

What We Heard

from Manitoba Housing's
Public Consultations

Informing a “Made in Manitoba” Provincial Housing Strategy



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A Message from the Minister of Families

Housing plays a central and stabilizing role in people's lives, and facilitates improvements in areas such as education, health care and employment. Housing costs are usually a family's greatest expense. The amount people spend on housing has a significant impact on their personal and family well-being.

The Manitoba government recognizes that housing is central to achieving positive outcomes in the lives of families and individuals. In order to deliver the right mix of programs and services for Manitobans, we need to seek innovative ways to address homelessness, and improve the condition of existing housing, housing affordability and access to homeownership. Housing and homelessness are a shared responsibility, requiring collaboration from various levels of government, community stakeholders and non-profit organizations.

This report describes the input that was provided through a consultation process to renew Manitoba's Provincial Housing Strategy. The development of a "Made in Manitoba" housing strategy provides the opportunity to identify priorities, effectively design and deliver housing programs that meet Provincially-defined objectives, meet the housing needs of Manitobans, and support improved outcomes for our most vulnerable households. Manitobans have offered concrete examples of policy and programming that will make Manitoba Housing more responsive to housing needs across Manitoba.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the consultation process for their input on the future policy direction for Manitoba Housing. These consultations have helped deepen our understanding of challenges and opportunities, and will guide the Manitoba government's direction forward in the development of solutions. Together, we are creating a shared vision for the housing sector in Manitoba that is practical, sustainable and community-driven.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By Scott Fielding

Honourable Scott Fielding,
Minister of Families

Acknowledgements

Through public consultation, there were numerous stakeholders who contributed countless hours, expert knowledge and are truly dedicated to housing in their communities. Many Manitobans shared their ideas through the online consultation surveys. Tenants who completed surveys provided important feedback on what it means to live in social housing and how Manitoba Housing may serve them better. Representatives of non-profit organizations, service providers, and private organizations working in housing-related sectors took time out of their day, often travelling from nearby communities, to provide feedback at our regional consultation sessions. Many contributed written submissions sharing important expertise with the Manitoba government.

The Manitoba government would like to thank everyone who took part in the provincial housing consultation. The input gathered is integral to the process of developing a new Provincial Housing Strategy and demonstrates that housing is truly a shared responsibility and key to the well-being of families, individuals and communities.

Executive Summary

Manitoba Housing conducted a public consultation process between the fall of 2016 and the spring of 2017, to collect feedback from stakeholders and Manitobans interested in providing their insights for a new Provincial Housing Strategy. Responses were received from online surveys, regional consultations, written submissions and engagement with Indigenous service providers and Manitoba Metis Federation housing leaders. Consultation focused on reaching out to service providers, industry representatives and stakeholder groups that partner with Manitoba Housing. Specifically, we started a dialogue with women, seniors, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities, Manitoba Housing tenants, youth and young adults, and agencies that work with Manitobans in need of housing related supports. Each voice provided important perspectives that enriched the consultation discussions. Central themes that emerged from the consultations include:

The importance of housing affordability: Affordability is important to Manitobans in both the homeownership and rental markets. Opportunities within the public and private rental market to keep rents affordable for Manitobans is a central concern.

Effective service delivery: Respondents felt that although Manitoba Housing supports many people, navigating available services and programs can be challenging. Aligning and streamlining programs and benefits to facilitate access for people in need represent a real opportunity for Manitoba Housing.

Meeting regional needs: Manitoba is a diverse province; housing policies and programs must be flexible to reflect differing needs throughout Manitoba.

Building community capacity: Some communities and housing providers believe strongly that they have the capacity to deliver housing programs that can better meet local needs. Housing initiatives should build capacity within community-based organizations poised to take on more housing delivery responsibility.

Housing with supports: There is a recognition that many vulnerable Manitobans require supports and services to maintain stable tenancies, and that these are of particular importance to some Indigenous Manitobans who additionally benefit from programming that is culturally informed. Housing solutions should be tailored to Manitobans who need them the most, including persons facing mental health challenges, persons with disabilities, vulnerable youth, women and seniors, and individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The information gathered through the consultation process and summarized here will be used to inform the development of the Provincial Housing Strategy which will guide Manitoba Housing's delivery of housing programs and supports over the coming years.

1. Introduction

The Manitoba government invited Manitobans to participate in a public consultation on housing and homelessness to inform the development of a new strategic direction for housing in Manitoba. The consultations were conducted by Manitoba Housing.

By focusing on the development of solutions, the consultation process provided an opportunity to capture stakeholder and community input to ensure that programs and services remain relevant and that priorities are responsive to community needs.

Prior to launching the consultation, Manitoba Housing completed a detailed analysis of recent provincial consultations to build a foundation for discussion. Several consultations that have recently been conducted have generated community-based strategies to improve the well-being of Manitoba specific geographies and population groups. These include *The Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness*; *A Place to Call Home: Brandon's Plan to End Youth Homelessness*; *The Plan to End Homelessness in Winnipeg*; and *All Aboard: Manitoba's Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion Strategy*. Information from Manitobans who participated in federal consultations for the development of a National Housing Strategy was also considered. In addition to this work, a jurisdictional review was completed to examine housing issues and innovative solutions occurring elsewhere in Canada and internationally. These strategies were used to identify discussion themes for this consultation.

During this preliminary work, four consistent *housing themes* emerged and were selected to engage Manitobans and to guide feedback. These themes were:

- *Addressing homelessness;*
- *Condition of existing social and affordable housing stock;*
- *Affordability of housing; and*
- *Support for existing and potential homeowners.*

Throughout the provincial housing consultations, the Manitoba government listened to a broad range of housing stakeholders in order to:

- build on past successful investment;
- review housing policy direction;
- identify ways to prioritize funding;
- ensure that housing services meet the needs of Manitobans; and
- articulate a provincial response to homelessness.

What We Heard summarizes the valuable feedback provided by Manitobans. The report also introduces key engagement strategies used in the provincial housing consultation process, including regional consultations, an online survey, and a focus group on Indigenous housing needs. It outlines key priorities, common themes, and solutions to housing challenges as identified by Manitobans. It also highlights the roles that respondents envisioned for governments, the private sector, service providers and community partners.

2. Who We Heard

Between October 2016 and March 2017, Manitobans were invited to provide feedback through:

- an online survey;
- regional consultations;
- written submissions;
- dialogue on Indigenous housing needs; and
- a meeting with representatives from the Manitoba Metis Federation.

The purpose of the consultation process was to reach out to Manitobans across the province and gather insight, information, opinions and expertise to renew Manitoba's strategic housing direction. The response from individual Manitobans, organizations, community stakeholders and Manitoba Housing tenants was remarkable. A total of 1,392 responses were received from the online survey and 22 written submissions from organizations and individuals. Additionally, 111 stakeholders participated in the regional consultations and a further 17 in a meeting with Indigenous serving organizations. A meeting was also held with representatives from the Manitoba Metis Federation.

Manitoba-Wide Consultations:

Consultation Engagement: Number of Participants



REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Eight regional consultation sessions were held in seven Manitoba communities (Thompson, Selkirk, Brandon, The Pas, Dauphin, Morden and two sessions in Winnipeg). Participants represented a variety of housing-related sectors as well as multiple communities within each region.

Organizations in attendance represented a range of populations including youth, seniors, new Canadians, Indigenous Manitobans, persons with disabilities, persons with mental health concerns, and other vulnerable populations with multiple barriers to housing and tenancy success. A detailed breakdown of attendees can be found in Appendix A, (please note many organizations represent multiple sectors).

The regional consultation sessions were organized around the four housing themes listed in the introduction section of this document. For each theme, participants were asked: what is working well; what requires improvement; what are solutions to address this issue; and what is the role for each stakeholder in addressing solutions? Attendees were then divided into small working groups and provided flip charts and markers to answer each question. Additional housing themes of interest were also recorded. For example, many raised concern regarding the supply of social and affordable housing in Manitoba.

At the close of each session, participants were asked to complete a *Reflections/Final Thoughts* feedback form (see Appendix B) to validate what was discussed and to provide an opportunity for additional individual input. Participants were asked if they felt the session allowed them to share their ideas on housing and homelessness in Manitoba – 88% of respondents answered “yes.”

ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey was designed to collect feedback from three different participant groups: Manitoba Housing tenants, individual respondents and organizations (See Appendix C for a sample of the individual respondent survey). All three surveys asked respondents a series of quantitative and qualitative questions. Survey respondents were asked demographic questions and for information specific to each participant category. For example, Manitoba Housing tenants were asked to rate their tenant experience as well as to provide feedback about their experience living in Manitoba Housing. A wide range of organizations completed the survey including governments, non-profits, private sector organizations, and advocacy and interest groups. For a breakdown of the individual, tenant and organization survey characteristics see Appendix D.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS

Manitobans were asked to submit their input as a written submission. At regional consultations, participants brought forward innovative ideas and were encouraged to expand on concepts discussed during the session through a written submission. Topics ranged from discussing the organization’s specific priorities to focusing on broad housing policy issues. A total of 22 submissions from private, government, non-profit entities and individuals were received (see Appendix E).

INDIGENOUS DIALOGUE

A meeting with representatives from organizations providing services targeted to Indigenous Manitobans from across the province on housing and homelessness issues was held in March 2017. The session was well attended and stakeholders initiated a discussion that situated housing as part of a greater framework of social supports, as well as the importance of culturally informed housing services.

