



# Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association

We represent over 100 non-profit housing providers who collectively own and manage more than 24,000 affordable homes across 25 communities in Manitoba.

## Housing In Manitoba

A significant number of Manitobans live in housing that is not affordable to them, and a growing number of people are living on the streets or in shelters. **In Manitoba:**

**50k+**

**renter households** in Manitoba spend 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities

**50%**

of **senior (65+) households** spend 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities

**50%**

of **youth-led (age 15-29 households)** spend 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities



**Indigenous** peoples are 2x as likely to live in core housing need than non-Indigenous people and 5x as likely to experience **homelessness**



Approximately 6000 individuals and families are on the **waiting list** for government owned and managed housing in Manitoba



There will be major **housing** needs in communities supporting **refugees** from the Ukraine in the next two years



In 2021, **less than 3%** of the total rental universe would be **affordable to the lowest income quintile** (this represents about 20% of renter households)



Despite increasing vacancies, **average rents increased by 12%** in Manitoba from 2018-21

## What is Non-Profit Housing and Why is it Important?

There are about 33,000 social and affordable housing units in Manitoba; the non-profit sector is responsible for managing over half of them. As market rates increase, non-profit housing remains affordable because of the volunteer and community-owned governance of the assets and the focus on mission over profit.

There are currently billions of dollars' worth of assets in non-profit and public housing in Manitoba that will soon be mortgage-free and have increased flexibility to serve the next generation of Manitobans, with an investment in capital. 90% of this housing was built before 1990 (over 30 years ago). About 23,000 were deemed to be in 'fair' condition, compared with 10,000 in excellent, good, or average condition.

The current lack of funding means that units remain vacant for longer than necessary, leaving deserving tenants out in the cold. Vacancy rates range from 10-20%, largely because of lack of funding to repair units.

Rent Assist, at its current rate, does not cover the full costs of operations, repair and maintenance, and capital costs for a building, leaving no doubt that there will be a loss of RGI units available for the lowest income Manitobans in the absence of government action. 43 out of 49 Manitoba post-85 agreement projects – projects where 100% of the rent is geared to the income of the tenant – will not be viable without an ongoing subsidy. Of these, 82% likely do not have sufficient capital reserves.

## Building and Maintaining Affordable Non-Profit Housing is an Investment in Manitoba's Communities

Access to affordable housing achieves social objectives of the Government of Manitoba, including increased family stability, ability to participate in the economy through employment and volunteering, and improved educational outcomes:

- 48% of social housing residents said their children's academic performance improved after they secured stable housing.
- Affordable housing is an effective investment of public dollars as it achieves cost savings in other departments, including justice and health, especially when the housing is geared to those experiencing homelessness.
- Affordable housing construction has a direct impact on local communities. Canada's GDP increased by \$1.52 for every dollar invested in residential construction.

### Commitment to Action

Housing activity at the provincial level has been on-hold during the last number of years, as negotiations between the Province and the Federal Government continued regarding the roll out of the National Housing Strategy and because the COVID-19 pandemic led to a focus on emergency-based responses.

MNPHA and its members encourage the Manitoba Government to now utilize and leverage the investments provided by the National Housing Strategy to address the escalating issues in affordable housing in our province. The following actions will assist individuals and families and contribute to healthier communities:

#### 1 Establish a long-term capital funding program to support existing social housing stock and build new supply. We specifically recommend:

- Immediately extend all post-85 agreements with non-profit housing that will expire in the next two years to prepare for the major transition off agreement, and create a capital funding program that would, combined with Manitoba's existing Rent Assist program, support sustainable operations of housing assets while maintaining the affordability of the units for the lowest income households in the province. Renewing existing assets costs significantly less than building new.

- Invest in 3000 units of rent-geared-to-income housing to address immediate and growing housing needs in Manitoba, at an estimated cost of \$500m in new dollars over the next 10 years. This assumes a portion of the cost would be covered by private financing and other levels of government.
- Develop a Capacity Program/Fund that non-profit housing organizations can easily access to help increase their capacity to develop new housing and increase their portfolios as community needs arise. This will lead to more units and additional revenue that will ensure long term sustainability.

#### 2 Enhance and sustain resources for tenant supports within social housing

Affordable, non-profit housing is more than a door; it is a home and a community. For the sector to be able to serve populations who face additional challenges, including life transitions such as aging, exiting systems such as child and family services, and moving to a new country, or leaving experiences of violence, the human side of housing must be resourced. Having supports in place to help maintain a tenancy and prevent eviction saves on average between \$5,000-\$8,500 per unit. We therefore recommend that the Manitoba Government:

- Target health, mental health, and community development funding to create sustainable supportive housing models for specific populations with support needs. For Manitoba to benefit most from federal programs such as the Rapid Housing Initiative and Reaching Home capital funds, aligned provincial investments in operating costs are required.
- Extend the Housing Supports Initiative to ensure long-term and predictable funding for outreach supports and eviction prevention services for people exiting or at risk of homelessness in non-profit housing.

#### 3 Support an Indigenous-led Housing Strategy

Support urban and rural Indigenous housing providers through ongoing funding agreements and partnerships to own and/or manage a greater amount of affordable non-profit housing. Develop a housing strategy that ensures Indigenous people have access to non-discriminatory housing that meets their needs, facilitates access to cultural resources, and enables self-determination for individuals and communities.