

# Let's Talk Housing

**Community Conversations**

A discussion guide to support  
local community conversations

## **Acknowledgements**

Maytree would like to acknowledge the contributions of our partners in developing this guide:

Lived Experience Advisory Council

United Way-Centraide Canada

In addition, thanks to United Way of Toronto & York Region for their valuable input.



## **About Maytree**

Maytree is committed to advancing systemic solutions to poverty and strengthening civic communities. We believe the most enduring way to fix the systems that create poverty is to have economic and social rights safeguarded for all people living in Canada.

© Maytree 2016

# Let's Talk Housing

## Community Conversations

A discussion guide to support local community conversations

### WHAT'S IN THE GUIDE?

<i>Let's Talk Housing</i> - Context . . . . .	1
Community Conversations . . . . .	1
Canada's National Housing Strategy . . . . .	2
Conversations, Considerations & Engagement. . . . .	4
Expanding participation . . . . .	4
Considerations for engagement . . . . .	4
Considerations for sparking community conversations . . . . .	6
Sharing the results of your conversation . . . . .	7
Community Conversations - Tools. . . . .	9
Sample Questions . . . . .	10
Sample Annotated Agenda. . . . .	13
My Vision for a National Housing Strategy Worksheet . . . . .	15
Sample Feedback Form. . . . .	16
Sample Note-taking Form. . . . .	17
Sample Submission Template. . . . .	18
Appendix A: <i>Let's Talk Housing</i> Vision for Housing . . . . .	20
Appendix B: <i>Let's Talk Housing</i> Key Principles. . . . .	21
Appendix C: <i>Let's Talk Housing</i> Themes for Discussions . . . . .	22
Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions . . . . .	25

## ***Let's Talk Housing* – Context**

The Government of Canada is gathering people's thoughts and ideas on the development of a national vision for housing and a national housing strategy. On the *Let's Talk Housing* website ([www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca)), you can provide feedback on four housing themes through an online survey and/or by uploading a written statement. The deadline for completing the survey or submitting a statement is **October 21, 2016**.

## **Community Conversations**

For a variety of reasons, many people will not participate in the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process. Maytree, United Way Centraide-Canada and the Lived Experience Advisory Council believe that consulting those directly affected is necessary for the success of the national housing strategy. The community conversations will address this gap in the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process by creating opportunities for engagement. Community conversations are intended to be inclusive, transparent and accessible for people who have complex housing needs, who are experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed.

Local community conversations are designed to engage people who face barriers to participating in formal consultation processes, and whose complex housing experiences and ideas will provide crucial input for the creation of the national housing strategy.

This discussion guide is designed to:

- Support and facilitate local conversations that engage people who will be directly impacted by the national housing strategy;
- Provide tools that will decrease barriers to participation; and
- Contribute to a Canada-wide “What Was Heard” document compiling the input gathered from these local conversations; this document will be submitted to the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation.

# Canada's National Housing Strategy

Housing is crucial to the wellbeing of Canadians yet can be one of the most difficult things for people to access and maintain. For 1 in 7 Canadian households, adequate housing is unaffordable, leaving individuals and families in housing that doesn't meet their needs and with too little left over to pay for other necessities.

Housing disadvantage is not distributed evenly across the population. Tenants experience a much higher rate of affordability problems and overcrowding than homeowners. Women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous people, racialized communities, immigrants and refugees, youth and older adults face a disproportionate risk of housing insecurity and homelessness. Systemic solutions to poverty depend on ensuring that people can access affordable housing and the appropriate supports to meet their needs.

The Government of Canada has committed to developing a new national housing strategy for Canada that will map the path for "better housing, socio-economic and environmental outcomes for people, including those living in Indigenous and Northern communities." The national housing strategy aims to meet the needs of all Canadians while recognizing that everyone's situation is unique.

Addressing the diverse housing needs of Canadians will require the participation of all levels of government. After a long absence, the federal government has recognized that it can and should play a more active role, one that seeks to complement and augment the role of the provinces, territories and municipalities.