Representatives of the Manitoba Metis Federation met with members of the Provincial Housing Strategy consultation team in May 2017 to discuss the historical role of housing for Métis Manitobans, and how this history has shaped the current housing priorities of the Métis community.

Manitoba Government Staff Consultations

Internal government consultations took place alongside the Manitoba-wide consultations. Staff working in the Manitoba Government are important stakeholders, as they serve clients who often have distinct housing needs.

Throughout the fall of 2016, staff of Manitoba Housing were invited to provide critical insight gained from their experiences in providing front line housing services throughout Manitoba. As part of this process, senior leaders within various branches of Manitoba Housing met with staff to gather input guided by questions used throughout the regional consultations with Manitoba stakeholders.

In addition to Manitoba Housing staff, two other internal consultation meetings were held. The first meeting was held in March 2017 with representatives of various departments across the Manitoba government, whose program users also require housing-related services and supports. A second meeting was held with representatives of divisions within the Department of Families in April 2017. The purpose of these meetings was to focus on opportunities for alignment, where the Manitoba government can provide better and more efficient services to program users. Both meetings were guided by the following two questions:

1. What are the housing needs of your clients?
2. Where do you see possibilities for greater alignment/collaboration?

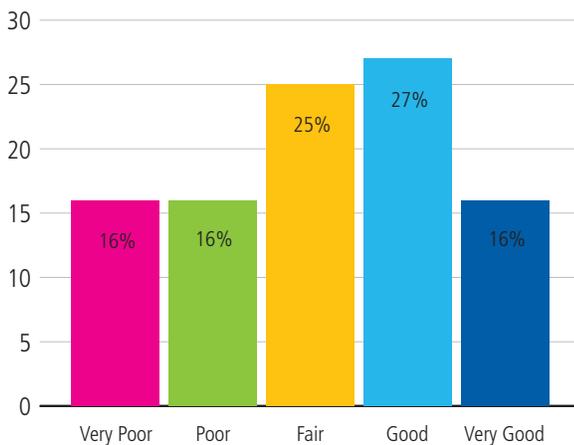
3. What We Heard

Manitoba Housing Tenants

In addition to their survey feedback, which has been incorporated into the other sections of this report, tenants were asked to provide responses to questions regarding their Manitoba Housing experience. For a breakdown of tenant respondent demographics, see Appendix D.

Manitoba Housing tenants were asked to rank the programs, services, and supports offered in their Manitoba Housing buildings; – 68% of tenant respondents reported that they were fair, good, or very good.

Rating of Manitoba Housing programs, services and supports by tenants



Through open ended survey questions, tenants discussed issues and proposed measures towards improving conditions in their buildings, often describing specific areas of concern such as repair, safety, lighting, accessibility and security. Tenants expressed a strong desire to have a venue for ongoing dialogue and feedback. Some common themes from Manitoba Housing tenants are outlined below.

SAFETY

Manitoba Housing tenants discussed building safety and provided several suggestions to improve safety in their buildings, including better lighting both inside and outside of buildings, more security cameras, and better enforcement of building rules. Tenants highlighted concerns with property damage, “gang activity” and “drug dealing” related to unfamiliar non-tenants frequenting the buildings. Tenants would also like Manitoba Housing building rules/house rules enforced for tenants who cause damage and disturbances.

MENTAL HEALTH, ADDICTION AND SUPPORTS

Tenants expressed concern about the well-being of tenants living with mental health issues, fearing that they may not be receiving the appropriate services and supports required to live independently. Respondents attested to the stress that this created for other tenants who live in the building. Tenant respondents would like to see greater mental health supports for tenants to enable them to successfully live independently in Manitoba Housing communities. They also want to see increased supports for persons with addictions. The need for improved referral processes to connect those in need of specialized supports to appropriate service providers was highlighted.

BUILDING CONDITION AND MAINTENANCE

Having “pride for their home” was important to tenants and they indicated that the condition of their buildings was a key priority. Tenants expressed the need for continued preventative maintenance, addressing safety concerns, building cleanliness, grounds keeping, and general maintenance to improve the condition of the buildings where they live. Some reported living in older housing stock that is in need of major repair.

AFFORDABILITY OF RENT

Many tenants reported that they feel growing financial pressure due to increasing expenses such as food, transportation and other household needs. Affordable rents that are geared to income provide tenants with reduced financial burdens. Tenants expressed that they would like to see rents remain affordable. Some requested greater clarity about how rent is calculated, citing fluctuating rental rates.

PESTS AND BED BUGS

Tenants expressed frustration with bed bugs, mice and cockroaches. They were not only concerned with the presence of pests in their units, but also the process of having to prepare for pest control treatments on a regular basis. Tenants suggested a more proactive approach to treating and preventing pests, as well as greater penalty for those who do not comply with pest control procedures.

ACCESS TO NEARBY AMENITIES

Access to nearby amenities was identified by many tenants as an important need. Seniors emphasized the importance of being able to access essential services such as health care and groceries, and expressed that mobility issues and other barriers make accessing basic services a challenge. In winter, snow and ice cover on sidewalks present additional barriers to seniors and those with mobility issues. Some respondents suggested that organizing bus trips to the grocery store, as well as the occasional trip to a mall would benefit their housing community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Tenants expressed that they want to have more involvement within their Manitoba Housing community. This includes having greater input on building-related decisions, on-site recreation activities and events, and greater community use of common space if available in the building.

Four Themes

Input on the four housing themes¹ was received from individual Manitobans, Manitoba Housing tenants, and provincial stakeholders through the consultation process. Their feedback is summarized in the following sections. Additionally, participants were asked to rank the four themes and the results of these rankings can be seen in Appendix F.

Theme #1: Addressing Homelessness

WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

Participants indicated that recent point in time counts of homeless populations in Winnipeg, Brandon, and Thompson have increased public awareness of homelessness in Manitoba communities. Many noted that emergency shelters play an essential role in providing a first point of service for many vulnerable Manitobans. Shelters in some rural and northern communities have developed strategies to provide enhanced cold weather services during winter months.

Participants stated that support provided by the Manitoba government and the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy has increased the number of private landlords collaborating with service providers to make housing and supports available to vulnerable Manitobans who are susceptible to homelessness.

Some participants identified co-habitation options where two or more previously homeless tenants share a unit as a viable solution to improve access to affordable housing in areas challenged by low vacancy rates and high market rents.

OPPORTUNITIES

While participants acknowledged that there is increased community awareness of homelessness and hidden homelessness, more needs to be done to de-stigmatize those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Governments, service providers and communities should work together to solidify the collective understanding of risk factors such as trauma, addictions, disabilities, poverty, social exclusion, family conflict and mental health issues.

Many emergency shelters across Manitoba operate at maximum capacity. Participants felt that an increase in the number of shelter beds throughout the province, especially in rural and northern communities, and lengthening the hours of operation would improve shelter services for the most vulnerable individuals. Stakeholders stressed the importance of diversifying shelter options to respond to emergency shelter needs of specific populations, such as families, those escaping domestic violence, youth, LGBTQ2S individuals,² and those with mobility limitations.

Participants felt that emergency shelter services could be further enhanced by increasing the number of transitional units (for youth, those fleeing family violence or human trafficking and others) and associated supports to assist individuals using emergency shelters to stabilize and establish tenant history.

¹ Addressing homelessness; condition of existing social and affordable housing stock; affordability of housing; and support for existing and potential homeowners.

² Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and two spirited.

To fill immediate localized service gaps, volunteer-run emergency shelters are being established in rural communities. While these shelters address an urgent need, they operate with very little funding. Greater funding and planning assistance is required to support community capacity and their efforts to provide emergency shelter programming.

Participants identified a need for a greater diversity of housing options throughout the province, including both scattered units in the community and congregate housing. Stakeholders advocated for the development of new housing options and expressed a need to move from housing models that “warehouse” vulnerable individuals to providing creative options that facilitate integration in the broader community and promote social inclusion.

Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson participants identified challenges associated with meeting the needs of a growing number of individuals and families migrating to urban centres from remote communities. Access to jobs, housing, education and health care services are important settlement services. Participants identified a need for increased services and supports that help rural and remote migrants settle and stay housed.

Participants advised that improved alignment of government funding streams would help community organizations better understand and navigate the various forms of shelter assistance that are available. This would improve community responses and provide more diverse supports for vulnerable populations. Greater program coordination was also encouraged to prevent service providers from working in “silos,” where at-risk populations may fall through program “cracks.” Participants also expressed a need for greater integration of homeless strategies with broader poverty reduction initiatives in recognition of the compounding impact low income and multiple barriers have on tenancies.

IDEAS

Participants recommended a coordinated effort by all levels of government and community organizations to raise awareness that homelessness is an issue in almost every community, regardless of size and location, and outlined the following ideas to address the issue in Manitoba:

- Develop a greater range and host of preventative initiatives across the province that would reduce the number of new individuals and families that become homeless.
- Support eviction prevention strategies, such as programs to address hoarding and develop tenancy skills.
- Provide information on the causal factors of homelessness and what homelessness may look like within various communities, particularly hidden homelessness.
- Establish greater partnerships within government and between government and community organizations to address homelessness.
- Engage those with lived experience of homelessness to develop a deeper understanding of homeless issues, to aid the development of effective solutions.
- Support non-profit organizations that want to create and support transitional housing.

