

## Nine out of 10 Americans and Canadians call for affordable housing solutions

- *Habitat for Humanity Affordable Housing Survey: Nine out of 10 say it's important to find a solution for the lack of affordable housing.*
- *Cost is the top barrier to homeownership, followed by difficulty obtaining mortgages, and most expect costs to keep increasing over the next five years.*
- *Eight out of 10 say affordable housing has a positive impact on the community.*

**ATLANTA (June 20, 2017)** A majority of Americans and Canadians have made it clear: we are not paying enough attention to affordable housing needs and solutions, according to Habitat for Humanity's Affordable Housing Survey.

With critical housing shortages across both countries, cost remains a top barrier preventing families from accessing decent homes with an affordable mortgage.

"In many ways, housing is an invisible crisis. There are still too many families without access to safe, secure and affordable housing," said Jonathan Reckford, CEO of Habitat for Humanity International. "This survey highlights the value all of us place on a decent place to call home and underscores the critical need to increase access to affordable housing. At Habitat, we are committed to continue partnering with communities, governments and the private sector to create affordable housing solutions and empower families working toward a path to homeownership."

On behalf of Habitat for Humanity, PSB surveyed 1,000 people in the United States and Canada, examining the perceptions, challenges to and benefits of affordable housing in both countries. The survey was conducted ahead of Habitat for Humanity's [34th Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter Work Project](#), which will build 150 homes in Canada this summer.

### Affordable housing issues and aspiration

Homeownership remains a top achievement for most people, from renters to current homeowners. Nine out of 10 Americans (92 percent) say owning a home is one of their greatest achievements in life. Among renters, a majority of Americans (68 percent) cite owning a home as one of their top goals.

While homeownership is an aspiration for a majority, it remains out of reach for too many individuals and families. Nine out of 10 Americans and Canadians recognize this, saying they believe it is important to find solutions to the lack of affordable housing. Moreover, compared with issues like safety (16 percent) and quality (11 percent) affordability is a top U.S. housing issue (59 percent), with 75 percent saying not enough attention is paid to the issue.



### **Barriers to homeownership**

Compared with other challenges, high cost remains the top barrier to homeownership for 84 percent in the U.S., closely followed by the ability to obtain a mortgage for 75 percent. Most do not expect the situation to get much better: A majority of U.S. (72 percent) and Canadian (84 percent) respondents say housing costs will go up in the next five years.

Most have struggled with housing costs at some point in their lifetime. One quarter of U.S. homeowners currently struggle to pay housing costs, while 65 percent say they have struggled with housing costs at some point in their lives:

<b>Difficulty paying housing costs</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Canada</b>
...in my 20s	27 percent	33 percent
...in my 30s	22 percent	22 percent
...in my 40s	11 percent	13 percent
...in my 50s	9 percent	10 percent

### **Benefits of homeownership**

Homeownership fosters many positive personal benefits. Nine out of 10 Americans (91 percent) report owning a home has made them more responsible, with four in 10 reporting that it has also helped them build a nest egg (44 percent) and given them stability (41 percent).

Affordable housing is also the foundation for reducing poverty and achieving economic growth, with the potential to positively impact a wider range of larger societal issues. At least eight out of 10 Americans and Canadians agree that having affordable, stable housing contributes to public health, community safety, economic growth and education.

### **Everyone deserves affordable housing**

Habitat for Humanity partners with families and individuals to build or improve a place they can call home, working alongside volunteers paying an affordable mortgage. Through this model, Habitat homeowners achieve the strength, stability and independence they need to build a better life for themselves and their families.

There are several ways to support affordable housing: volunteer with a local Habitat for Humanity, advocate for better housing policies or donate to help more families build and improve a decent place to call home. Visit [habitat.org](https://www.habitat.org) for more information.

### **About Habitat for Humanity**

*Driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat for Humanity began in 1976 as a grassroots effort on a community farm in southern Georgia. The Christian housing organization has since grown to become a leading global nonprofit*

*working in more than 1,300 communities throughout the U.S. and in more than 70 countries. Families and individuals in need of a hand up partner with Habitat for Humanity to build or improve a place they can call home. Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage. Through financial support, volunteering or adding a voice to support affordable housing, everyone can help families achieve the strength, stability and self-reliance they need to build better lives for themselves. Through shelter, we empower. To learn more, visit [habitat.org](http://habitat.org).*

**About Habitat for Humanity Canada**

*Founded in 1985, Habitat for Humanity Canada is a national, nonprofit organization working toward a world where everyone has a decent and affordable place to call home. Habitat for Humanity brings communities together to help families build strength, stability and independence through affordable homeownership. With the help of volunteers, Habitat homeowners and 56 local Habitats working in every province and territory, we provide a solid foundation for better, healthier lives in Canada and around the world. For more information, please visit [www.habitat.ca](http://www.habitat.ca).*