The development of Canada's national housing strategy over the coming year creates an exciting opportunity to engage people who will be directly impacted by the strategy, along with housing experts, the non-profit and private sectors, and other levels of government so the strategy meets the needs of all Canadians.

The federal government's consultation focuses on the following four themes:

- Affordability;
- Inclusivity;
- Sustainability; and
- Flexibility.

### Suggested Action:

To prepare, please review the *Let's Talk Housing* website ([www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca)) to get acquainted with the consultation's **proposed vision, principles, themes** and **outcomes**. These are also included in the Appendix section of this guide. You might want to include additional themes and principles, such as equity and human rights. You can also invite participants to name other principles they believe are important to a national housing strategy.

# Conversations, Considerations & Engagement

A consultation process that includes people with diverse housing needs will strengthen the outcomes of the national housing strategy. It will give people an opportunity to identify their needs and priorities, while also providing first-hand, experiential insights into the potential successes and challenges of any proposed strategy.

## EXPANDING PARTICIPATION

This guide is designed to make the consultation process more inclusive by engaging people who face housing challenges, including those who are homeless or have experienced homelessness. In many cases, people with the most profound housing needs also face significant barriers to participating in formal consultation processes. Barriers include, but are not limited to: low income, disability, experiences of abuse, health issues, or various forms of discrimination.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGAGEMENT

The Lived Experience Advisory Council (LEAC) has developed resources to help others plan inclusive and accessible events. These include a document that outlines seven principles for inclusion of people with lived experience of homelessness, as well as a detailed event planning checklist. You can find these resources at [www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs](http://www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs).

For example, LEAC advises event planners to:

- Dedicate as much funding as possible to lived experience inclusion
- Choose a barrier-free venue and accommodations that are in or near the lived experience community
- Compensate participants for their time; ensure that compensation will not impede the income source of a person with lived experience of poverty

Here are some other things you can do to reduce barriers to participation:

- Choose a time of day that works best for the people you hope will participate in the conversation (for example, seniors often prefer meeting during the day; try to avoid conflicts with drop-in programs or other activities)
- Provide food and drinks - while refreshments are a welcome addition to most community events, in some cases, this might be the only nutritious food that people have access to that day
- Cover transit costs or provide alternate transportation as appropriate
- Consider whether to include staff from community agencies - in some cases, they are part of a familiar support system; however, some participants might feel more comfortable speaking about their concerns about existing housing and supports if agency staff are not present
- Give participants the option of using a fictitious name, as anonymity will make some people feel more comfortable
- Determine what other types of supports would reduce barriers for the participants you hope to engage: for example, child-minding, attendant care, translation/interpretation (including for ASL), scribes to help participants provide written feedback, etc.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPARKING COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Successful community conversations will reflect the local needs, wants and culture of a community. Consider what conversation format will provide a supportive environment to spark and encourage discussion on a potentially difficult topic. Sample formats and environments include:

- Small-group roundtable discussion of 8 to 12 people sharing a particular housing experience, facilitated by a local organization with an established relationship with the community
- Peer-facilitated small group discussion of 8 to 12 people
- Informal conversation integrated into existing programming, such as community kitchens, English as a second language programs or drop-in programs
- Informal storytelling session with a facilitator who engages participants in a journey of sharing their individual stories, guided by the discussion questions
- One-on-one conversations
- Other formats that work well for the participants

Be conscious of the language you use throughout this process, so that conversations are accessible to all participants. Be creative with the conversation and focus on what works best for the people participating. Use the sample discussion questions as a guide in your conversation, rather than as a script. Focus on the intent of the questions and use language that is accessible for people participating in the conversation.

Consider using existing community-based work and research to support the local community conversation. Being aware of recent consultations, research and engagement can help you avoid duplicating previous efforts. Where possible, these community conversations should build on previous work.

You can find tools to support the local community conversations, including a sample agenda, feedback form, note-taking form and an art-based feedback form, in the Tools section of this guide.

