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Canada announces support for rapid housing in Winnipeg

Winnipeg, Manitoba, July 19, 2021

Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the need for affordable housing and led to rising levels of homelessness. The Government of Canada created a national strategy to build hundreds of thousands of units and provide affordable housing to people across the country. By continuing to make investments in affordable housing, the government is building stronger communities, creating jobs, and growing our middle class, while fighting homelessness and helping vulnerable Canadians.

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister Responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Terry Duguid, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South, and Brian Bowman, the Mayor of Winnipeg, today announced $12.8 million to create an estimated 51 new affordable homes for individuals and families in Winnipeg through the Cities Stream under expanded Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI). These housing units will support Canadians who are in uncertain housing situations, experiencing or at risk of homelessness, or living in temporary shelters because of the pandemic.

This is in addition to the Government of Canada's previous investment of $12.5 million through the first phase of the Rapid Housing Initiative to support the creation of 83 housing units in Winnipeg.

In its initial round, with funding of $1 billion announced in October 2020, the RHI exceeded its original target of 3,000 permanent affordable housing units and achieved 4,700 units nationally. Due to this success, an additional $1.5 billion for the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) was recently announced to create 4,500 new units of permanent affordable housing across the country. Thanks to this expansion, this initiative will now create over 9,200 affordable homes for the most vulnerable Canadians across the country.

This new investment will create thousands of good jobs in the housing and construction sector, grow the middle class, and build back stronger communities, while getting us closer to our goal of eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada.

Quotes:

> "Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. Today's funding through the Rapid Housing Initiative will go a long way to support those who need it most by quickly providing nearly 51 new affordable homes for vulnerable individuals and families in Winnipeg to keep them safe. This is one of the ways our National Housing Strategy continues to ensure no one is left behind."
>
> **— The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

"We have seen how COVID-19 has worsened existing housing and homelessness challenges and without urgent action by the Government of Canada, the pandemic could lead to a dramatic increase in homelessness. Creating housing rapidly to address this housing crisis is a priority for our government. This new funding is part of our commitment to addressing severe housing needs across the country. It will provide immediate support to create safe and stable housing to thousands of vulnerable individuals and families."

— Terry Duguid, Member of Parliament for Winnipeg South

"The first round of funding for the Rapid Housing Initiative had a significant impact on the creation of affordable housing units in Winnipeg and I want to thank the federal government for their support of housing unsheltered Winnipeggers through another round of funding for this program. I'm pleased to see more results of my advocacy to the Prime Minister, alongside my counterparts on the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Big City Mayor's Caucus, for direct support to municipalities for affordable housing. The City of Winnipeg will be identifying the recipients of this additional RHI funding in the near future and look forward to the important contributions these projects will make."

— Brian Bowman, the Mayor of Winnipeg

Quick facts:

- The RHI is delivered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), under the National Housing Strategy (NHS).
- Canada's NHS is an ambitious, 10-year plan that will invest over $72 billion to give more Canadians a place to call home. Launched in 2017, the NHS will build and repair thousands of housing units, and help households with affordability support.

- The RHI is a $1 billion program launched in October 2020 to help address urgent housing needs of vulnerable Canadians, especially in the context of COVID-19, through the rapid construction of affordable housing.
- Due to this success, an additional $1.5 billion for the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) was recently announced through Budget 2021 with $500 million in funding under the Cities Stream being allocated to the following municipalities: Burnaby, Calgary, Capital Regional District, Durham, Edmonton, Gatineau, Greater Sudbury, Halifax, Hamilton, Iqaluit, Kingston, Laval, London, Longueil, Montreal, Niagara, Ottawa, Peel, Quebec, Regina, Saskatoon, Surrey, St. John's, Toronto, Vancouver, Waterloo, Whitehorse, Windsor, Winnipeg, and Yellowknife. Under the Projects Stream: $1 billion will be allocated to eligible applications submitted during the RHI's initial application period last fall and having not yet received funding.
- Based on feedback from stakeholders, CMHC has introduced new flexibilities to the RHI:
    - Program applicants will be eligible to receive funding for additional forms of new construction beyond modular, if units can be built within 12 months.
    - Non-profits will now have an opportunity to demonstrate that they have the financial capacity to support the viability of units without government subsidy (self-funded).
    - Cities will have a longer time to submit projects (60 days instead of 30).
    - Project delivery timelines have been adjusted for projects located in the North and special access communities.
- At least 25 per cent of this new funding will go toward women-focused housing projects. The units will be built within 12 months of when funding is provided to program applicants.
- The RHI will continue to prioritize proposals that target units serving Indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups. It will also continue to provide flexibilities on timelines to Indigenous governing bodies or organizations as needed.
- Due to the considerable response during the first round of the Projects Stream, many eligible applications remain unfunded. Applicants with eligible proposals from the first round of RHI that have not yet received funding will be contacted directly with further details.
- The RHI takes a human rights-based approach to housing, serving people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and other vulnerable people under the NHS, including: women and children fleeing domestic violence, seniors, young adults, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, people experiencing mental health and addiction

issues, veterans, LGBTQ2 individuals, racialized and Black Canadians, and recent immigrants or refugees.
- CMHC supports the government's efforts to improve the well-being of Canadians facing housing and homelessness challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Associated links:

- Rapid Housing Initiative
- National Housing Strategy
- New Rapid Housing Initiative to create up to 3,000 new homes for Canadians
- Rapid Housing Initiative will exceed targets by creating more than 4,700 new homes for Canadians
- Budget 2021: A Recovery Plan for Jobs, Growth, and Resilience

As Canada's authority on housing, CMHC contributes to the stability of the housing market and financial system, provides support for Canadians in housing need, and offers unbiased housing research and advice to all levels of Canadian government, consumers and the housing industry. CMHC's aim is that by 2030, everyone in Canada has a home they can afford, and that meets their needs. For more information, follow us on Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and Facebook.

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