- Examine how Manitoba Housing – through its programs and policies – can prioritize those who are the most vulnerable to homelessness (youth aging out of care, Indigenous Manitobans, persons with multiple barriers).
- Increase housing options for vulnerable tenants, including rooming houses.
- Increase substance misuse interventions and supports for at-risk individuals.
- Increase access to withdrawal management treatment services in northern Manitoba that provide safe monitored beds.
- Increase the number of supportive/transitional units with supports (life skills, treatment and counseling) to support vulnerable populations.
- Support small scale congregate unit initiatives as an appropriate form of housing for individuals with severe barriers that compromise their ability to function independently.
- Increase the supply of affordable housing to provide more housing choice for vulnerable households.
- Improve tracking of emergency service usage and information sharing to support greater coordination of existing services and to help identify gaps for addressing homelessness.
- Increase the scope of supports available to private market housing providers willing to house those vulnerable to homelessness or those exiting homelessness. Doing so could also increase housing options available to individuals and service providers.
- Increase housing options and supports in smaller rural and northern communities so stakeholders may offer services and supports locally and reduce dependency on larger urban centres.
- Provide greater support in planning and implementing community-led responses to homelessness.

Theme #2: Condition of Existing Social and Affordable Housing Stock

WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

Participants confirmed that access to social housing through Manitoba Housing or a non-profit housing provider is a valuable community asset. They also noted that housing managed by non-profit organizations through sponsor management agreements is working well. When combined with tenant supports and true community integration, social housing provides valuable housing options for low-to-moderate income Manitobans.

Participants acknowledged that the condition of housing is important for health, well-being, feeling “at home,” and taking pride in one’s housing. Social housing unit refreshes have enhanced the quality of housing provided to tenants. Consultations confirmed that partnerships between Manitoba Housing and community-led social enterprises for renovations and repairs have also supported training and employment opportunities and built capacity within communities.

Participants outlined the positive impact of programs such as: Manitoba Housing’s Rental Housing Improvement Program which provides financial assistance to landlords who rent to tenants with low incomes to repair and rehabilitate their property; energy efficiency programs such as the Power Smart Affordable Energy Program offered through Manitoba Hydro; and the Bug N Scrub program that provides

assistance to Manitobans with barriers (such as seniors) to prepare for bed bug treatment. Access to federal and provincial funding for repairs is of benefit to cooperative and non-profit housing providers.

OPPORTUNITIES

Despite ongoing improvements to existing social housing, many challenges lay ahead for maintaining aging social housing stock. Participants also advised that additional investment in repairs and maintenance is required in social housing throughout the province. We were also told that some non-profit housing projects' capital reserves are inadequate to maintain the quality of this sector's housing stock.

Aging social housing stock provides an opportunity to engage social enterprises and promote local trades to undertake maintenance, renovation and repairs.

Participants stated that the federal and provincial operating subsidies provided to rent-geared-to-income housing providers do not sufficiently fund required capital improvements. The impending expiry of project operating agreements will also create challenges for some cooperative and non-profit housing providers that will struggle to remain viable while continuing to offer affordable rents. Many are expected to also require new debt financing for major capital renewal.

Participants felt that Manitoba Housing should amend program criteria for the Rooming House Assistance Program (RHAP) to ensure rooming house owners outside of Winnipeg are eligible for support. For example, in Brandon, municipal bylaws require the owner to reside in the rooming house, making them ineligible under current RHAP eligibility criteria.

Participants also indicated that current rent increase guidelines do not create incentives for landlords to make necessary improvements to their rental stock.

IDEAS

Public, private, and non-profit housing providers all share the responsibility to provide affordable, adequate and suitable housing for Manitobans. Participants identified the following ideas to help revitalize Manitoba's aging social and affordable housing stock:

- Provide non-profit housing organizations greater access to repair and maintenance funding.
- Divest housing assets that are in disrepair and allocate proceeds from the sale and operational savings to new affordable housing.
- Maintain the safety, security, and physical infrastructure of Manitoba Housing buildings to help build pride in the housing that tenants occupy.
- Improve maintenance and repair of social housing units in partnership with social enterprises and local trades people to maximize social housing's impact on communities.
- Involve tenants in renovation plans and priorities and provide support for tenants to contribute to renovations. Tenants could develop skills to help them access the labour market.
- Consider the supports available in surrounding communities when building housing projects, including First Nations communities.

- Provide greater financial incentives for private housing providers to offer housing that is affordable to low-income Manitobans and to improve the condition of affordable private housing stock.
- Make subsidies to landlords conditional on passing fire / building safety checks to ensure that they meet satisfactory housing standards. Better standards and greater accountability are required for private housing providers including follow-up through a reporting process.
- Support renovations with housing providers before their operating agreements expire.
- Repair and upgrade the existing housing stock in northern Manitoba. Much of the housing stock is old and in need of repair in these communities.
- Seek direct input from northern communities on the use of materials and construction techniques suitable for harsher northern climates. Look for best practices in other northern jurisdictions when building in the North.
- Develop creative solutions to repurpose assets to address local housing and homelessness needs as demographics change within a community.

Theme #3: Affordability of Housing

WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

Consultation participants identified that subsidized housing units in Manitoba provide a stable environment for low-income households. Participants also emphasized the importance of provincial programs that assist low-income households to access affordable housing options in the private rental market. These housing assistance supports are complemented by other grants and funding streams such as the federal Homelessness Partnering Strategy and by community housing providers that offer affordable rental units.

Participants also highlighted recent Manitoba Housing investments in the creation of new social housing units and the inclusion of affordable housing in new projects.

Additionally, participants pointed to diversity of housing options such as co-housing, rooming houses, and secondary suites as providing flexible affordable housing options to low-income Manitobans.

Some communities and non-profit sector partners have come together to develop shared responses to local housing needs. Innovative and creative solutions are being explored, such as pre-fabricated housing in rural communities.

OPPORTUNITIES

While social housing continues to meet an essential need in Manitoba communities, the opportunity exists to increase supply to reflect current and future housing needs, especially for vulnerable populations.

Some participants stated that the timeframe for Provincial Requests for Proposals (RFPs) should be lengthened to allow communities more time to develop feasible community-led projects. They felt that not having enough time to “think projects through” discourages greater uptake and may result in projects that do not fully serve the needs of the community. Participants also stated that assistance with planning and developing affordable housing options would be beneficial in smaller communities that lack the technical background to plan housing projects.

Increasing the diversity and availability of affordable housing options such as rent geared-to-income units, transitional housing, multi-generational housing, co-housing, student housing, housing for large families, and adaptable units (modular housing outside of larger urban centres) would further increase options for low-to moderate-income Manitobans.

Participants emphasized that the creation of the Department of Families provides an opportunity to incorporate poverty reduction strategies to address provincial housing needs, and increase alignment and consistency across programs such as levels of shelter assistance that correspond to regional market realities. Participants also noted that individuals may have limited funds for a rent damage deposit or member share purchase in cooperatives and spoke about this as a gap in current housing assistance programming.

IDEAS

Participant feedback shows that there is desire to maximize the number of people served through initiatives that are affordable, sustainable and effective. An important theme was that affordable housing is not just an urban issue, it is a province-wide issue.

Participants presented several creative ideas to provide good value for money. Some felt that repurposing existing buildings would be a more cost-effective way to increase the supply of affordable housing. This would include consulting with communities to ensure existing structures meet local housing needs. Others felt that new builds should occur, but greater measures should be taken to reduce administrative expenses, control project costs, measure outcomes, and use local trades and procurement processes that are fair to local proponents. Also, it was suggested new builds be funded on a per bedroom basis, not per unit.

Participants also emphasized the benefits of public private partnerships to encourage private investment toward new construction, and recommended incenting private owners/developers to dedicate units in their property to affordable rentals. Additional ideas were to:

- Expand incentives for landlords to provide affordable units in recognition that the provision of subsidies presents a cost-effective alternative to construction and maintenance of new units and increases access to private market housing for lower-income Manitobans.
- Attach subsidies to individuals rather than units and prioritize access for those with the greatest housing barriers.
- Ensure shelter assistance rates reflect income disparities and regional market differences.
- Provide supports to Manitoba Housing tenants who are able to transition to other types of housing. This may include the introduction of tenant support programs such as asset building and training opportunities.
- Engage with housing providers and other levels of governments to prevent the loss of rent geared-to-income units due to the expiry of project operating agreements.
- Increase the diversity of social and affordable housing stock, especially in rural and remote communities, including transitional housing, secondary suites, student housing, accessible housing, rent-geared-to-income units, cooperative housing, supportive housing micro-homes, single room occupancy units, rooming houses, seniors housing and assisted living.

- Ensure that any planned increase in housing units align with longer-term demographic trends and changes in order to reduce future market strains. Consider repurposing surplus existing community assets, such as hospitals and other unused institutional buildings.
- Create a single window for developers and non-profit organizations to access resources and funding for the development of new housing.
- Ease access to capital from the financial sector.
- Support regions to develop regional housing strategies that respond to local needs. While many rural communities reported reasonable vacancy rates they expressed concern over the lack of affordable units.

Theme #4: Support for Existing and Potential Homeowners

WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

Existing renovation and improvement programs for homeowners such as those offered by Manitoba Housing and Manitoba Hydro provide a valuable form of assistance to existing homeowners. These programs also assist in making homeownership more affordable and contribute to environmental sustainability.

