

COVID-19

Housing and Homelessness Recovery Response Plan

A request for provincial and federal funding support to help create 3,000 permanent, affordable homes, within the next 24 months

September 2020



Overview

The goal of the City of Toronto's COVID-19 Housing and Homelessness Recovery Response Plan is to create 3,000 permanent, affordable homes, within the next 24 months, for vulnerable and marginalized residents.

This plan is based on strong social, public health and economic fundamentals.

- Accommodating one person in a shelter costs over \$3,000 per month before COVID-19 and costs have since more than doubled due to the extra space and other protective resources needed during the pandemic.
- Accommodating one person in permanent, supportive and affordable housing, such as a studio apartment, costs approximately \$2,000 per month.

The City acknowledges the substantial financial pressures that all governments now face and is thankful for the range of federal and provincial emergency response initiatives that are helping to address the increased housing and homelessness challenges caused by the pandemic.

The City's Housing and Homelessness Recovery Response Plan therefore proposes to fast-track and expand initiatives under the National Housing Strategy and other existing federal and provincial funding programs while also reiterating previous requests to partner on the City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan.

The current pandemic highlights both the urgency and the opportunity for all governments to make investments that will quickly provide innovative housing options to help manage the challenges associated with COVID-19 while also creating solutions that will support people for decades to come.

What the City of Toronto wants to accomplish

Create **3,000** permanent housing opportunities (2,000 of which are intended to be supportive housing) through:



1,000 permanent modular homes



1,000 new units through acquisition, renovations and shovel-ready projects.

1,000 new portable (and flexible) Canada-Ontario Housing Benefits (COHB)



The Funding Request

Expedited Development of Modular Housing			
What	Year funding required	Support requested*	Details
1,000 permanent modular homes	2020 One-time grant	\$200 million	Capital funding to support the City's existing modular, rental housing program.
*The City will contribute \$228.5 million towards this plan through capital and operating funding as well as land value			
Flexible Acquisition and Enhanced Investment Program			
What	Year funding required	Support requested	Details
1,000 new units through acquisitions and renovations	2020 One-time grant	\$475 million	Capital funding to support the acquisition of buildings and land, renovation of properties as well as investment in "shovel-ready" projects to create new homes.
Scale up the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit			
What	Year funding required	Support requested	Details
1,000 new portable (and flexible) Canada-Ontario Housing Benefits (COHB)	2020	\$3.5 million	Move 1,000 residents into permanent housing by assisting with rental costs. The COHB pays the difference between 30 per cent of the household's income and the average market rent in the area. For recipients of social assistance, the COHB pays the difference between the shelter allowance and the household's rent and utilities costs.
	2021 and annually thereafter	\$7 million	Continue keeping these residents housed by assisting with rental costs.

Funding to support 2,000 of these residents to maintain stable housing

Housing and Support Services			
What	Year funding required	Support requested	Details
Assist 2,000 clients moving from shelters into permanent housing	2020 and annually thereafter	\$48 million	Ongoing investments in housing benefits and support services will help a range of individuals maintain their housing in the long term. This complements required federal and provincial health resources for the mental health and addictions sector to support those most vulnerable.

The benefits of investing now

Housing is a key driver of social and economic growth. Investing in housing:

Improves lives:

- Providing stable affordable housing can improve lives in countless ways including better health overall, improved nutrition, increased ability to achieve employment, improved mental health, increased access to education and better school performance in children.

Supports better public health outcomes:

- In order to "stay at home" to fight the spread of the pandemic, one must have a home.
- Affordable, good quality, and stable housing is a key prerequisite for promoting health and preventing illness. It is also a key determinant for building healthy and inclusive communities.

Saves provincial and federal governments at least \$60 million to \$180 million per year:

- Moving people into stable, affordable housing reduces demand on the costly shelter system.
- There are also reduced costs to the healthcare, long-term care and justice systems.

Stimulates the local economy, supporting economic recovery:

- Infrastructure investments create employment opportunities. For every \$1 million invested in residential construction, a total of 10 jobs are created including five direct jobs and five indirect and induced jobs.
- New investments in affordable housing help cities attract and retain workers necessary for economic recovery and to grow the economy, including delivery drivers, personal support workers and grocery clerks.