Consider including some time at the end of the community conversation for people to explore next steps, including what to do with the feedback from the conversation. As much as possible, this exploration should reinforce the value of the ideas and experiences shared.

### Suggested Action:

Review the tools provided in this guide, as well as community engagement tools you have used successfully in past community conversations to develop your tailored strategy for engaging people in the housing consultation. Also, refer to the resource documents developed by the Lived Experience Advisory Council to plan a people-centred strategy for engagement ([www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs](http://www.homelesshub.ca/NothingAboutUsWithoutUs)).

## SHARING THE RESULTS OF YOUR CONVERSATION

As the Lived Experience Advisory Council highlights in its *Nothing About Us Without Us* documents, “the people who are living it usually have the best understanding about what the problem is and what needs to be done to address it.”

Sharing the results of your community conversation has the potential to increase the effectiveness of housing and homelessness policies and programs in your community and across the country.

Maytree and United Way Centraide-Canada will be submitting a cross-Canada compilation of the feedback from local community conversations to the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process. If you want your community conversation to be included in this larger submission to the Government of Canada, please email it to Maytree ([evlachoyannacos@maytree.com](mailto:evlachoyannacos@maytree.com)) by **October 7, 2016**. We will share the final document with the communities participating in this initiative.

In addition, you can:

- Submit the thoughts, ideas and results of your conversation to the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* conversation process on the [www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca) website, using the "Upload a written statement" button. **The deadline to submit your ideas to the government is October 21, 2016.**
- Share your *Let's Talk Housing* submission with your local elected representatives from all levels of government and, if conversation participants are interested, consider meeting with your elected representatives to talk through your submission.
- Share your *Let's Talk Housing* submission with other people in your community.

### Suggested Action:

Encourage the facilitator and note-taker of your community conversation to review the sample submission form found in the Tools section of this guide in advance of the conversation. This can give them a sense of how the information gathered will be provided to Maytree by October 7, 2016, directly to the Government of Canada by October 21, 2016, and how it might be shared in other ways.



**Community  
Conversations**

Tools

---

## Sample Questions

These questions are designed to support the conversations of people who will be directly impacted by the national housing strategy, and the submission of their first-hand experiences, thoughts and ideas into the Government of Canada's consultation process. The questions focus on people's experiences and are broadly framed so that they can be adapted to diverse experiences. Discussion prompts can act as a guide to help focus or expand the conversation.

The questions can be used in a small group discussion format, or in another discussion format that will be most comfortable for the participants. We encourage you to focus on the housing areas that have a direct impact on participants' experiences, and not attempt to discuss the overwhelming breadth of potential housing issues impacting all Canadians. Depending on who is present and who is organizing the discussion, your local conversation might focus on, for example, the housing needs of young parents, tenants living in social housing, women and families fleeing violence, persons with disabilities, urban Indigenous communities, and/or other specific experiences, needs and groups.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Government of Canada has identified four themes that inform its consultation: affordability, inclusivity, flexibility and sustainability. Consider using the four themes to spark conversation.

Question	Possible prompts
<p>1. What is our <b>vision</b> for a national housing strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What do we consider home?</b></li> <li>• <b>What does it look like?</b> (e.g., everyone has a roof over their head; we have enough money to pay for rent and food; we are welcomed in our community)</li> <li>• <b>What does it feel like?</b> (e.g., it feels healthy because repairs are done well and on time; it feels safe because I know my neighbours and feel a sense of community; it feels welcoming because we don't feel ostracized in our community)</li> <li>• <b>Who is included?</b> (e.g., everyone has the home they need - women and their kids can leave abusive relationships and still have a safe community to live in without fear; pets are welcome and encouraged; harm reduction principles are valued and integrated; we have autonomy to shape our lives and homes)</li> </ul>
<p>2. What are some of the things that <b>make it difficult</b> for people to have the home they need that the Government of Canada needs to be mindful of when developing the national housing strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there <b>supports and services</b> that we can't access that make it difficult to find and keep housing? (e.g., are there reliable transit/schools/social services where you can afford to live? is the social housing wait list too long? are harm reduction programs available?)</li> <li>• What are some of the reasons that people can't <b>afford</b> healthy and safe homes? (e.g., social assistance rates, minimum wage and unreliable jobs, other responsibilities like food, child care, school?)</li> <li>• Are there enough <b>different types of homes</b> for people with different needs? (e.g., homes with larger number of bedrooms, supportive housing, accessible housing options, housing that operates with harm reduction principles, shelters and transitional housing?)</li> <li>• Are there <b>certain groups in our community</b> who have less access to the homes they need or who are more likely to become homeless? (e.g., do some groups experience discrimination and other barriers when they are looking for housing or jobs?)</li> </ul>