Low-income Manitobans face many barriers to home ownership, even if paying rent similar in amount to mortgage payments. Participants indicated that programs like Habitat for Humanity and SEED Winnipeg's Inner City Homebuyer Program are good models for helping low-income Manitobans to own their own home, accumulate assets and build net worth on their journey to financial independence.

Tax incentives, such as school tax rebates for low-income seniors, were identified as an important tool to help Manitobans stay in their homes.

OPPORTUNITIES

Consultation participants felt that the Manitoba government needs to increase communication of available programs, incentives and financial assistance as many people are unaware of the programs that are currently available to homeowners. Additionally, there is a need to promote a diversity of program options to serve populations that include seniors, potential first time homebuyers, low-to moderate-income populations and rural and northern Manitobans.

Participants also noted that an abundance of administrative requirements has made homeownership programs difficult to navigate and that the program income limits to qualify for renovation, repair programs and emergency repair programs are too high. Most people earning very low incomes are unlikely to own their own home.

To help alleviate affordability issues associated with homeownership, participants identified that programs like Manitoba Housing's Rural Homeownership Program should be available to potential homeowners in urban centres.

Participants in northern communities identified fluctuating property values – especially in communities where the local economy is based on resource extraction – as an obstacle to securing mortgages. In addition, an insufficient supply of starter homes in some northern communities restricts first time buyers from entering the market.

First time and potential homeowners need education around saving, budgeting, financing, insurance, planning, and conducting maintenance and repair (home-ownership literacy).

Participants indicated that new Canadians can experience challenges, such as entering homeownership, and finding housing that accommodates large families or enables multi generational living arrangements.

IDEAS

Participants suggested the following ideas to address the needs of existing and potential homeowners:

- Provide Manitoba Housing tenants with homeowner options such as rent-to-own, conditional upon completion of a course on ownership. This could be complemented by Manitoba Housing providing clients with asset building options for down payments or deposits.
- Increase options for individuals and families to enter homeownership such as low cost starter homes, eliminating land transfer tax for first time buyers and reducing the burden of closing costs, information and training on home ownership, incentives such as down payment assistance and a system of graduated property tax for the first few years of homeownership.
- Explore opportunities for tenants to move out of social housing and into homeownership.
- Support homeowners in northern communities faced with negative equity when property values decrease due to changes in local economic conditions (e.g., communities with a single resource-based economy).
- Assist low-income Manitobans with the costs of entering cooperative housing.
- Require that developers set aside units for affordable homeownership.
- Create an advisory group to gain stakeholder input in designing new homeownership programs and explore potential partnership opportunities with lenders on new homeownership programs.

Indigenous Dialogue

During the regional consultations, participants from organizations that serve Indigenous populations told us that Indigenous specific dialogue would best facilitate discourse on the housing needs of Indigenous Manitobans. Following this advice, Manitoba Housing organized meetings with service organizations that primarily serve Indigenous Manitobans in policy areas within provincial jurisdiction.

The Department of Indigenous and Municipal Relations connected Manitoba Housing staff with the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg to partner in facilitating a dialogue with Indigenous service providers. The Council hosted a housing consultation session at the Neeginan Centre, where rural Manitoba friendship centres joined Winnipeg-based agencies that primarily provide services to Indigenous Manitobans.

Indigenous stakeholders expressed that housing plays an essential part of a broader holistic approach to the needs of Indigenous individuals, families and communities. Participants shared that many Indigenous Manitobans are challenged by intergenerational poverty, systemic discrimination, and trauma. In responding to these challenges, the importance of culture, land, kinship, community and Indigenous approaches to healing were emphasized.

At the Indigenous stakeholder meeting, participants raised *social supports* for those of First Nations ancestry as a singular theme, to which *addressing homelessness* was secondary. *Affordability of housing* and *condition of existing social and affordable housing stock* received less attention and – in contrast to what was learned about Métis housing priorities – less emphasis was given to the importance of *homeownership*.

MIGRATION AND A LACK OF SUPPORTS

Consultation participants, who primarily provide services to First Nations Manitobans, emphasized that the experience of Indigenous people moving off reserve to urban centres is similar to newcomers moving to Canada. The settlement needs that result when crossing from federal to provincial jurisdiction mirrors those of crossing international boundaries including securing housing, service system navigation and acquiring documentation (identification) to access services. Participants identified challenges when moving between reserves and urban centres that relate to fragmentation between provincial and federal administration. This situation can be particularly troubling for women leaving a reserve to escape domestic violence. Women in this situation risk losing funding and supports while seeking services in an unfamiliar community. Resources for those leaving reserves should be similar to the settlement supports of new Canadians. Some ideas presented included:

- Increased options for second stage and transitional housing for youth, victims of domestic violence and those challenged by addiction.
- Flexible housing arrangements that accommodate large and intergenerational families and short-term stays for extended family members.
- Flexible support systems that follow families and individuals on and off reserve.
- Communities and governments work together to map resources that support Indigenous migrants in their transitions between remote reserves and urban centres.

- Enrich the homelessness service continuum beyond existing Housing First eligibility criteria by making Housing First initiatives more accessible (broaden eligibility) and support other homeless interventions relevant to vulnerable youth and families.
- Plan housing around proximity to services such as health care, child care and education.

VULNERABLE YOUTH

Indigenous youth represent the fastest growing population in Canada, yet face multiple barriers that place them at risk of falling through “the cracks.” One of the greatest concerns expressed by participants were the prospects of youth aging out of the care of a child and family services agency. The abrupt termination of supports provided to these youth at 18 years of age leads to high service needs from limited community resources. Participants highlighted that the vulnerability of youth exiting care places them at a much higher risk of becoming homeless or involved with criminal behavior. Some ideas suggested included:

- Extend the age for youth leaving child and family service agencies.
- Support appropriate programming for Indigenous youth that promotes training opportunities and traditional cultural healing and supports.
- Invest in keeping families together including developing housing for larger, intergenerational and extended families in Manitoba’s communities.

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE HOUSING

Participants highlighted the importance of culturally appropriate supports that build relationships and create a sense of community for people at all stages of their life. The importance of housing options with common spaces for residents to cook together, practice cultural crafts, engage in cultural ceremonies or support community members through child minding was shared as a concern by participants.

Restrictive housing regulations that prohibit extended family members staying in the home were noted to present housing barriers for Indigenous Manitobans. Participants also stated that no-eviction policies are needed for the most vulnerable tenants.

Organizations that primarily provide services to Indigenous Manitobans characterized rental supports (budgeting, rental education and basic maintenance skills) as vital for successful tenancies. They also identified a need for increased access to trauma counselling that is culturally appropriate, and recommended that all service providers that work with Indigenous clients receive anti-oppression training.

ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS

Participants taking part in the consultation spoke of Indigenous Manitobans who are moving from poor housing conditions on reserve and in some rural Métis communities to economic opportunity and access to services in urban centres. Participants expressed that the Manitoba government plays an important role in funding services that support these urban transitions as well as community organizations that serve Indigenous Manitobans.

Partnerships between governments and community-based organizations were characterized by Indigenous stakeholders to work best when services are provided locally and in culturally appropriate ways. Also

underscored was the importance of building capacity within the Indigenous community through a focus on economic development. The importance of community planning that receives government support and resources where the need is greatest was emphasized.

Participants stated that they appreciated the opportunity to be consulted. It allowed Indigenous stakeholders to have dialogue and an opportunity to share their needs and opinions with the Manitoba government. Participants expressed a desire to have such conversations with the Manitoba government on a more regular basis.

MÉTIS MANITOBANS

In May 2017, Manitoba Housing met with of the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) to discuss the housing and homelessness experience of Métis people. Representatives shared the MMF's history as a prominent housing provider in Manitoba and their experience of connecting housing to training, employment and economic opportunities. Representatives also spoke of self-reliance being a keystone of the Métis identity, personified by hard work leading to prideful home ownership.

Representatives of the MMF identified homeownership as the traditional form of tenure for Métis people and a platform supporting economic independence. For Métis people, housing is considered a physical asset and economic opportunity. The use of local-sourced materials, local contractors and qualified labour in construction, maintenance and improvement projects constitute practical skills training and job creation leading to self-sufficiency.

With a preference for ownership, representatives of the MMF stated that they pursue all alternatives for adequate and affordable housing for the Métis people. Representatives expressed despair over the deteriorated condition of housing located where many rural Métis people live, which has impacted the health and well-being of vulnerable Métis (the elderly, those with disabilities and health complications) and undermined the ability for these Métis people to live in their communities. Manitoba Housing was encouraged to sell units to families residing in social and affordable housing with long tenures at a price below market. Representatives also raised barriers to homeownership in some Métis communities, including difficulty:

- insuring homes, due to a lack of local emergency response infrastructure; and
- securing mortgages, due to a weak housing market.

MMF representatives spoke of the Métis people's unique history, resulting in varying expressions of Métis religious and cultural practices, and of how not all Métis people require supports and services embedded in culture. It was also noted that the Métis people are culturally inclined to move for employment opportunities and some settlement services are equally relevant for Métis as they are for First Nations Manitobans.

Representatives of the MMF spoke passionately about the Federation's ability to best meet the housing needs of Métis Manitobans. Representatives discussed the importance of understanding communities, where decisions can have important repercussions locally. Representatives related the MMF history as an independent housing provider to the Métis people's autonomous socio-political identity. Representatives of the MMF envisioned an autonomous role in housing for Métis Manitobans. The vision put forward by MMF representatives was similar in tone to others who, through consultation, promoted greater control over housing at a community level.

