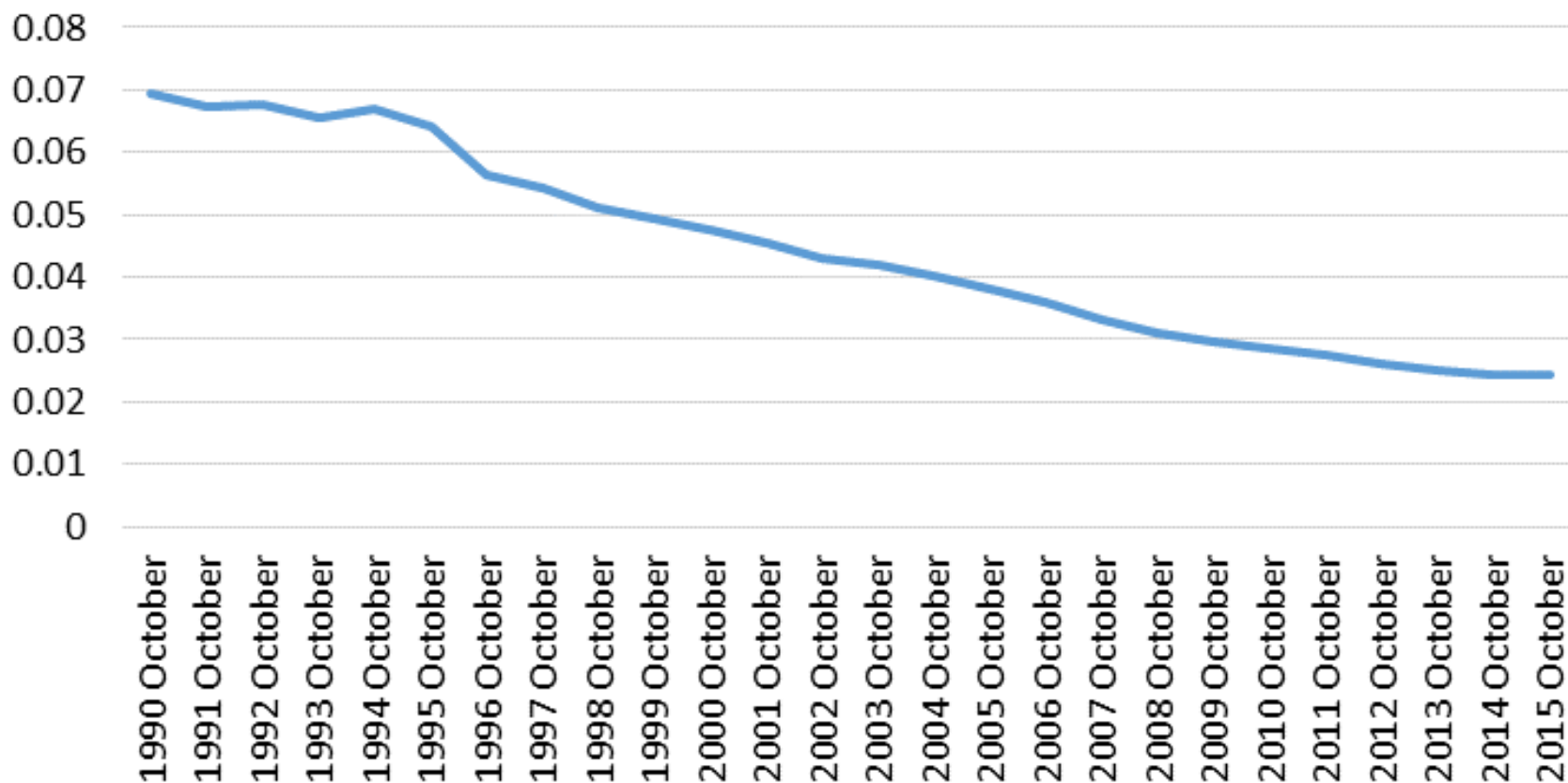


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Note: This is a modified version of a bar graph that has been generously provided to me from Professor Ron Kneebone.



Number of Apartments in Calgary (as % of Pop.)



