



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Budget 2024 falls short in addressing Canada's low-income housing crisis

The Social Housing and Human Rights (SHHR) coalition is disappointed that Budget 2024 has failed to adequately invest in housing that is affordable to the lowest-income households and people experiencing homelessness. The coalition has identified a need for a minimum of 500,000 new non-market social housing units over 10 years. Budget 2024 does not include a target for new social housing, where rents are set at less than 30% of household income. Instead, it continues to focus only on “affordable housing” for middle and high-income households.

“Canada’s low-income housing crisis will not be solved without all levels of government collaborating to reinvest in social housing. The federal government has failed to do its part in Budget 2024,” says Shauna MacKinnon, coordinator for the Social Housing and Human Rights coalition. Canada must take the lead in ensuring each level of government brings their respective fiscal and policy tools to the table to acquire, build, operate, and maintain new and existing public, non-profit, and cooperative-owned social housing.

SHHR welcomes the additional \$1 billion for the Affordable Housing Fund to support the development of non-market housing, and the commitment to create a stream within the fund to build “deeply affordable housing.” This housing will not be affordable to low-income households or people experiencing homelessness without operating subsidies from other levels of government to ensure rents are set at less than 30% of household income. “The Rapid Housing Stream is the only place where Budget 2024 makes new investments in social housing, but the amount budgeted won’t meet the need and it is unclear exactly how many new units will be produced with rents that are geared to income,” added MacKinnon. Based on results from previous rounds of Rapid Housing funding, Budget 2024’s investment is expected to generate less than 5,000 social housing units - a mere 10% of the annual need.

The \$1.5 billion Canada Rental Protection Fund aligns with the acquisition fund SHHR called for to support the non-profit sector to acquire and protect the existing affordable housing supply. The fund should be set aside for non-market housing providers exclusively. Again, without operating subsidies from other levels of government, non-profits who use the fund will struggle to provide rents that are geared to income and ensure units are affordable to those in greatest need.

Finally, SHHR has highlighted the need to keep public land under public ownership, and use public lands and buildings to support the development of non-market social housing. While Budget 2024 announces plans to use public



land and buildings to develop homes, the coalition would like to see a commitment to prioritize land and buildings for non-market housing providers to develop social housing.

Apart from these modest steps in the right direction, Budget 2024 continues to rely primarily on failed policies that focus on incentivizing the private market to produce low-rent housing. “We cannot keep doing the same thing and expect a different result. It’s clear we need a new approach and the political will to lead it,” added MacKinnon.

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Social Housing & Human Rights is a coalition of organizations and individuals advocating for more federal investment in social housing in Canada. www.moresocialhousing.ca