Distinct Housing Needs

Throughout the consultations, some common themes emerged about the specific housing needs of women, seniors, youth and young adults, and persons with disabilities. Another common theme throughout consultations was the importance of building healthy and inclusive housing communities.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Accessibility was a central theme related to housing for persons with disabilities. Participants also wished to emphasize the need for additional housing and supports for persons with an intellectual disability. Housing models beyond the group home setting were noted as a suggested resource to accommodate those with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Participants noted that it was important that rural and urban communities plan for current and future accessibility needs. This underscores the need for more visitable and accessible public and private market housing, addictions treatment facilities, as well as homeless and domestic violence shelters. A current lack of accessible housing has placed strain on hospitals and personal care homes, particularly in instances where an individual's ability has suddenly changed and their home can no longer accommodate their needs. Ideas provided include programs to assist homeowners and landlords with renovations and support services to enable persons with disabilities to remain in their homes.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Participants said that strategies and supports are needed for youth leaving care, incarceration or health facilities to prevent youth homelessness. Increased shelters and transitional housing was identified as essential for youth transitioning from homelessness.

Participants in every community with a post-secondary institution identified a need for additional housing for university and college students as well as larger housing units for students with families. Participants identified the need for young adults to have the ability to save towards homeownership, which was noted to be beyond the reach of many young Manitobans.

WOMEN

Participants expressed that women face unique housing challenges. Vulnerable women, women with mental health challenges and women who experience prejudice face some of the highest rates of homelessness.

Recognizing that discrimination from landlords and an extremely tight affordable housing market present significant barriers to women exiting abusive relationships, participants felt that housing policies should encompass strong protections against discrimination and promote transfers to safe housing. Participants also identified the importance of second stage transitional housing with supports for households fleeing domestic violence.

SENIORS

Participants identified many challenges related to seniors' housing, including financial barriers for low-income seniors. Improvements to income assistance programs, tax relief programs for seniors, and financial assistance for home repair and renovations were identified as possible ways to improve housing outcomes for elderly Manitobans. The issue of hidden homelessness among elderly Manitobans and the need for supports to transition seniors out of homelessness was mentioned in several communities.

Participants expressed the need for more seniors housing including assisted living facilities, personal care home beds, and greater housing flexibility to allow elderly couples with differing levels of care the ability to continue to live together. It was noted that many seniors prefer one-bedroom suites over studio apartments. Some seniors indicated their preference was to live in buildings with a diversity of age groups; others described an improved sense of safety when living in buildings that are strictly for seniors. Participants also expressed a desire for age-friendly communities with housing that enables individuals to age in place and access services needed to remain independent including accessible units and meal programs.

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Healthy communities include housing options for Manitobans from all walks of life. Participants emphasized the importance of creating inclusive communities that comprise different types of tenure (condominium, rental, cooperative). This would allow households with different income levels and age groups to be represented. Participants also wanted geographic diversification of where affordable housing is located, including more rural communities and broader dispersion throughout Manitoba's cities.

Building healthy communities also includes improving households' long-term housing stability. This can be accomplished by helping households integrate within the broader community. Participants emphasized access to diverse supports (other than housing) that help to foster community integration and independence, for example:

- life skills training (budgeting, home repair and maintenance, navigating existing support systems, information on how to access identification);
- pre-employment training and labour market attachment supports;
- information about tenancy and homeownership (transitioning from one form of housing tenure to another);
- services to support educational and training opportunities;
- services to support client physical and mental well-being;
- child care for families with children; and
- supports to reduce isolation (e.g., programs that promote tenant interaction and/or interaction with the community at large).

As highlighted by participants, a significant hurdle to building healthy communities is addressing the attitude of 'Not in my Backyard' (NIMBY-ism), which can undermine the development of housing and homelessness solutions. Participants felt that the key to reducing NIMBY-ism was education. They explained that educating the public and service providers about homelessness and poverty are ways to reduce stigma. Sharing success stories of Manitoba Housing tenants and those with lived experience of homelessness are ways to put a face and a story to an issue and to help raise awareness and empathy.

Roles of Stakeholders

GOVERNMENTS

Participants felt it was important to see increased investment in social and affordable housing by all three levels of government. This investment goes beyond funding for new housing construction and rent supplements. Participants envisioned government collaboration on new tax incentives for development of affordable housing, density bonuses, land trusts, inclusionary zoning, and alignment of housing and homelessness strategies and plans.

At a federal level, participants wanted to see an expanded role for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This includes additional supports for first time homebuyers, restoring the corporation's presence in northern Manitoba, CMHC re-engaging in the direct delivery of social housing and developing localized policy. To assist homeowners experiencing significant life events, participants suggested that the federal government broaden the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) down-payment plan beyond first time homebuyers (e.g., where a new house is required due to unforeseen circumstances like death in the family, divorce or large-scale job loss in the community).

Participants also saw a need for increased federal funding for on-reserve housing and coordination with other levels of government on housing Indigenous Manitobans off reserve.

Several participants indicated that government policy often stands as a roadblock to change. They expressed a desire for reduced regulation at the provincial level to improve client service. This may include breaking-down service "silos" by developing a single window for all assistance programs. Participants also felt that improved client service should include in-person guidance as well as easy-to-understand materials to help the public navigate government systems and facilitate access to the assistance they may require.

To help ensure good value for money for social and affordable housing initiatives, participants saw a need for the Manitoba government to remain a key figure in addressing housing solutions in the province. This includes centralizing responsibility for setting targets, tracking progress and adjusting programs where necessary.

At a municipal level, participants wanted to see improved municipal by-law enforcement on health and safety issues (e.g., rooming houses). Municipal contribution in the form of reduced land costs and lower land transfer taxes for developers of affordable housing and first time home buyers was also discussed. Participants envisioned more municipal involvement in the development of housing policy and saw a role for municipalities in improving access to affordable public transportation.

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

Some participants felt that in small communities, local non-profit organizations and government are able to operate social housing more cost effectively and with more immediate response to tenant concerns, and called for greater control and coordination of social housing through municipal or local housing authorities. They felt that repairs and renovations could be completed faster with local management.

At a local level, it was felt that consultation with community groups on new housing construction would be an improvement; these organizations have local knowledge of needs in their area. It was further suggested that local organizations could act as resource centres for renters to navigate the transition from rural/on reserve housing to an urban environment. These centres could also provide education and training for potential homeowners transitioning out of rental housing.

Participants indicated that better coordination of housing and related services and supports would enhance client outcomes as they transition through systems. Participants also wanted to see increased collaboration, communication and policy coordination both within and across government departments. For example, better coordination of Manitoba Housing with tenant supports such as Employment and Income Assistance, Rent Assist, disability services, child care, health care, mental health services and addiction services.

A need for improved discharge planning from institutions such as the justice system, child and family services and hospitals to ensure people have a place to live was also identified. Manitobans who leave the justice system without housing arrangements in place are likely to end up in emergency shelters and at a high risk of homelessness. The same is true for youth who age out of the care of a child and family services agency. Respondents noted that a backlog exists within hospitals as patients cannot be discharged for lack of appropriate housing for patients, such as seniors and those in the mental health system. This backlog is expensive and these beds are needed to relieve pressure on the hospital system and enable it to be used for its intended purpose – the provision of health care services.

Women who have been victims of domestic violence face similar challenges. Stakeholders have noted that many domestic violence shelters have a maximum stay of 30 days. Without transitional housing and adequate housing with supports, victims and their children are at a greater risk of returning to their abuser, “couch surfing,” or becoming homeless. Better coordination and appropriate living options and services are also needed to address additional barriers that some women might be experiencing, such as mental health issues, addictions or lack of life skills.

There was also desire among stakeholders for ongoing collaboration with governments on housing-related issues. Reinstating a housing stakeholder forum to advise the Manitoba government on housing challenges and solutions, and to share best practices was recommended.

Provincial Alignment

Many tenants living in Manitoba Housing units receive Employment and Income Assistance, and receive additional services from within the Department of Families, as well as other departments within the Manitoba government. Feedback from staff from within the Department of Families and other Manitoba government departments reinforced that access to housing is key to their program areas, and that the focus should be on continuing to build on program coordination through:

- reducing barriers to effective service delivery;
- greater alignment in program design and delivery; and
- building on program strengths through cooperation with service providers.

REDUCING BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Participants discussed that one of the greatest barriers to providing services and supports to their most vulnerable clients was access to housing that suits their needs. Service providers want to continue to partner with Manitoba Housing on housing solutions that can meet the complex needs of their clients.

It was also stated that greater focus must be placed on delivering the right mix of appropriate housing models to meet the needs of Manitobans. This includes housing that is accessible, meets the needs of persons with disabilities, allows aging in place, accommodates services, and can house larger families. Participants also identified opportunities where partnerships with the non-profit and private sector, including philanthropy, should be built upon to enhance effective service delivery.

GREATER ALIGNMENT IN PROGRAM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

Participants highlighted that there is opportunity for greater alignment in the delivery of better and more efficient services to Manitobans in order to address gaps in the housing continuum. There is a need for transitional housing for those fleeing family violence, youth aging out of care, and persons transitioning into communities from hospitals, addiction treatment and correctional institutions.

