

Housing Starts Here

HOUSING FOR ALBERTANS IN NEED



The Alberta Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs helps many Albertans in need to get and keep housing.

Alberta 

Partners and Priorities

Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs works to address the housing pressures of today and help prepare the province for future growth and prosperity.

Together with our partners – Alberta’s community-based organizations, housing management bodies, municipalities, non-profit groups, private businesses and the federal government – we seek to understand local issues and collaborate on solutions. We all want Albertans who are most in need to have a safe and stable home where they can build a better life for themselves and their families.

These partnerships enable us to achieve more in a shorter timeframe, and provide the best value to the taxpayer. Working with developers that specialize in housing has resulted in thousands of new rental units for people with low incomes – such as those with special needs that limit their ability to earn a living, seniors on fixed incomes, and individuals and families striving to resolve the underlying causes of their homelessness.

We believe our investments in housing, rent supports and related services will help build a better Alberta and make a difference for generations to come.

About Alberta Housing and Urban Affairs

Housing and Urban Affairs is the Alberta government ministry responsible for providing stable, sustainable lower-cost housing options and supports for Albertans most in need, especially those who are homeless, persons with special needs, seniors and families. The ministry is made up of the:

- Department of Housing and Urban Affairs, which works closely with groups and communities across the province to address the housing pressures of today and to prepare for future growth and prosperity.
- Alberta Social Housing Corporation, which manages over 26,000 housing units – mainly for seniors – as well as the delivery of some of the Ministry's housing programs.
- Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness, which monitors the implementation of the provincial 10-year plan to end homelessness (by 2019). The Secretariat provides strategic advice to the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs and provides support to communities as they develop their own plans to end homelessness.
- Community Development Advisory Board, which makes recommendations to the Minister regarding the overall development plan for Parsons Creek land in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, which includes Fort McMurray.

In addition to the groups above, partnerships are another important part of the ministry. Partners in developing and operating housing and housing support programs, as well as ending homelessness, are a big reason why Housing and Urban Affairs continues to make so much progress. The progress can be considered even more significant when considering the ministry's budget has decreased by approximately 38% over the past two years. Directing funding to partners who are also investing in housing and ending homeless results in effectively assisting many Albertans in need at a good value to taxpayers.



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Housing For Albertans In Need

The Alberta government, through the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, helps many Albertans in need to live in safe, affordable housing – including homeless and low-income individuals and families, seniors, and Albertans with special needs.

■ Rent Support

Each month, over 77,000 Albertans, mainly families, seniors and persons with special needs, get help through rent supplements and government-owned community housing.

■ 11,000 New Housing Units

In 2007, Alberta committed to help lower income individuals and families access affordable housing. Capital partnerships with municipalities, the federal government, non-profits, the private sector and local housing management bodies spurred the development of 11,000 housing units for lower income and homeless Albertans—and saved taxpayers over \$1 billion through cost-sharing agreements.

■ Supporting Home Ownership

Alberta was the first Canadian province to partner with Habitat for Humanity to help working families invest in a home. Over four years, the Alberta government has provided about \$29 million to Habitat for Humanity to help develop more than 440 affordable home-ownership units in communities throughout Alberta.

Ending homelessness and increasing access to safe and affordable housing represent a significant investment in improving the quality of life for Albertans.

Next Steps

With demand for affordable housing expected to continue, support for those most in need will continue to be provided. Along with capital partnerships to develop housing units, the Ministry will support government priorities such as the Safe Communities Initiative and Continuing Care Strategy. To further ensure Alberta is prepared for future growth, the Ministry will also develop a five-year affordable housing plan and continue to explore innovative ways to help people become more independent.

Helping Homeless Albertans

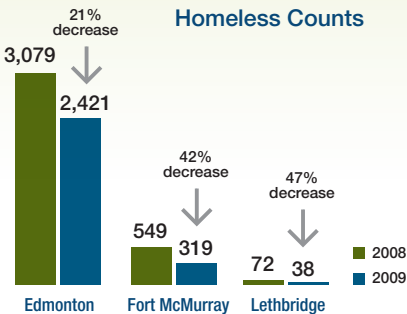
Alberta was the first province in Canada to develop a 10-year plan to end homelessness.

The plan takes a Housing First approach – which provides individuals and families with a stable place to call home and connects them with supports to help them address the underlying cause of their homelessness and become more self-sufficient. Supports may involve a mix of medical, psychiatric and case management services, along with employment or life skills training.

Progress on Ending Homelessness by 2019

Two years into the plan:

- About 4,000 formerly homeless are now housed – double the two-year goal
- More than 500 Housing First clients are at a point where they no longer require services, only some rent support
- Cities like Edmonton, Lethbridge and Fort McMurray have reported a decrease in the number of homeless people
- Shelter use has decreased by an average of 5.6% and one shelter has closed due to reduced demand
- Secure identification cards are available to help homeless Albertans access services and programs, find work, and open a bank account.



Next Steps

As Housing and Urban Affairs continues to ensure more homeless Albertans get and keep housing, the Ministry will also work with Alberta Supports to provide easier access to citizen-centred programs and services delivered through community-based organizations. Even though shelter demand is expected to continue to decline, funding to ensure access to emergency shelters remains an important element of the plan.

More Land for Homes in Fort McMurray

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (which includes Fort McMurray) is a big part of Alberta's economic success. For this growing part of the province, more housing is needed for the people who live, work, and play there.

Timberlea Community

Housing and Urban Affairs has led the development of the nearly completed Timberlea community, which will be home to about 35,000 people in 12,500 housing units.

Parsons Creek Community

To meet continued and future demand for residential land, the Parsons Creek community is also being developed. When fully developed, the 1,000-acre Parsons Creek area will be home to about 24,000 people in 8,000 homes. About 13%, or 1,000 homes, will be designated as affordable housing. The first 135 acres were released in January 2011, a full year ahead of schedule.



Next Steps

Housing and Urban Affairs continues to prepare more land in Parsons Creek for developers to build homes. Information on housing options and lots in the first phase is expected to be ready in 2012, from the developers who will be building and selling homes.



Success

The success of Housing and Urban Affairs in helping Albertans in need to have housing and become more independent is directly linked to many successful partnerships. These relationships include community-based organizations, housing management bodies, other orders of government, and the profit and non-profit sectors.

For more information on Alberta's social based programs and services, including housing and homeless related support, contact:

Alberta Supports
www.albertasupports.ca

Phone
1-877-644-9992 (toll-free)
780-644-9992 (Edmonton area)

Housing and Urban Affairs
www.housing.alberta.ca

Phone
780-422-0122
(to call toll-free, first dial 310-0000)

Government of Alberta ■