Question	Possible prompts
<p>3. What are some of the things that we have <b>seen or experienced that work well</b> in supporting people to have the homes they need that the Government of Canada should include in the national housing strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the <b>role of housing supports</b>, including rent banks, housing workers and harm reduction programs, in these successful experiences?</li> <li>• Have <b>other programs or services</b>, such as health clinics, community centres, settlement programs, or schools, helped people find or keep their home?</li> <li>• What made it <b>feel</b> like a good experience? (e.g., does it feel safe and healthy? is it space people can afford while also having enough food to eat? is it accessible?)</li> <li>• What are the <b>roles of individuals and the community</b> in these successful experiences? (e.g., is it directly linked with Indigenous groups and cultural practices? is there a tenant council where individuals can share their concerns? is there a peer support program linked to the shelter drop-in program?)</li> </ul>
<p>4. How should people who will be impacted by the national housing strategy be <b>involved in further shaping and monitoring</b> the national housing strategy, as well as the policies and programs that come out of it?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was <b>missing from this current consultation</b> process and vision that could have engaged us more effectively?</li> <li>• How could we <b>help with the evaluation</b> of the policies and programs to make sure that they actually work for the people they're trying to help? (e.g., are there advisory groups, satisfaction surveys or other ways this can happen?)</li> <li>• <b>How often</b> should people who will be directly impacted by the strategy be engaged in shaping it? (e.g., once a year? any time changes are made?)</li> <li>• <b>Who should be responsible</b> for engaging people? (e.g., one level of government? every level of government? local housing and service providers? our peers?)</li> <li>• <b>What would help people engage</b> in these types of conversations? (e.g., time and space for conversations with government staff, ongoing conversations, translated materials, honouraria for time?)</li> </ul>
<p>5. What <b>other advice</b> would you give the Government of Canada as they develop the national housing strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit thoughts and ideas raised in past questions where people want to <b>spend more time</b> exploring.</li> <li>• Check in on <b>areas that haven't been discussed</b></li> </ul>

## Sample Annotated Agenda

Timing	Agenda item	Details
10 Minutes	Welcome and introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome to the community conversation and review goal of the gathering:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial goal: To participate in the <i>Let's Talk Housing</i> consultation and provide feedback into the development of a national housing strategy.</li> <li>• Ask participants if they have any other goals they want to add, discuss viability and work towards consensus.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Give each participant, facilitator and note-taker an opportunity to introduce themselves.</li> <li>• Confirm that notes will be taken in the conversation, but that no comments will be attributed to anyone.</li> <li>• Consider developing a common set of ground rules for the group conversation with participants at this point. Have the group develop and write it on flip chart paper so that you can refer to it throughout the conversation as needed.</li> <li>• Consider using the Government of Canada's vision, principles and themes to provide clarification on what a national housing strategy could include.</li> <li>• Consider using a small "icebreaker" activity to relieve any nervousness some participants might feel.</li> </ul>
15 Minutes	Question 1: Vision for housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This question can be used to start the entire conversation as a larger group.</li> <li>• This could also include space for individuals to document their thoughts on their own worksheet (in the attachments) before the larger group discussion.</li> <li>• Consider documenting people's feedback on flip chart paper as it may be helpful to refer back to these visions in subsequent questions.</li> </ul>