There is opportunity for program and regulatory alignment between provincial departments, service providers and housing operators that serve seniors and those living with disabilities. Additionally, it was stated that regulatory alignment must address difficult transitions that clients make between systems based on their needs. It was also identified that shelter benefits between programs should be aligned.

BUILDING ON PROGRAM STRENGTHS THROUGH COOPERATION WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

Government stakeholders reported that access to housing plays a central role in delivering services to vulnerable groups such as seniors, youth in the Child and Family Services system, children and adults living with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, people living with addictions and mental health challenges. While some service delivery programs operate their own housing, participants said that it is hard for community organizations to also be strong housing managers. Alternately, it was reported that some organizations want to provide services with access to an allocation of housing units potentially dedicated by Manitoba Housing.

4. Next Steps

The provincial housing consultations provided a tremendous opportunity to not only hear from Manitobans, Manitoba Housing tenants, community stakeholders and interest groups, but to build relationships and learn from the experience and knowledge of Manitobans across the province. Participants shared invaluable knowledge and expertise that is critical to the development of a renewed Provincial Housing Strategy.

Visiting Manitoba communities was paramount to the success of the consultations and Manitobans have shared their vision of how their cities and towns can grow and prosper with the right housing options in place. Moving forward, ongoing dialogue with stakeholders about housing priorities is important.

The input received through the course of these consultations will not only inform the development of a Provincial Housing Strategy, it will inform the Government of Canada on the perspective of Manitobans on housing issues and will help determine how the National Housing strategy and Provincial Housing Strategy can be mutually complementary, avoid duplication and truly have a collective impact.

Policy makers are now tasked with analyzing a wealth of information, while being mindful of ways to balance competing interests. A focus on solutions that address the priorities of Manitobans will support the development of a shared vision that is practical, sustainable and community-driven. Solutions must therefore be effective, measurable and results-oriented, while also being affordable to Manitobans.

The Manitoba government appreciates the extensive feedback received from the provincial housing consultations and invites your feedback regarding the content of this report and other information you may wish to provide at housingconsultation@gov.mb.ca.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sectors Represented by Regional Consultation Participants

Sector	Number of Participants
Service Provider	42
Housing Provider	30
Homelessness	20
Economic Development/Community Economic Development	16
Advocacy – Social Policy	15
Housing Development	11
Urban Planning	11
Municipalities	10
Property Manager	9
Health	9
Academic	8
Advocacy – Professional Association	6
Research	5
Business	4
Cooperative	3
Real Estate	2
Financial	1
Police	1

Appendix B: Reflections/Final Thoughts Survey

Manitoba Provincial Housing Strategy Community Consultations

Reflection / Final Thoughts

Reflecting on what you've heard today, please prioritize the following themes (rank 1-4, with 1 being the most important priority and 4 being the least important priority):

- _____ Addressing homelessness
- _____ Condition of existing social (subsidized) and affordable housing stock
- _____ Improving the affordability of housing
- _____ Support for existing and potential homeowners.
- _____ Other (please describe) _____

If Manitoba Housing were to take away any one recommendation from today's session, what would it be?

Do you feel today's session allowed you to share your ideas on housing and homelessness in Manitoba?
(Circle one)

Yes / No

_____ If you answered no, what do you feel should have been done differently?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C: Manitoba Provincial Housing Consultation Survey Sample

Provincial Housing Consultation

INDIVIDUAL RESPONDENTS

I am participating in this survey as a Manitoba resident who is not a Manitoba Housing tenant and I am not responding on behalf of an organization.

IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

Please rank the following:	Not a priority	Somewhat a priority	Neutral	Moderate priority	High Priority
Addressing homelessness	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Maintaining existing social and affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Affordability of housing	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Existing and potential homeowners	<input type="checkbox"/>				

IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

What solutions do you see for the following Housing priorities?

1. Addressing homelessness
2. Maintaining existing social and affordable housing
3. Affordability of housing
4. Existing and potential homeowners

Are there other issues that you feel are a priority? (Please explain)

What would make your housing situation or your family's housing situation better?

What would improve the housing situation in the community where you live?

Please select the theme you feel is the most important priority. (Select one)

- Addressing homelessness
- Maintaining existing social and affordable housing
- Affordability of housing
- Existing and potential homeowners

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

The information in this section will help us identify housing issues that are relevant to specific demographic groups of Manitobans or local communities.

In what Manitoba city, town or municipality do you live? _____

For the following questions, select the appropriate response:

What is your age?

- Under 18 30 to 49 65+
- 18 to 29 years 50 to 64

What is your gender?

- Male Female Other

Do you identify as having North American Indigenous ancestry (First Nations, Métis or Inuit)?

- Yes No

If you answered yes, please specify:

- First Nation Métis Inuit

How many people are there in your household?

- 1 3 5+
- 2 4

What is your family composition?

- Single with children
- Single without children
- Married or common-law with children
- Married or common-law without children

Does your household include (choose as many as apply):

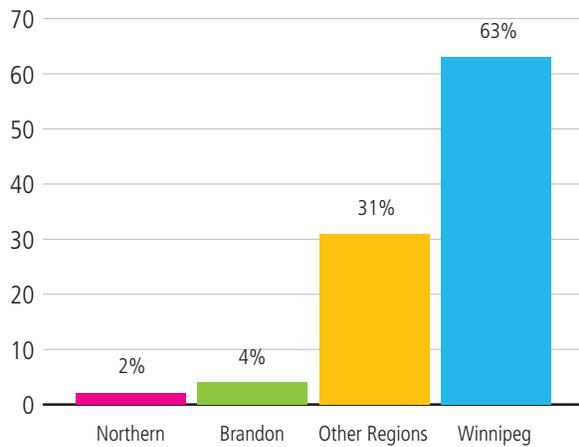
- Newcomers to Canada (5 years or less)
- Person(s) with disabilities
- Person(s) with mobility issues

Thank you for your feedback!

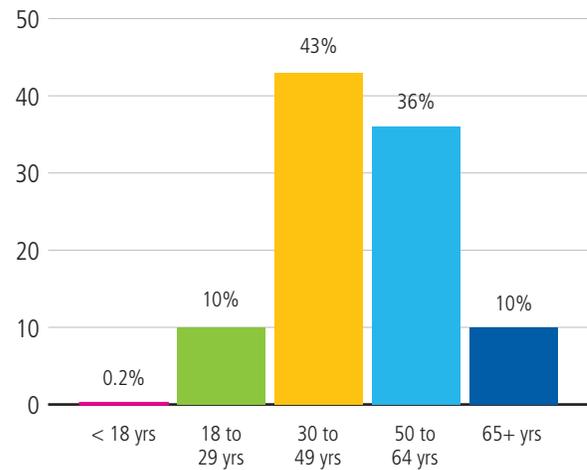
Appendix D: Survey Respondent Characteristics

Individual Respondents

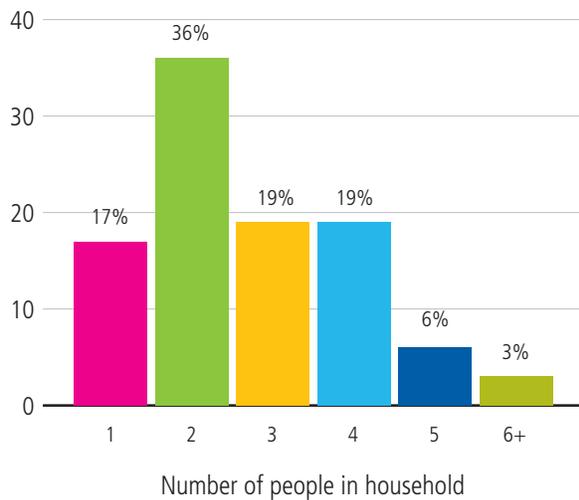
Geographical Distribution of Individual Respondents



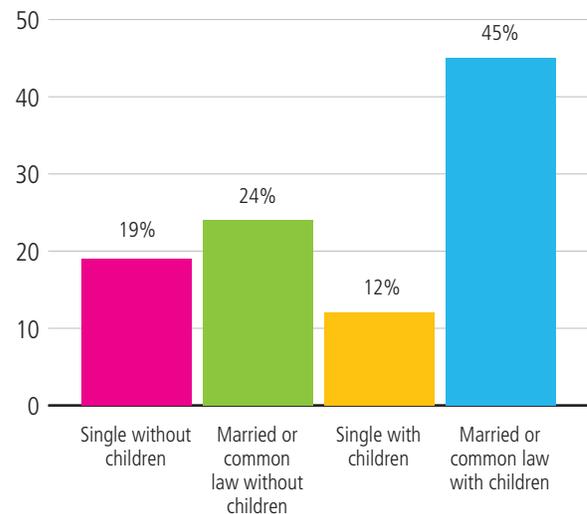
Age Distribution of Individual Respondents



Individual Respondent Household Size



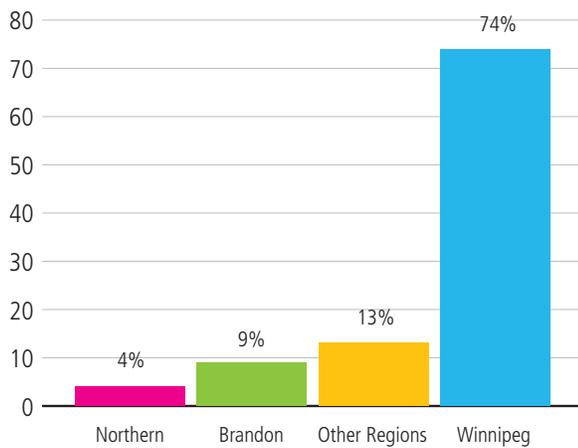
Individual Respondent Family Composition



