



**VOTE | VOTEZ**  
**HOUSING | LOGEMENT**

# Campaign Platform

FINAL

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The largest non-partisan housing advocacy campaign in Canadian history to mobilize thousands of Canadians to pledge to Vote Housing in the upcoming federal election.



# The Platform

## Implement an urban, rural, and northern Indigenous housing strategy containing both dedicated investments and an Indigenous-led governance structure.

- There is no dedicated federal For Indigenous By Indigenous strategy to address the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in urban, rural and northern communities.
- Indigenous peoples disproportionately experience homelessness. This is directly linked to the ongoing colonization, and systemic dislocation and dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their land, language and culture.
- 1 in 15 Indigenous peoples in urban centres will experience homelessness in Canada, compared to one in 128 for the general population.
- Indigenous peoples disproportionately live in housing that is unaffordable, overcrowded, is not culturally appropriate and/or needs major repairs, and are unable to access a home that meets their needs.

## Commit to the prevention and elimination of homelessness.

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- More than 235,000 people in Canada experience homelessness in any given year, and over 35,000 people experience homelessness on any given night.
- An estimated 1.6 million Canadians have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives. Over 20% of Canadians know someone who has experienced homelessness and 11% have a family member who have experienced it.
- The mass homelessness that we see today has not always existed. It began in the 1980s and accelerated in the 1990s largely as a result of federal government policy changes.
- Rural and remote communities are also struggling with homelessness and housing need, but are not receiving adequate or equitable funding under the National Housing Strategy.
- A growing number of communities across North America are having success in reducing and ending homelessness.

## Invest in the construction and operation of a minimum of 50,000 units of supportive housing over a decade.

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- Pressures into homelessness are relentless. We need to create supportive housing options to help reduce chronic homelessness across Canada.
- Permanent housing with wrap around supports is a proven intervention for people with complex needs.
- While the vast majority of those using emergency shelter services experience homelessness only once and only temporarily, some have complex needs that require intensive supports to end their homelessness.
- There is a lack of affordable, accessible housing. Households that require accessibility adaptations are more likely to experience affordability challenges.
- Housing investments should prioritize people experiencing, or at greatest risk of homelessness.

# Build and acquire a minimum of 300,000 units of deeply affordable non-market, co-op and non-profit housing over a decade.

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- There are not enough affordable, accessible housing options for Canadians, contributing to growing economic and social inequities.
- The lack of affordable housing is one of the largest contributors to homelessness.
- In Canada there is a shortage of accessible affordable housing, which is why a portion of these new units must be specifically designed to be fully accessible.
- Waitlists for households to access any and all forms of community housing are unacceptably long.
- Non-market housing is permanently affordable, community-owned and provides security of tenure. Increasing the stock and share of non-market housing actively counters the financialization of housing.
- Over 1.7 million Canadian households cannot access a home that they can afford, that does not need major repairs and/or is not overcrowded. This is experienced disproportionately by women, children, seniors, Indigenous peoples and racialized communities.

**Commit to the progressive realization of the right to housing, including measures to curtail the impact of the financialization of rental housing markets, addressing the unique needs of equity-seeking communities in the National Housing Strategy, and ensuring people with lived expertise of housing need and homelessness are engaged in all levels of policy development and implementation.**

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- Homelessness is the result of systemic denials of access to justice and fundamental human rights.
- Housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person, and to building sustainable and inclusive communities.
- The disparity between the right to free and equal existence and the current homelessness crisis has become more apparent than ever.
- The financialization of rental housing in Canada is taking affordable housing out of the market faster than it can be replaced compounding Canada's housing crisis. Between 2011 and 2016 over 320,000 units of rental housing were lost to financialization. The current National Housing Strategy only aims to create 150,000 units over 10 years.
- Policies and actions must be sensitive to the historical and ongoing impacts of stigma, prejudice, and oppression on individuals and communities; deliberate action must also be undertaken to address the ways that intersecting systems and structures compound experiences of homelessness.



## **Expand rental assistance for low-income households to reduce core housing need and prevent a wave of new homelessness resulting from the pandemic.**

- 530,000 renter households in Canada pay over 50% of their income on rent.
- Lower rent housing is rapidly being eroded, and evictions and arrears have been growing. Over 250,000 households in Canada have accumulated over \$350 million in arrears since the onset of the pandemic.
- Economic pressures are growing, in part from the financialization of rental housing markets, rapid inflation of the cost of housing, and increasing income inequality.
- Rental assistance can be either direct financial support to households living in market or non-market housing, or direct financial support to non-market housing providers in order to off-set the cost of rent for low-income households.