Timing	Agenda item	Details
60 Minutes	Questions 2-4: Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each question can be allotted 20 minutes, but be flexible and let the group prioritize what they see as important. This may result in more time spent on a particular question, thought or idea.</li> <li>• If a lot of time is being spent on a particular issue/ thought, check in with the group to see if they're ready to move onto another topic.</li> </ul>
15 minutes	Question 5: Recap & new ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisit thoughts and ideas raised in past questions where people want to spend more time exploring.</li> </ul>
10 minutes	Wrap up & next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank everyone for their participation and important feedback into this conversation.</li> <li>• Outline the process you will use for pulling the notes together and submitting them into the consultation process:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will participants be able to give feedback into the submission?</li> <li>• Will participants get a copy of the submission?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Talk through any next steps participants want to take:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the group want to meet with their local Member of Parliament to present the submission?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
10 minutes	Feedback forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide some time at the end of the meeting for people who may want to give additional feedback into the process by writing their thoughts and ideas onto the attached feedback form.</li> <li>• Use as appropriate for your group.</li> </ul>

### Further suggestions:

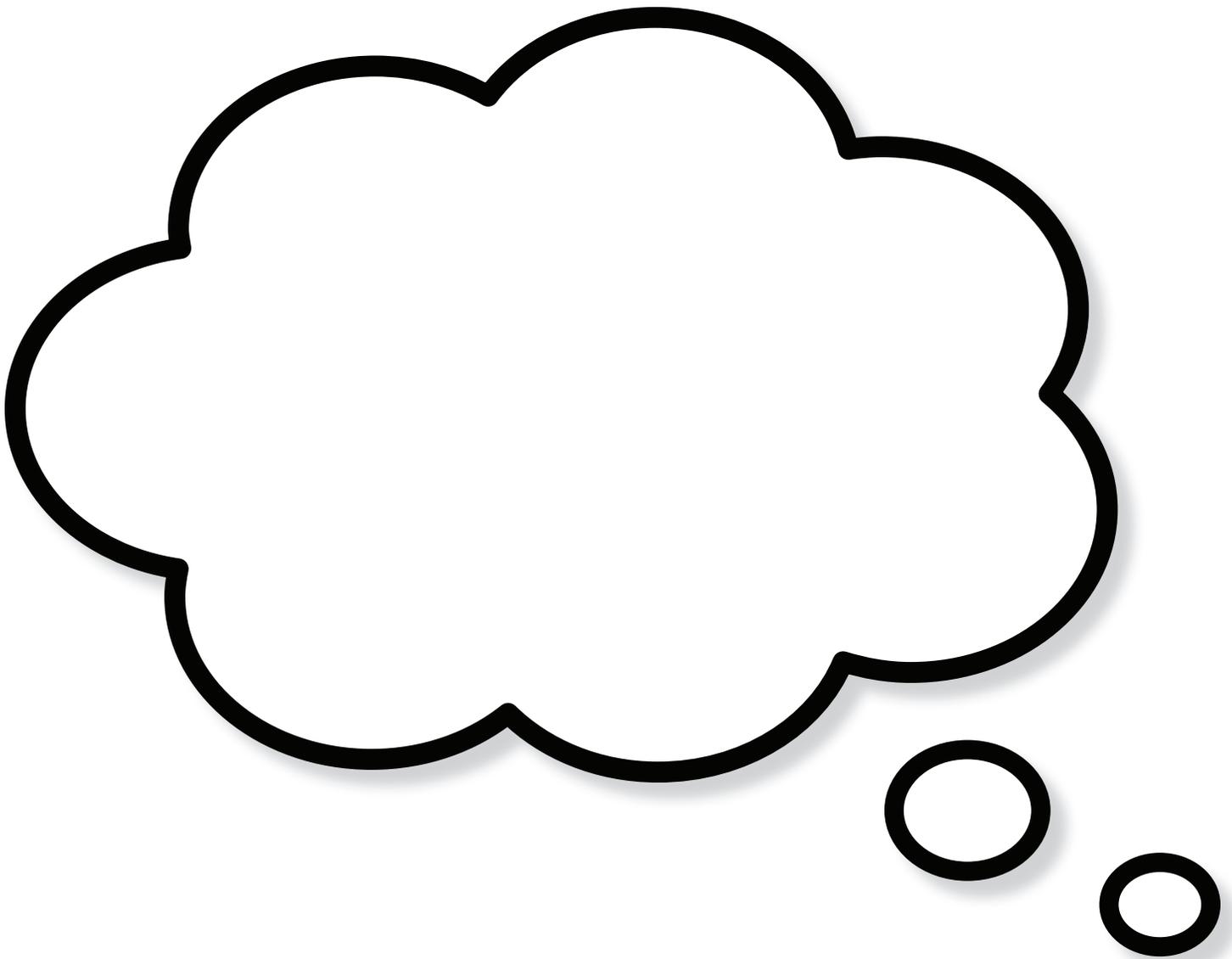
Include an appropriate amount of time before and after the facilitated conversation for people to enjoy refreshments as well as for informal conversations among participants, facilitators and note-takers.