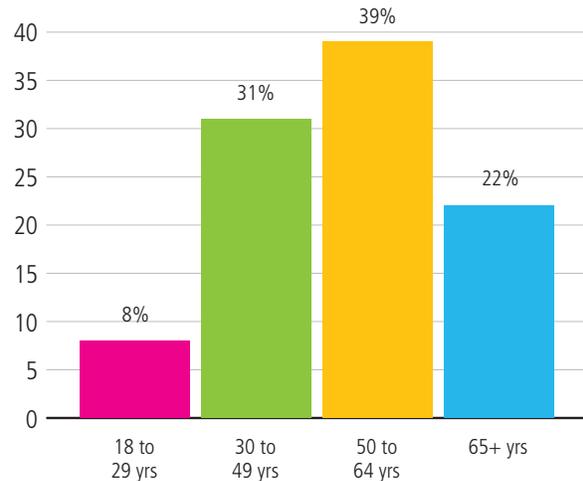
Additional Information – Individual Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Gender – Female	71%
Gender – Male	28%
Gender – Other	1%
Indigenous Ancestry (First Nation, Métis, Inuit)	12%
Newcomers to Canada (Arrived in the past five years)	4%
Person (s) with disabilities	16%
Persons (s) with mobility issues	9%

Manitoba Housing Tenants

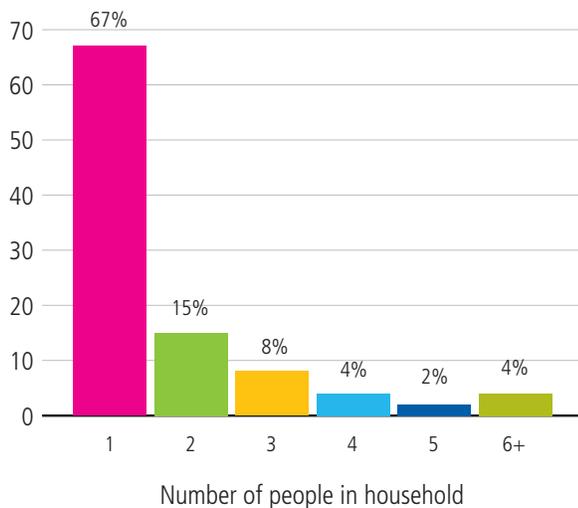
Geographical Distribution of Tenants



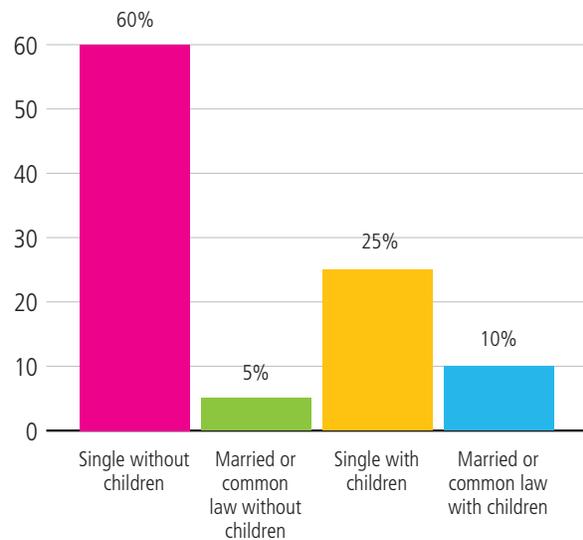
Age Distribution of Tenants



Tenant Household Size



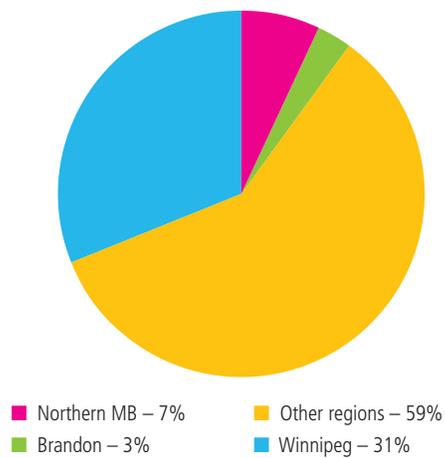
Tenant Family Composition



Additional Information – Manitoba Housing Tenants	Percentage of Respondents
Gender – Male	40%
Gender Female	60%
Indigenous Ancestry (First Nation, Métis, Inuit)	30%
Newcomers to Canada (Arrived in the past five years)	4%
Person (s) with disabilities	45%
Persons (s) with mobility issues	19%

Organizations

Location of Organization



Appendix E: Written Submissions

Written submissions were received from:

Municipality of Ashern
Assiniboine Credit Union
Aurora House
Brandon Community Builders
Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives – Manitoba
Cooperative Housing Federation
Dauphin Friendship Centre
Habitat for Humanity
Manitoba Association of Women's Shelters
Manitoba Real Estate Association
Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations
Manitoba Metis Federation
New Journey Housing
Right to Housing
Solutions to end Poverty Permanently
Ten Ten Sinclair
Eagle Urban Transition Centre
End Homelessness Winnipeg
Winnipeg Realtors
Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
A Private Citizen
A Private Citizen

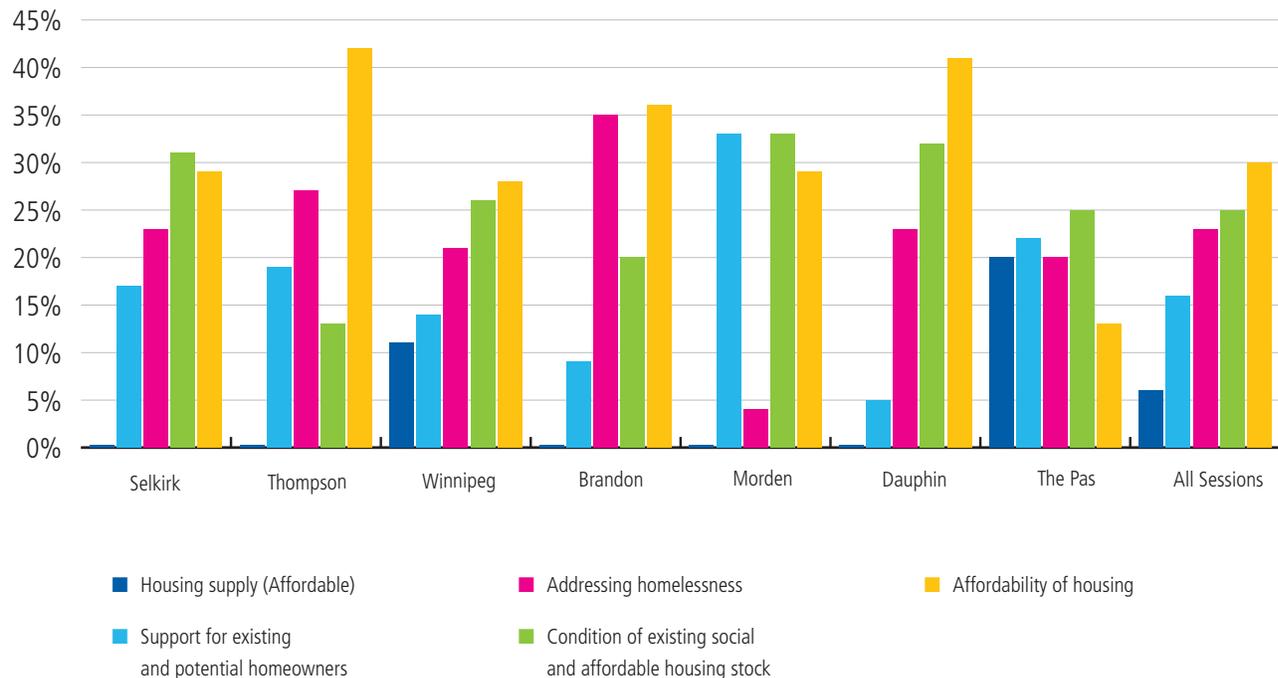
Appendix F: Setting Priorities – Ranking the Housing Themes

Regional Consultations

At the beginning of regional consultation sessions, each stakeholder participated in a “dot exercise” where they were asked to prioritize each of the four themes. At two sessions participants also asked to have a fifth category, *housing supply*, added to the dot exercise. Overall, *affordability of housing* received the greatest support with 30% of dots. *Condition of existing social and affordable housing stock* came in second (25%) closely followed by *addressing homelessness* (23%). *Support for existing and potential homeowners* received 16%.

This exercise highlighted some unique geographical differences. For example, in the Morden region, the *support for existing and potential homeowners* theme was tied with *condition of social and affordable housing stock* as the top ranking theme with 33% of dots, whereas in Dauphin this theme was ranked fourth with 5% of dots. Inversely *addressing homelessness* received 5% of dots in Morden, compared to a high of 35% of dots in Brandon (see figure 3-2). While *affordability of housing* was ranked as the top ranking theme in all sessions as a whole, the theme ranked fourth overall in The Pas.