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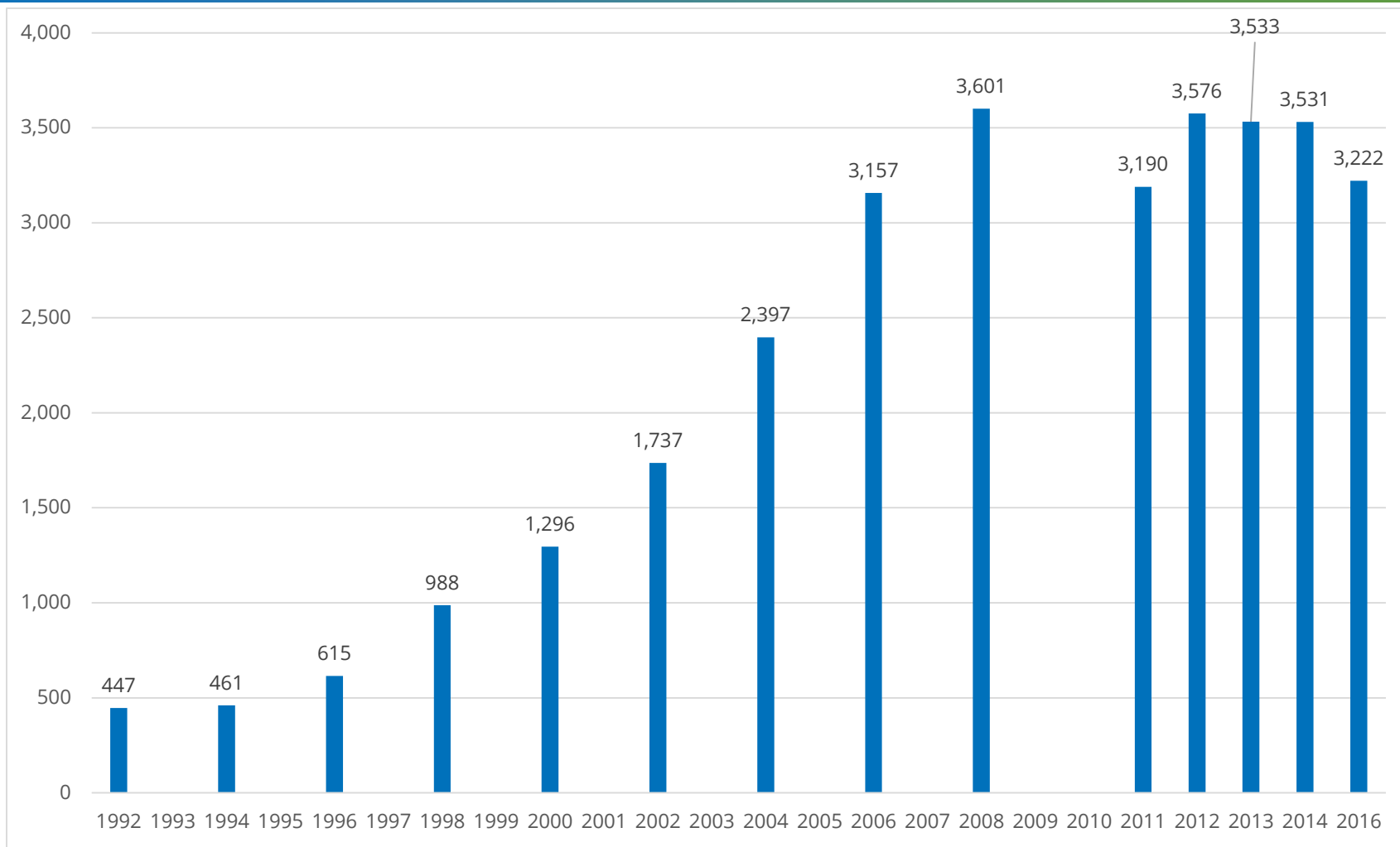
Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey (Historical Universe by Bedroom Type).

Note: The CMHC data presented above refer to purpose-built apartments in buildings with three or more apartment units. Special thanks to Ron Kneebone for providing me with this data.

Homelessness in Calgary



Calgary's Homeless Population Over Time (bw 2008 & 2016, per capita decrease of 26%)



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Source: Calculations above have been made by Dr. Ali Jadidzadeh.

Takeaways

- The role of System Planners (i.e. Calgary Homeless Foundation, Edmonton Homeward Trust, City of Toronto) matters.
- But so does public policy.
- We should always be mindful of the important role played by public policy in both creating and ending homelessness.



Thank You