Include time for facilitators and note-takers to talk before and after the conversation to make sure that information is accurately gathered.

# My Vision for a National Housing Strategy Worksheet

Use words or pictures to describe your vision for Canada's National Housing Strategy. What does it look like and feel like? Who is part of it?

Use the space inside and outside the thought cloud to express your thoughts.



## Sample Feedback Form

**Community Conversation:**

**Date:**

My vision for a national housing strategy includes:

What are some of the **things that make it difficult** for people to have the home they need that the Government of Canada needs to be mindful of when developing the national housing strategy?

What are some of the things that we have seen or experienced that **work well** in supporting people to have the home they need that the Government of Canada should include in the national housing strategy?

How should people who will be impacted by the national housing strategy **be involved** in further shaping and monitoring the national housing strategy, as well as the policies and programs that come out of it?

What other advice would you give the Government of Canada as they develop the national housing strategy?

# Sample Note-taking Form

**Community Conversation:**

**Date:**

**Facilitator:**

**Note-taker:**

**Number of participants:**

<b>Question #</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Observations</b> (e.g., level of agreement in the group, other information that could suggest support or frustration like body language)

## Sample Submission Template

### Submission to the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation

This is the title of your submission. You can adapt it to reflect your local conversation.

#### To Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

This is the space where you list who you are sending it to. You can add your local Member of Parliament to this list as well.

#### Introduction

This is where you can give some background information on your community conversation, including:

- How many people participated and a very brief description of the structure of the conversation (e.g., was it a discussion group or did you use a different format to gather feedback?)
- General description of participants without compromising confidentiality and respect (e.g., most participants were single women in private rental housing; all participants lived in social housing; all participants identified as LGBTQ2)
- The focus of the conversation (e.g., homelessness; violence against women; transitional housing)
- A statement that identifies that the submission is a reflection of the thoughts and ideas of individuals who will be directly impacted by the results of the national housing strategy

#### Conversation findings

This is where you will list the results of the conversation. The more that you can do to help the reader understand the outcome of the conversation, the easier it is to have the feedback incorporated into the national housing strategy. You can share the results in a number of different ways - for example:

- Question and answer: Simply listing each discussion question with the corresponding cleaned-up notes below.
- Thematic: Structure the feedback using the vision and themes of the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation (sustainability, affordability, inclusivity, flexibility) by doing an analysis of the discussion notes and categorizing responses into each of these areas.

- **Mixed:** Draw major trends or highlights from the conversation (similar to the thematic format), and combine with a question and answer format.

**Summary or closing statement**

This is where you can provide a summary of the community conversation and/or make a closing statement which may or may not include recommendations.

