



**Council Member Motion**  
**For the Committee of the Whole Meeting December 7, 2023**

**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** November 22, 2023  
**From:** Councillor Dave Thompson  
**Subject:** Call on Federal Government to Double Social Housing

**Background**

In the 1980s and 1990s, successive federal governments adopted a policy of cutting the social safety net in order to reduce taxes, and this included dramatic cuts to social housing spending. Provincial governments did not pick up the slack, but rather passed downloading on to municipal governments, which have inadequate financial capacity to build needed amounts of social housing.

Today we are experiencing the predictable results of this short-sighted, ideological policy shift, with large numbers of households in core housing need. 21% of Victoria households are in core housing need, with even higher numbers for some, e.g. Indigenous, seniors, under-25s, refugees, and – especially – single mothers.

FIGURE 28: Proportion of Priority Population Households in Core Housing Need Against the Proportion of all Households in Core Housing Need

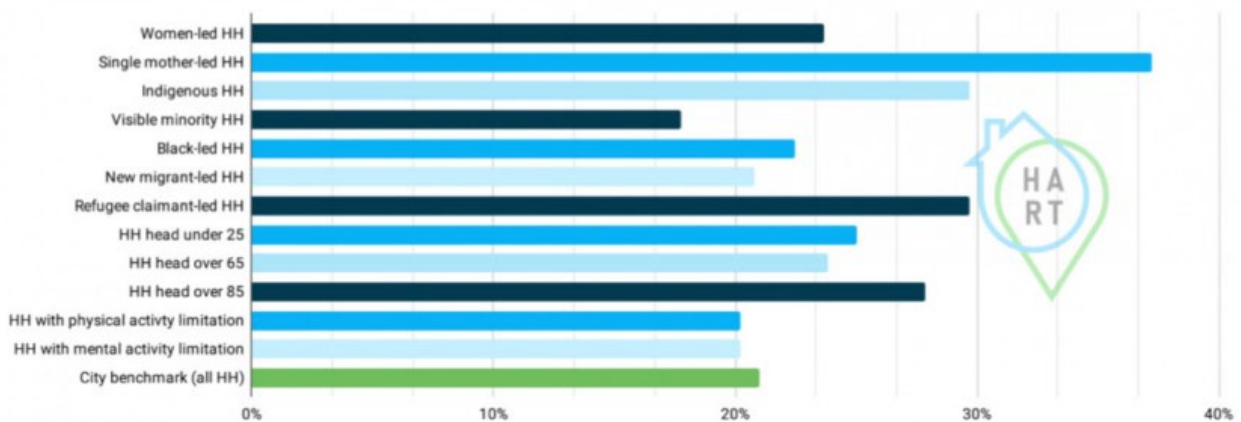


Figure: [City of Victoria, Housing Strategy Annual Review 2022](#)

All levels of government, and parties of all political stripes, have now come to understand that the broader housing shortage needs to be corrected, and are bringing forward needed policy changes to make it easier to build more housing. However, new housing is generally expensive housing, and far more investment in social housing is also needed. The Federal Government’s National

Housing Strategy has been commenced, but it has not demonstrated “improved housing outcomes for vulnerable Canadians.” (Auditor General, 2022).

There is a need to ramp up ambition and investment, and for governments to return to providing social housing at scale. A number of housing sector organizations – non-profit and for-profit housing providers, developers and investors – have developed a [National Housing Accord](#) putting forward a series of recommendations, including a blueprint to fund social housing. Other organizations have also developed calls for a significant ramping up of social housing.

### **Recommendation**

That Council hereby calls on the Federal Government to create and implement a coordinated plan with all three orders of government, including a blueprint to immediately and rapidly increase funding of deeply affordable housing, co-operative housing, supportive housing, seniors housing and student residences, and double the relative share of non-market community housing.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dave Thompson".

Councillor Dave Thompson