



Call to action and talking points:

Advocating to the Ontario government for a provincial housing acquisition fund

Introduction

Below are some key points that you can use at government meetings to discuss the provincial Housing Acquisition Fund. These talking points attempt to showcase the immediate value of the Acquisition Fund within Ontario's current political context, as well as address frequently asked questions and concerns from government officials about the fund.

Key messages to convey:

- The most affordable housing is the affordable housing that already exists.
- The acquisition of private market rental housing by nonprofit housing providers will keep them permanently affordable, by turning them into non-market, nonprofit housing.
- Non-market housing operates outside of market forces; housing co-ops, community land trusts, and nonprofit housing are all variants of non-market housing that offer affordable rent or long-term ownership.
- Non-market housing versus below-market housing: Below-market housing rents and prices are calculated in relation to the private market, and are often priced at 80% of market rate, which can still be unaffordable for many. Market rents and prices can fluctuate, and when they do, below-market rates change accordingly. In non-market housing, rents are set at a percentage of household income (30% by CMHC definition of affordable housing). This can provide a measure of security for developments over time.
- Nonprofits have been engaging in housing acquisitions, and an increasing number of them are ready, willing and prepared to acquire more housing to keep them affordable - a housing acquisition fund will allow them to do it faster and at a larger scale.

Personalize your approach and consider mentioning:

- Stories of people with lived experience, and the positive impact housing acquisition could and/or has had on people in your local community.

- Specific examples of nonprofits acquiring and preserving affordable housing (please don't hesitate to share these with ONN as well so we can document nation-wide examples for future advocacy – candice@theonnc.ca).
 - Other context that is specific to your organization or jurisdiction.
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Calls to action

1. Request to meet with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister, Associate Minister, Deputy Minister and/or ministry staff and discuss why your community needs and ways to implement a housing acquisition fund
2. Meet with your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) and discuss the acquisition fund with a local example.

Talking points - Why it matters

- Ontario needs to build and preserve more non-market, nonprofit affordable housing - 40% of Canadian households cannot afford today's average market rents and this is also true in Ontario.
- Currently, new construction of any types of housing can be expensive and impacted by factors such as labour shortages.
- We are proposing an alternative that is faster and more cost-effective, which is to simply preserve and maintain the affordable housing stock we already have in the province.
- To do this, nonprofit housing providers, including Indigenous housing providers, co-operatives, and community land trusts, purchase private market rental housing to secure the units and turn them into permanently affordable non-profit housing. This is what we call housing acquisition.
- Our organization is **ready, willing, and prepared** to take on more housing acquisitions, and an Ontario Housing Acquisition Fund will make it a lot easier for us to do this and at a larger scale.
- The turnaround time for our organization to acquire a building with this fund would be **[INSERT AVERAGE TIME]**, in general, significantly faster than the traditional timeline for new constructions.
- Outside of the recently announced Federal housing acquisition fund, several provinces and cities across the country have already developed their own housing acquisition funds including Manitoba, Nova Scotia, BC, and Toronto. These funds have preserved hundreds of affordable rental units despite only being around for a few years
- For example, BC's [\\$500 million Rental Protection Fund](#) was able to preserve more than [380 rental homes on Vancouver](#) Island alone in under one year. Similarly in Toronto there is the The Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition Program ([MURA](#)) which in 2023 provided

\$21.5 million in funding preserving hundreds of units within just a year. Similar funds also exist in Australia and the U.S.

- [An acquisition fund allows](#) the community housing sector to build up its capital asset base so they can continuously renew and develop community housing supply. Once established, the fund can be leveraged for matching private sector and philanthropic funds as well.
- Because this fund focuses on the acquisition of buildings, with a rolling fund we can consistently help your government see that affordable housing is preserved across the province regardless of increasing construction costs and labour shortages.
- The most affordable housing is the affordable housing that already exists. Your government can improve the lives of Ontarians who need affordable housing by working with us to continue to preserve affordable housing across the province.