**Attachments**

This is where you can add any additional information that you want to include in your submission. If participants in your conversation filled out individual feedback forms or if your group has seen another document that you think the consultation should consider, you can include these as attachments to your submission. Attachments can be actual documents or website links.

## Appendix A: *Let's Talk Housing* Vision for Housing

### **FROM WWW.LETSTALKHOUSING.CA**

The Government of Canada is asking people to help develop a vision for Canada's national housing strategy and believes that the vision should:

- Speak to all Canadians
- Address a full spectrum of needs, from people who are homeless to those who rent from the private market or own their own home
- Improve the lives of people in greatest need
- Place housing at the centre of communities
- Recognize the importance of housing to achieving other social, economic and environmental goals

The government is seeking feedback on a *draft* vision for Canada's National Housing Strategy. The draft vision it has developed is:

All Canadians have access to housing that meets their needs and they can afford. Housing is the cornerstone of building sustainable, inclusive communities and a strong Canadian economy where we can prosper and thrive.

This information was taken from the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* website on August 29, 2016. We have included it here for background only.

## Appendix B: *Let's Talk Housing* Key Principles

### **FROM WWW.LETSTALKHOUSING.CA**

The Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation is being developed according to the following principles (you can also find them online at [www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca)):

#### **1. RESULTS-BASED**

- Environmentally sustainable: we want housing to contribute to a cleaner environment and support a greener tomorrow
- Performance tied to results: we measure our performance; evaluate our outcomes; and base our decisions on the best evidence of what works
- Self-reliance: we seek to support greater self-reliance for individuals, families and housing providers, where possible
- Fiscally responsible: we seek fiscally responsible housing responses and leverage support from others
- Flexibility: we recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to addressing housing needs
- Community-centred: we believe housing should be community-based and consider access to public transit, proximity to work, amenities and services
- Economic stability: we want a stronger housing system that supports stability in the Canadian economy and helps withstand fluctuations in the economic cycle

#### **2. PROCESS-BASED**

- Innovation: we encourage innovative new approaches
- People-centred: we remember that people are at the heart of all housing solutions
- Collaboration: we value collaboration and build respectful relationships

This information was taken from the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* website on August 29, 2016. We have included it here for background only.

---

## Appendix C: *Let's Talk Housing* Themes for Discussions

### **FROM WWW.LETSTALKHOUSING.CA**

#### **AFFORDABILITY**

##### **Affordable lands and financing**

Housing is driven by demand and supply factors. How can housing supply challenges be better addressed to meet the needs of future demand across Canada, including the needs of future homeowners.

##### **Affordability pressures in cities**

The individual choice of homeownership and rental may vary from market to market. How can data and evidence-based policy making support a better understanding of the drivers between the choice of homeownership and market rental? Is there a need to better balance homeownership and rental options in all markets across Canada?

##### **New and renewed rental housing**

Rental housing is home to 30% of Canadians. Canada needs a greater supply of new affordable rental housing, including through increased private sector involvement and the maintenance and preservation of our existing rental housing stock. Supporting more affordable rents can help reduce poverty and grow the middle class. In many cities, developers are building more condos than affordable rental units. In addition, existing rental housing is aging and in need of repair. How can we support a stable supply of rental housing that is affordable?

##### **First-time home buyers**

First-time buyers (FTBs) with mortgages accounted for just over 40% of all home sales from 2010-2014. What factors have an impact on first-time buyer access to housing over the next decade compared to the last decades? For example how does level of income, house prices and interest rates impact access to housing? Is homeownership within reach?

---

## **INCLUSIVITY**

### **Low-income and vulnerable Canadians**

About 20% of Canadians require assistance to meet their housing needs. Some groups have distinct needs that require unique solutions, including: the homeless, recent immigrants, lone-parent families, persons with disabilities, victims of family violence, seniors and Indigenous households. What new approaches can make a difference?

