September 9, 2026

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Poll Shows British Columbians Want More Community Housing and Expect Governments to Act

Overwhelming majority see housing affordability as a top issue and support expanding non-profit and co-op housing.

Unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, known as Vancouver, BC – British Columbians are sending a clear message to decision-makers: housing affordability remains one of the most pressing issues facing communities, and expanding non-profit and co-op housing is a key part of the solution, according to new polling conducted by Research Co. on behalf of Housing Central.

The survey found that 85% of British Columbians said it is important that local politicians commit to expanding non-profit and co-op housing, while 71% expect their local government to take action to create more affordable housing.

In addition, nearly seven in ten British Columbians (69%) say housing affordability is either the most important issue facing their community or one of the top issues, underscoring the urgency of addressing the housing crisis.

"The message from British Columbians is clear: housing affordability remains a top priority, and people want leadership," said Jill Atkey, CEO of BC Non-Profit Housing Association. "Communities need more affordable homes, and residents recognize that non-profit housing is one of the most effective ways to deliver long-term affordability. Local governments, community housing providers, Indigenous-led housing organizations, and senior governments all have a role to play in making that happen."

The poll found strong confidence in the community housing model. More British Columbians selected non-profit and co-op housing than private for-profit housing as the

model most likely to deliver long-term affordable housing, keep costs stable over time, put tenants' needs ahead of corporate interests, use public funding responsibly, and support reconciliation efforts in communities.

Support for the sector extends beyond housing outcomes. Nearly three-quarters (72%) agree that a strong non-profit and co-op housing sector is essential infrastructure for keeping housing affordable, while 67% agree that without non-profit and co-op housing many communities would lose long-term affordable homes.

“This research confirms what most people already know – that investing in non-profit and co-op housing supports healthy citizens and builds strong communities,” said Thom Armstrong, CEO of the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC. “We look forward to working with local governments to expand permanently affordable housing options for all British Columbians.”

The survey also revealed a strong connection between housing and community well-being. Nearly 6 out of 10 (59%) British Columbians identified housing with supports as the most effective approach to reducing homelessness and related public safety concerns, while 75% believe supportive housing is more likely to improve public safety than short-term enforcement measures.

Responses also underscored strong public support for increased investment in For Indigenous, By Indigenous (FIBI) housing. Nearly two-thirds of British Columbians believe these investments can strengthen community well-being and advance reconciliation (62%), while helping those most in need achieve housing security (66%).

“British Columbians understand that housing is more than a roof over someone’s head; it is the foundation for healthy, connected and thriving communities,” said Maragret Pfoh, CEO of Aboriginal Housing Management Association. “We need municipal leaders to help ensure that everyone has a place to call home. There is strong public support for dedicated urban Indigenous housing solutions as an investment in community well-being, safety, stability, and reconciliation.”

Concerns about failing to expand non-profit housing are significant. The most commonly cited consequences were increased homelessness (61%) and rising rents (51%).

Housing Central says the findings reinforce the need for continued investment in non-profit, co-op, Indigenous-led, and supportive housing across British Columbia.

Poll Highlights

- 85% say it is important for local politicians to commit to expanding non-profit and co-op housing.
- 69% say housing affordability is the most important issue or one of the top issues facing their community.
- 72% agree a strong non-profit and co-op housing sector is essential for keeping housing affordable.
- 71% expect their local government to take action to create more affordable housing.
- 59% believe housing with supports is the most effective way to address homelessness and public safety concerns.
- 64% support reducing fees and costs for non-profit developers to accelerate affordable housing development.[1]

Elizabeth Moffat
CHF BC
Communications
emoffat@chf.bc.ca
(604) 616-5023

Stephen Thomson
BCNPHA
Communications
communications@bcnpha.ca
(778) 945-2159

Kelly Moon
AHMA Communications
communications@ahma-bc.org
(604) 353-042

About Housing Central

The mission of the Housing Central partners – BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA), the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) and the Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC) – is to strengthen and grow the community housing sector so all British Columbians have a safe, secure home they can afford.

[1] **About the Poll:** the survey was conducted online by Research Co. for Housing Central from June 2 to June 4, 2026, among 801 adults in British Columbia. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.