Ranking the Housing Themes – All Regional Sessions



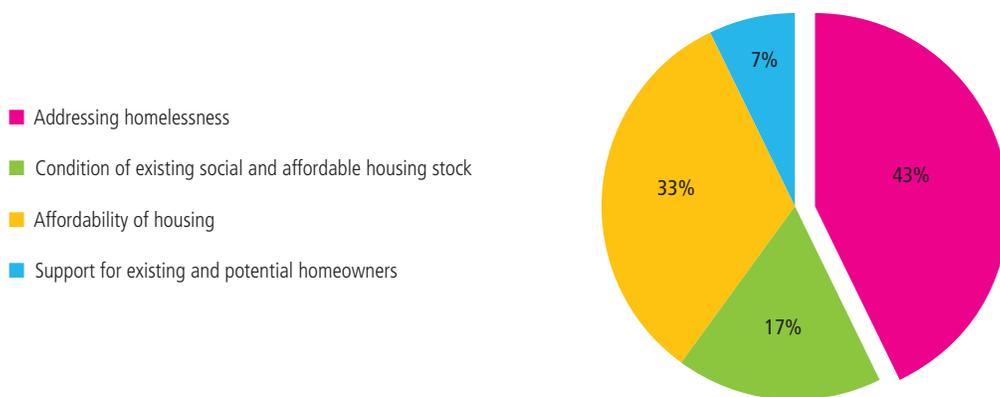
Online Surveys:

Online survey respondents were asked to rank the importance of each of the four housing themes on a scale that ranged from “not a priority” to “high priority.” Almost all respondents ranked each as a “moderate” or “high” priority. Respondents were also asked to identify which of the four themes they consider to be their most important priority. The message was clear! Manitobans have strong opinions on housing and are deeply concerned for those who are homeless. Manitoba Housing tenants are concerned about the cost of housing and stakeholder organizations are specifically interested in the problems of those who have difficulty affording housing or who are simply under-housed.

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESPONDENTS

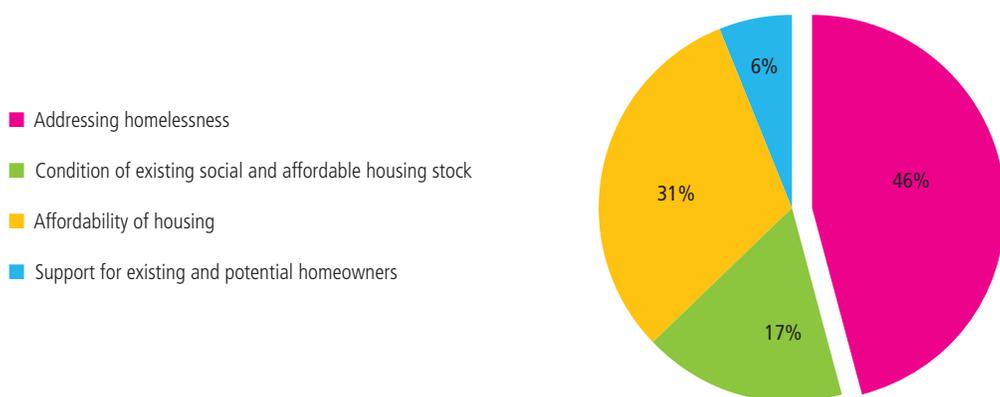
Respondents ranked *addressing homelessness* and *affordability of housing* the most important themes. In Brandon, however, 50% of respondents identified *affordability of housing* as the most important theme.

Most Important Theme – Individuals



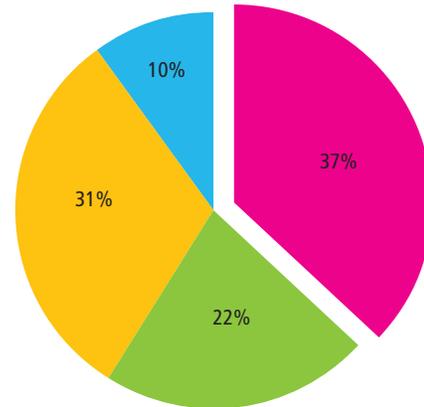
There were also different geographical priorities amongst individual respondents. A breakdown of individual respondents by region highlights these differences below.

Most Important Theme – Winnipeg Respondents



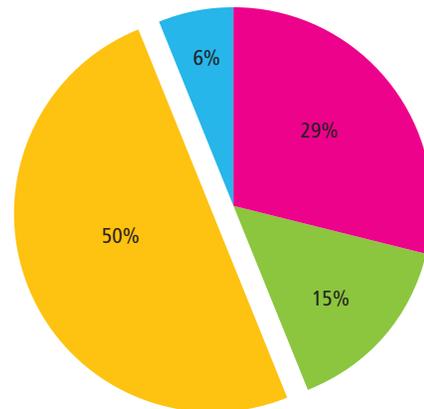
Most Important Theme – Northern Manitoba Respondents

- Addressing homelessness
- Condition of existing social and affordable housing stock
- Affordability of housing
- Support for existing and potential homeowners



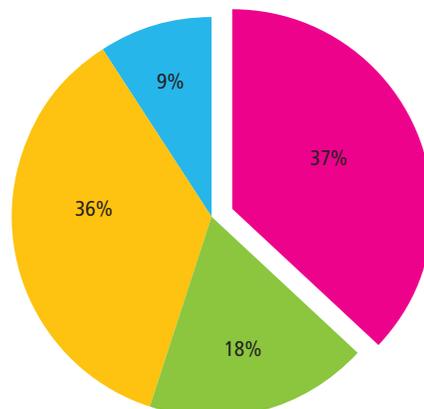
Most Important Theme – Brandon Respondents

- Addressing homelessness
- Condition of existing social and affordable housing stock
- Affordability of housing
- Support for existing and potential homeowners



Most Important Theme – Respondents from Other Regions

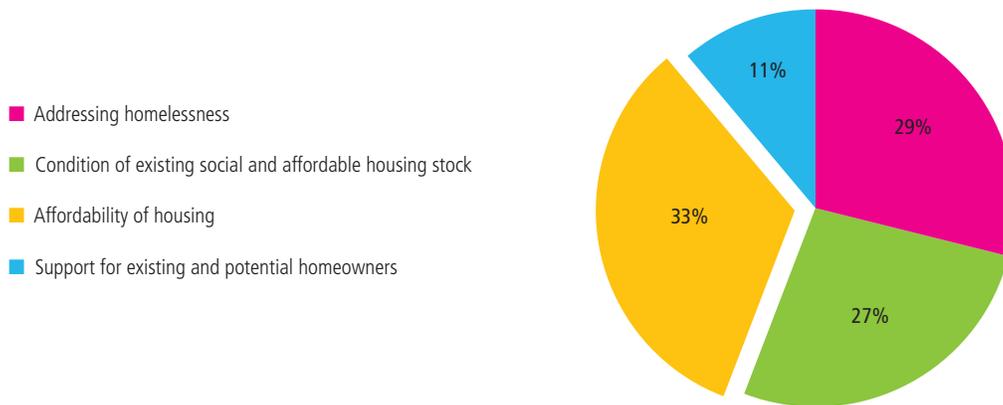
- Addressing homelessness
- Condition of existing social and affordable housing stock
- Affordability of housing
- Support for existing and potential homeowners



MANITOBA HOUSING TENANTS

Manitoba Housing tenants rated *affordability of housing* as their most important priority (33%), followed by *addressing homelessness* (29%), and the *condition of existing social and affordable housing stock* (27%). Also noteworthy, tenants ranked *support for existing and potential homeowners* (11%) higher than individual and organizational respondents. Tenants also provided important feedback in detail about these themes and how to address the challenges they face.

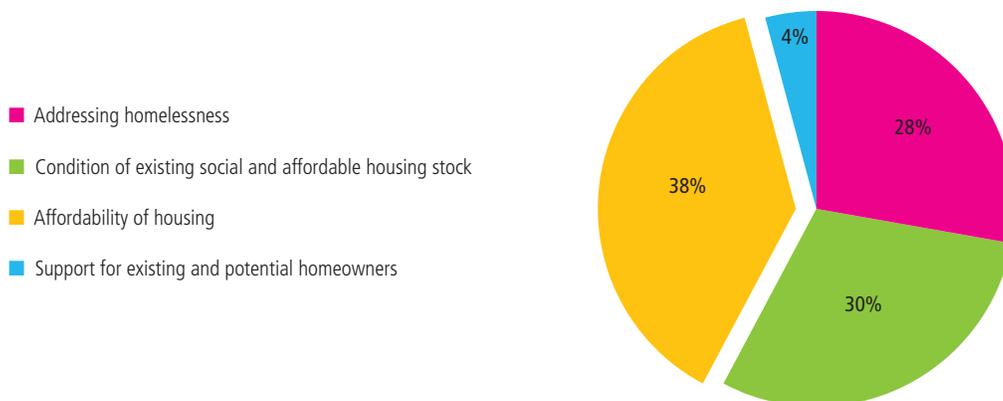
Most Important Priority – Tenants



ORGANIZATIONS

Similar to individuals and tenants, the majority of organization respondents ranked all four themes as moderate or high priority. When asked about their most important priority, organization respondents ranked all themes high with the exception of *support for existing and potential homeowners*. Also noteworthy was that organization and Manitoba Housing tenant respondents ranked *condition of existing social and affordable housing stock* higher in comparison to individual respondents.

Most Important Priority – Organizations



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Available in alternate formats upon request.

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