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Environmental sustainability**

Housing has a big impact on our environment. Sustainable solutions are needed. New approaches can build more resilient homes and communities. Reducing energy consumption in housing will also help Canada reach its climate change goals. How can we build a greener future through housing?

### **Social housing renewal**

Canada's investment in social housing is an important asset for all Canadians. Much of our social housing stock is aging and in need of repair and renewal. Long-term government subsidies that have supported our social housing are also set to expire by 2038. As a result, many of the low-income individuals and families who live in these buildings may lose the safe and affordable places they call home. In addition, there are also opportunities to make Canada's affordable and social housing sector more financially viable and less reliant on government funding.

How can we build a strong and financially healthy affordable housing sector that attracts private investors, increases the supply of affordable housing, ensures that our investment in affordable housing is "paid forward" to future generations, and renews Canada's social housing to promote well-being and socially-inclusive communities?

### **Creating a better quality of life**

Housing is more than shelter. It helps Canadians gain access to important socio-economic opportunities, including jobs, education and services. Moving from social to market housing is possible for some. What approaches can help?

---

### **Economic growth and stability**

In light of overall household debt levels and sustained period of low interest rates, what alternate financing approaches can ensure Canadians continue to have access to housing finance across the country that both meets their needs, and they can afford (e.g. shared-equity mortgages; loan-to-income ratio, etc.)?

### **Supportive institutions and regulations**

Strong housing institutions and effective regulations and laws are needed to meet the housing needs of Canadians. Better integration and alignment of policies, programs and regulations across all levels of government will help achieve better housing outcomes for Canadians. What changes are required?

## **FLEXIBILITY**

### **Use of data-based evidence**

Housing initiatives and approaches should be built on the best evidence available and the achievement of desired outcomes. We need to close data gaps to better inform our decisions and policies. Actions need to be measured and tied to results to ensure success.

### **Continuum of housing options**

People's housing preferences and choices continue to evolve. How can future homeownership options meet changing preferences (single detached to multi-unit/high density/sustainable options)?

This information was taken from the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* website on August 29, 2016. We have included it here for background only.

---

## Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions

1. What's the difference between the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process and the *Let's Talk Housing* community conversations supported by Maytree, the United Way and the Lived Experience Advisory Council?
  - Maytree and the United Way Centraide-Canada are working with community groups to support the participation of people who will be directly impacted by the national housing strategy in the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation by supporting local community conversations. Maytree and the United Way will compile feedback from community conversations and submit it to the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process. If you want the results of your community conversation to be included in this compilation, please email Maytree (evlachoyannacos@maytree.com) **by October 7, 2016**.
  
2. Why did Maytree, the United Way Centraide-Canada and the Lived Experience Advisory Council get involved?
  - Maytree and the United Way Centraide-Canada want to support the participation of people who will be directly impacted by the national housing strategy in the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation by decreasing barriers to participation. We are also interested in the feedback of people from across the country to better understand people's experiences so that it can also shape our own work.
  
3. I have more to say. Where I can give my personal feedback into the national housing strategy?
  - The Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process has two ways that you can give feedback into the national housing strategy: by filling out a brief online survey, and by submitting a written statement through the website ([www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca)). You can complete both the survey and written statement if you choose to.

4. What is the deadline for giving my feedback into the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process?
  - The deadline to complete the online survey or to submit a written statement is **October 21, 2016**.
  
5. Where can I find more information on the Government of Canada's national housing strategy consultation process?
  - You can find more information, such as its vision, principles, themes and key dates at [www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca).
  
6. Who in the Government of Canada is responsible for the *Let's Talk Housing* consultations?
  - The Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development is responsible for the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation process. You can find more information on the consultation process at [www.letstalkhousing.ca](http://www.letstalkhousing.ca).
  
7. When will we find out the results of the Government of Canada's *Let's Talk Housing* consultation?
  - According to the *Let's Talk Housing* consultation website, the Government of Canada will release the results of what it heard through the consultation on November 22, 2016. The information will be released through an online Town Hall, and a report will be posted to the website.