

Affordable Housing Development

Expression of Interest Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC) asking organizations for an expression of interest (EOI) rather than an application?

By having organizations submit a high-level Expression of Interest (EOI) proposal, SHC can identify and prioritize projects it believes will best address housing needs in the province without requiring organizations to prepare a detailed application. SHC will provide one-on-one assistance to organizations selected to apply for funding under one of its programs.

Why is capital funding from different programs available for this EOI? How do we know which program to apply under?

SHC offers different types of capital funding to address multiple housing needs and to align with funding available from the federal government under the National Housing Strategy. For this EOI, funding is available from two programs: the Rental Development Program (RDP) and the Shelter Enhancement Program (SEP). RDP is limited to affordable housing projects, and SEP is limited to domestic violence shelters.

What can we use the funding for?

The funding can be used to acquire and renovate existing housing, convert a building from non-residential to residential, or construct new housing units. Projects can be mixed-market (i.e. market and affordable rents), but units built with SHC funding must serve eligible households as defined by SHC.

Under SEP, repairs to existing projects are eligible.

Funding can be used for eligible capital costs only and cannot be used for other expenses including support services, staffing costs, furniture, and ongoing operating costs.

Our organization serves clients with a housing need, but we do not have experience developing or managing housing. Can we still apply?

Yes, your organization can still apply. SHC recognizes some service providers do not have the capacity or mandate to build and manage housing units. We recommend these organizations to either:

- Partner with another organization, such as a housing developer that has experience managing housing construction projects and properties, and submit a joint EOI proposal

OR

- Partner with SHC for the use of units in an existing SHC-owned building. Organizations interested in this type of agreement do not need to apply for capital funding. Interested parties should contact SHC for more information.

Which households are eligible to rent the units we build and how much rent can we charge?

All households in rental projects must have incomes within the Saskatchewan Housing Income Limits (see the application for current rates). Rent must be affordable for your targeted household while ensuring the long-term financial viability of your project.

What type of support services are required as part of the proposal?

Support services that help tenants maintain occupancy and meet the requirements of a lease agreement are a funding requirement of RDP. Examples of support services include counselling, addictions management, life-skills training, and supports for mental health. Proposals for people who require barrier-free and accessible housing do not need to include support services.

Organizations will need to consider the cost of providing support services as part of their proposal.

What is “demonstrated housing need”?

Organizations must demonstrate need for their project by providing evidence that the current supply of comparable housing does not meet the demand in the community. Evidence like program waitlists, statistics, housing market trends, and availability of similar housing in the community can be referenced. Organizations should also include information about the long-term financial viability of the project by considering operational costs and revenue based on affordable rent levels.

How will successful EOI proposals be selected? How will we know if our proposal has been selected?

SHC will review and score project proposals. Preference will be given to projects that:

- Align with provincial strategies and action plans including *Saskatchewan’s Disability Strategy*, *Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan*, and *Poverty Reduction Strategy*;
- Create affordable housing for people who have the greatest difficulty obtaining or maintaining suitable, adequate, or affordable housing;
- Come from applicants with demonstrated capacity;
- Maximize government funding;
- Include support services for tenants and/or barrier-free and accessible units; and
- Are located in southern communities with populations over 5,000 or in northern communities with demonstrated housing need.

Proposals will be reviewed in spring 2023, and organizations selected to apply for funding will be sent a letter outlining the application process.