

Dear Sarah Goldrup:

I am writing in response to your letter of March 28th, 2023, to the Right Honourable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, conveying a resolution letter from the Council of the County of Grey, calling on the federal government to end homelessness in Ontario. Your letter was forwarded to the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, who has asked me to reply on his behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

The Government of Canada is concerned about homelessness and affordable housing. Homelessness has an impact on every community in Canada. It affects individuals, families, women and children fleeing violence, youth, seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples. Through the National Housing Strategy, the Government of Canada is making significant investments to improve access to housing for people who need it most.

As part of the National Housing Strategy, the Government of Canada has nearly doubled its investments in federal homelessness programming, from over \$2 billion over 9 years to nearly \$4 billion. This includes over \$1.1 billion in new investments through Budgets 2021 and 2022, to further support communities in addressing homelessness for individuals and families across Canada. These are in addition to new contributions made by the federal government throughout the pandemic to help address the growing crisis those most vulnerable were faced with.

The Government of Canada has been working with communities across the country to reduce chronic homelessness by 50% by 2027-2028. Building on all the work governments, the non-profit sector, Indigenous partners and communities have done to date, and recognizing the need to do more, the Government of Canada has taken a step further and has committed to working with partners to end chronic homelessness in Canada by 2030. To ensure communities have access to all of the knowledge and tools they need to effect change, Budget 2022 proposes to provide \$18.1 million over three years, starting in 2022-23, to Infrastructure Canada to conduct research about what further measures could contribute to eliminating chronic homelessness.

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. Reaching Home funding is administered in eligible communities primarily through the Community Entity delivery model. Under this model, the federal government entrusts a community body, often a community's municipal government or an established not-for-profit, to select and manage Reaching Home projects in their area. More information about the entrusted Community Entities in Ontario can be found [here](#).

Additionally, as the Council may know, the Canada Housing Benefit (CHB) is a financial benefit provided directly to families and individuals in housing need, including those living in social housing, on a social housing wait-list, or those housed in the private market and struggling to make ends meet. Under the National Housing Strategy, the CHB is designed to provide affordability support to families and individuals in housing need. The federal government has worked closely with provinces and territories to co-develop CHB initiatives to address regional housing affordability issues across Canada. The CHB was launched in 2020, with joint funding totalling \$4 billion over eight years. To learn more about the CHB, including who is eligible and how they can apply, please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/action-plan-under-national-housing-strategy>.

Lastly, the Council may be interested to know that Bill C-31, the Cost of Living Relief Act, No. 2 (Targeted Support for Households), received Royal Assent on November 17, 2022. This legislation delivers targeted affordability measures for the Canadians who need it most. The one-time top-up to the CHB will provide a tax-free payment of \$500 to an estimated 1.8 million low-income renters who are struggling with the cost of housing. This top-up is available to applicants with an adjusted net income below \$35,000 for families, or below \$20,000 for single Canadians, who pay at least 30 per cent of their adjusted net income towards rent. The Canada Revenue Agency receives applications and was to start processing payments for this top-up starting December 12, 2022.

In closing, I would like to assure the Council that the Government of Canada remains concerned about homelessness and affordable housing in Canada and is committed to continuing to work with provincial and territorial governments, as well as with a wide range of community stakeholders, to find longer-term solutions to homelessness and housing challenges.

Yours sincerely,

Kris Johnson

Director General

Community Policy and Programs Branch

Infrastructure Canada