

Dear Members of the Strathcona Residents Association:

I am responding to your email of July 13, 2020, concerning the Strathcona Park encampment. I understand the circumstances that prompted you to write, and I regret the delay in replying.

Like you, the Government of Canada is concerned about homelessness and affordable housing and is committed to working 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.

The Government of Canada recognizes that homelessness has an impact on every community in Canada. It affects individuals, families, women and children fleeing violence, youth, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities. In 2016, an estimated 133,000 people experienced homelessness at an emergency shelter. This is why the Government committed \$2.2 billion to tackle homelessness across the country.

Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy launched on April 1, 2019. First announced on June 11, 2018, Reaching Home replaces the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, and will continue to support communities' efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness in Canada. Reaching Home supports the goals of the National Housing Strategy, especially the reduction of chronic homelessness nationally by 50 percent by 2027-2028.

Reaching Home is a community-based program aimed at preventing and reducing homelessness across Canada. This redesigned federal homelessness program provides direct financial support to urban communities, including Vancouver, as well as rural and remote communities across Canada, to help them address their local homelessness needs. A dedicated Indigenous stream supports Indigenous service providers to ensure that culturally appropriate supports are available. For more information on Reaching Home, please visit www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/homelessness.html.

Reaching Home funding is administered in eligible communities primarily through the Community Entity delivery model. Under the Community Entity 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.

In Vancouver, the entrusted Community Entities are the Vancity Community Foundation and the Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society. You can obtain more information by visiting their respective websites at www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca/ and <http://lnhs.ca/community-entity/>, or by calling the Vancity Community Foundation at 604-877-7647, or Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society at 604-876-0811.

You may be pleased to know that on September 21, 2020, I announced that the Government of Canada will provide an additional \$236.7 million through the Reaching Home program to help extend and expand the emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Details on the mechanisms for flowing the funds and funding amounts will be communicated as soon as possible. This new investment will enable communities to extend the emergency measures that

have been successful in reducing the risk of potential outbreaks among people experiencing homelessness, as well as provide them the flexibility to deliver affordable housing solutions. This funding is in addition to the \$157.5 million announced in March 2020 to help communities address the immediate impacts of the pandemic.

In addition, a new Rapid Housing Initiative was announced to help address urgent housing needs of vulnerable Canadians by rapidly creating new affordable housing. Delivered by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, this \$1-billion initiative will cover the construction of modular housing, as well as the acquisition of land, and the conversion of existing buildings to affordable housing. For more information about the recent funding announcement, please visit www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/media-newsroom/news-releases/2020/canada-rapidly-create-affordable-housing-support-homeless.

Greater Vancouver							
	Designated Communities (VCF and Lu'ma)			Indigenous Homelessness (Lu'ma)			
	Base	COVID-19 Response	Sub-Total	Base	COVID-19 Response	Sub-Total	Total
2019-2020	\$11,782,096	\$2,659,220	\$14,441,316	\$3,724,936		\$3,724,936	\$18,166,252
2020-2021	\$11,782,096	\$9,291,645	\$21,163,741	\$3,724,936	\$3,128,338	\$6,953,274	\$28,017,015

You may also be pleased to know that on July 16, 2020, the Government of Canada announced an investment of more than \$19 billion to help provinces and territories safely restart their economies through the Safe Restart Agreement. Funding will be cost-matched by provinces with investments made this fiscal year and will address up to seven priority areas as determined by the province.

One priority area that may be of particular interest to you is investments in health care to respond to the pandemic, including support for Canadians experiencing challenges with substance use, mental health, or homelessness. For more information about the Safe Restart Agreement, please visit <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/07/16/more-support-canadians-through-safe-restart-agreement>.

The Government of Canada recognizes that providing safe and stable housing, as well as related supports, is an important element to address homelessness and help individuals achieve greater self-sufficiency and an improved quality of life. Reaching Home encourages communities to adopt longer-term solutions and data-driven community plans as cornerstones of their plan to address homelessness.

In closing, I would like to assure you once again that our government is concerned about homelessness and affordable housing and is committed to continuing to work with a wide range of partners to find longer-term solutions to homelessness and housing challenges.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Employment and Social Development Canada