



Right to Housing

Right to Housing is encouraging its supporters and members to complete the National Housing Strategy survey, accessible online at letstalkhousing.ca. Let's demonstrate that housing matters to Canadians and show a groundswell of support for a renewed federal presence on the national stage.

First and foremost, we would like the Trudeau Liberals to deliver on their commitment to reinvest and support social and affordable housing.

The survey is brief, so we have chosen to prioritize options that emphasize the role the federal government can play in developing a national housing strategy that is fair and equitable for all Canadians.

This document offers sample responses that emphasize the values of the Right to Housing Coalition. Our suggestions are by no means exhaustive nor meant to be reflective of all the issues surrounding housing in Canada.

We ask you to encourage your coworkers, friends and family to take five minutes to complete the survey. Answers can be submitted until October 21. Your response to the survey can demonstrate that housing is vitally important to millions of Canadians.

Thank you for sharing!

Survey

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following vision of housing in Canada:

“All Canadians have access to housing that meets their needs and they can afford. Housing is the cornerstone of building healthy communities and a strong Canadian economy where we can prosper and thrive.”

✓ **Strongly Agree**

Somewhat Agree

Neutral

Somewhat disagree

Totally Disagree

Please elaborate on your rating. For example, tell us why this vision of housing in Canada resonates with you or not.

Right to Housing suggests one or more of these additional comments:

In Canada at present, only one of the three aspects of a national housing policy operates effectively, namely the provision of market housing for middle and upper income families. A long-term commitment to social and affordable housing is needed.

Canada has a housing affordability crisis. In significant part, this is related to the acute shortage of social housing, where rent is geared to income, and the almost total failure of affordable market rental housing. Both these aspects of housing policy can be addressed with leadership at the federal level.

It is time for renewed federal government leadership to address housing policy and programs across Canada. The results will be increased economic stimulus, but more importantly, a great increase in the well-being of lower and modest income Canadian families.

In Canada there are families and individuals who cannot afford even the cheapest market housing. This may stem from illness, accident or systemic or situational poverty. The social and economic costs to society of not providing such housing are equally manifold.

Poor housing is strongly linked with poor educational outcomes, poor connection to the labour force, increased illnesses, especially among children, and a host of other problems. Inevitably, these social costs are translated into the economic costs of poor labour force attachment, increased child welfare costs, increased health expenditures and so forth. These costs, while very real, exist in the silos of government expenditures, and are rarely accounted for as costs of inadequate housing.

When governments build housing and provide necessary supports, low income people experience improved health, education, and employment outcomes. Communities experience increased stability and safety.

Public sector investment is needed as the market on its own has proven it cannot provide sufficient housing for low income people. If governments do not act, they exacerbate systemic social issues, colonialism, privilege and inequity.

Not so long ago, Canada had a remarkable record of providing all citizens with access to the basic necessities of survival. The growing line ups at shelters should remind us how far we have turned from this tradition. It will take increased federal involvement to resolve a housing crisis that is decades in the making and national in scope.

Housing Themes

The following themes speak to the key housing challenges we are facing in Canada that need to be addressed.

Do you agree that these themes are important to housing in Canada?

- i. Financing costs and affordable lands for rental housing
Very Important
- ii. Cost of housing in Canada's largest cities
Somewhat Important
- iii. Low income and groups with distinct housing needs (e.g., homeless, seniors, persons with disabilities, newcomers)
Very Important
- iv. Social housing renewal and subsidized housing
Very Important
- v. Laws and regulations
Somewhat Important
- vi. Building a stronger affordable housing sector
Very Important
- vii. Housing that contributes to Canada's climate change goals
Somewhat Important

- viii. Affordable rental supply, including through increased private sector involvement

Somewhat Important

What have we missed?

- i. Working to recognize housing as a human right that the market may be unable to provide without public sector support
- ii. Restoring CMHC's original mandate to play a central role in the provision of social housing to Canadians.

Which of these are the three most important?

- i. Social housing renewal and subsidized housing
- ii. Building a stronger affordable housing sector
- iii. Low income and groups with distinct housing needs

Outcomes supporting the vision of housing in Canada

The following set of outcomes could help us measure the success of a National Housing Strategy.

How important are these outcomes to you?

Sustainability

- Housing is environmentally, socially and financially sustainable
✓ **Very Important**
- Healthy housing
✓ **Very Important**
- "Green" housing
✓ **Somewhat Important**
- Housing supports a better quality of life
✓ **Very Important**
- Housing system that supports economic stability and growth
✓ **Somewhat Important**

Affordability

- Canadians have housing that they can afford and that meets their needs

✓ **Very Important**

Inclusivity

- Housing helps distinct groups (e.g., homeless, seniors, persons with disabilities, newcomers)
- ✓ **Very Important**

Flexibility

- Communities have housing options that meet the diverse and changing needs of Canadians
- ✓ **Somewhat Important**

What have we missed?

Suitability

- Households should not be forced to live in overcrowded conditions, in areas unsafe for their members, or isolating from their communities. Housing options should be as varied as possible.

Adequacy

- Households require major repairs and upkeep. Housing stock must be maintained in accordance with safety and community standards and offer amenities that reflect the needs of the residents.

Please select the three most important outcomes to you.

- Only three outcomes can be selected.
 - i. **Affordability**
 - ii. **Inclusivity**
 - iii. **Housing is environmentally, socially and financially sustainable**