

How to Fight Back:

Saving our neighbourhood

Despite the years of continued abuse, neglect, disrespect and violence faced by tenants in Herongate, we have proven year after year through organizing, education and collective action we will not give up in the fight to protect the neighbourhood *we* built. The developers don't live here and now they don't want low-income people to live here either. Our collective strength will ensure they don't continue to destroy our neighbourhood.

- ▶ ACORN organizers go door-to-door in Herongate to recruit more tenants and organize to fight for change; multiple community chapter meetings reveal there are huge maintenance/pests problems as a result of Transglobe's negligence **2009**
- ▶ Investigative reporters conduct detailed analysis of neglect in Herongate, through the help of ACORN members **2010**
- ▶ ACORN organizers/members organize rallies, marches and press conferences and get enough public uproar to convince the Mayor to attend a forum where members detailed their concerns. He is so taken aback that he publicly tells Transglobe if they don't fix the units they'd never own property in Ottawa again **2011**
- ▶ January 2012 CBC Marketplace runs an investigative report on Herongate's biggest landlord, Transglobe REIT. Titled, "Trouble for Rent" the CBC alleges Transglobe engaged in systemic negligence in the management of their properties **2012**
- ▶ ACORN begins work with lawyer George Brown and law students from uOttawa to start the Housing Justice Program which allows members to get their case taken to the Landlord and Tenant Board with the help and guidance of law students
- ▶ January 2013, the first legal clinic is held at Heron Road Community Centre. More than forty tenants brave the cold to tell law students stories of mice, cockroaches, filthy carpets, bed bugs, burst pipes, leaking roofs, month-long floods, fires, and insults. These stories are meticulously documented and evidence such as photos and work orders are carefully collected. **2013**
- ▶ June 2013 the hearings begin. The landlords are represented by experienced paralegals, who are tough negotiators and masters at delaying the process. Some tenants win repairs and rent abatements.
- ▶ Timbercreek hires Ottawa-based PR firm, *Momentum*, to deal with the negative press. President Suzanne Valiquet reveals the eviction of residents and the destruction of homes was Timbercreek's "long-term plan" all along **2015**
- ▶ July 2016 ACORN members hold a mock funeral for the demolished affordable townhomes and continue to fight for rental replacement, landlord licensing and inclusionary zoning **2016**
- ▶ Timbercreek applies for a 5% AGI which would increase rents by \$50+/month. ACORN members hold a march to oppose the increase and tenants go to the LTB and win a 2% decrease
- ▶ March 2017 ACORN members in the neighbourhood hold a press conference in Herongate to launch their citywide tenant survey **2017**
- ▶ Heatherington Land Trust is formed to create permanent affordable housing, address the crisis situation in Herongate, balance the power of land development and self-determine our own future
- ▶ ACORN members participate in the City's/Timbercreek's visioning session for the new Herongate redevelopment with demands to protect tenants **2018**
- ▶ Heatherington Land Trust proposes townhouses be transferred to our land trust, creating local jobs through renovations, once a neutral third-party conducts engineering assessments of the houses