



TWO WORLDS
CONSULTING

Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together

info@twoworldsconsulting.com

 (778) 400-3499

www.twoworldsconsulting.com

PREPARED FOR

BC Housing
Suite 1701 - 4555 Kingsway,
Burnaby, BC V5H 4V8



PREPARED BY

Two Worlds Consulting
Unit 310A - 645 Fort St.
Victoria, BC V8W 1G2

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We'd like to acknowledge and express gratitude for being able to write this report on the traditional territories of the Tla'amin Nation and the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ.

We'd like to thank and acknowledge the individuals across British Columbia who contributed their voices to this report.

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MESSAGE FROM BC HOUSING

This report, along with ongoing dialogue, will inform how BC Housing moves forward in supporting reconciliation through a strategy and a plan developed collaboratively with interested Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. BC Housing understands that doing this work needs to reflect the principles inherent to reconciliation and embrace meaningful action. BC Housing will continue to build relationships and plan the next phase of engagement on reconciliation in partnership with individuals and organizations interested in further engagement on the development of the Reconciliation Strategy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2019, BC Housing initiated the first step in developing a Reconciliation Strategy. This involved initial engagement with BC Housing's staff, Board of Commissioners, and Indigenous partners on what they would like to see reflected in the Reconciliation Strategy and ideas for next steps in developing the Strategy. Once developed, the Reconciliation Strategy will serve as a roadmap for how BC Housing approaches reconciliation. It will include clear goals, objectives, and actions that align with Indigenous perspectives and documents such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

BC Housing commissioned Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) to lead discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing staff, and BC Housing's Board of Commissioners regarding how to develop a Reconciliation Strategy. Engagement occurred between December 2019 and June 2020 and included organizations with whom BC Housing has a business relationship. The engagement activities included:

- Twenty-three phone interviews with BC Housing staff;
- Seven phone interviews with BC Housing Board members; and,
- Thirty-nine phone discussions and five written submissions from representatives of Indigenous housing providers and organizations, Indigenous non-housing organizations, and Nations with whom BC Housing had an existing relationship.

A large portion of this engagement took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which placed increased pressure on BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as they addressed COVID-related matters and emergencies. Although TWC's engagement plan was not significantly impacted by the pandemic, COVID-19 health and safety requirements have implications for BC Housing and the Reconciliation Steering Committee as they continue to advance work on developing the Reconciliation Strategy.

The "Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together" Report (the Report) captures the perspectives of all participants on how BC Housing can act on a collaborative basis with their partners to support reconciliation. Key topic areas include understanding reconciliation, transforming organizational culture, building relationships, supporting reconciliation, and measuring success. The Report includes ideas and opinions on reconciliation, including their personal

understandings, concerns, and areas for improvement. It also defines next steps and preliminary recommendations for BC Housing to consider.

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that participated in interviews were invited to provide feedback on the draft *Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together* Report. TWC provided the draft Report to participants in Fall 2020, along with options to submit feedback anonymously through a survey link or by filling out a response form. TWC received feedback from 15 of 39¹ participants; comments are included in Appendix F. Thank you to all participants for your time and commitment to this process. BC Housing is committed to continuing a collaborative dialogue; the feedback included in Appendix F will inform BC Housing's journey moving forward on completing a Reconciliation Strategy.

¹ TWC shared the draft report with 39 out of 44 participants. Four participants submitted written submissions anonymously and one interviewed participant left their position within the organization; as a result, TWC was not able to contact five participants for feedback on the draft report.

1 INTRODUCTION

Since being established as a Crown agency² of the Province of British Columbia (BC) in 1967, BC Housing has been operating on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples to develop, manage and administer housing options for BC residents. BC Housing partners with hundreds of non-profit, private sector, and Indigenous organizations to deliver a range of quality services. Their vision is to “serve as a trusted leader and partner in sustainable solutions for British Columbians.”³ BC Housing has developed strong relationships with Indigenous community partners and works to enhance these relationships and incorporate the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the *Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) into their operational and business practices.

To develop a stronger level of commitment to reconciliation, BC Housing is developing a Reconciliation Strategy that will provide a framework for how they support the development and operation of affordable and social housing across the province. This includes a stronger level of commitment to their implementation of UNDRIP and the TRC’s Calls to Action.

BC Housing commissioned Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) to lead discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, organizations, BC Housing staff, and BC Housing’s Board of Commissioners about BC Housing’s approach to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, including key actions and measures for tracking progress. Through one-on-one phone discussions and written submissions, interview participants expressed their views on what reconciliation means, how BC Housing can meaningfully commit to reconciliation through action, and what they would like to see reflected in the Reconciliation Strategy.

The “Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together” report (the Report) captures the perspectives of all participants on how BC Housing can take action on a collaborative basis with their partners to support reconciliation. The Report provides a set of preliminary recommendations for BC Housing, which will inform their development and implementation of a Reconciliation Strategy in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

1.1 What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation emerged as a response to the historical injustices and discrimination against Indigenous peoples resulting from colonial systems and ethnocentric views that have centred Western⁴ (e.g., European/North American) ideals and knowledge systems. Canada’s policies

² Crown agencies and corporations are organizations that are wholly owned by the federal or provincial government, established and funded by the government to provide specialized goods and services to Canadians. Like the Crown, they have a responsibility to making amends for any colonial practices they may have enacted in the past and repair and/or improve their relationships with Indigenous peoples.

³ BC Housing, “Mission, Vision, Values.” Accessed March 26, 2020.

⁴ The use of the term “Western” refers to social norms, ethical values, traditional customs, belief systems, and political systems of western European and North American society.

have historically aimed to dispossess Indigenous peoples of their rights, lands, and title and assimilate them into "mainstream" Western culture.

1.1.1 TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

The Law Society of British Columbia shares that "Residential schooling was a central element of colonial practices and policies. In 2008, the TRC was established because former students and survivors of the residential schools came forth and placed the issue on the public agenda. The TRC report highlights how Canadian law and lawyers played an active role in forcing Indigenous children into residential schools."⁵

The intergenerational impacts of residential schools continue for Indigenous people today and have led to an unequal representation of Indigenous peoples in the correctional, child welfare, justice and health care systems,⁶ as well as other social service systems, including public housing. Additionally, residential schools have also been "linked to a number of issues among former residential school students and their children: addiction to alcohol, drugs and gambling, psychological distress, and a greater likelihood of having experienced other trauma such as sexual or physical assault and domestic violence."⁷

Impacts from colonial systems, racism and discrimination against Indigenous peoples have also resulted in systemic barriers, including lack of affordable and appropriate housing, culturally inappropriate health and education services, insufficient employment opportunities, and inadequate infrastructure in Indigenous communities.⁸ Across Canada and BC, a disproportionate number of Indigenous peoples are faced with urgent housing issues, including homelessness, overcrowding, critical housing shortages, long waiting lists, lack of capacity to develop new housing, homes in disrepair, and more.⁹

Jesse Thistle, a Métis-Cree author and advocate for the homeless, argues that systems of colonization and racism are at the root of the housing disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Canada, stating: "Indigenous homelessness is not simply a response to [current housing markets and the limited availability of affordable housing], but is best understood as the outcome of historically constructed and ongoing settler colonization and racism that have displaced and dispossessed First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples from their traditional governance systems and laws, territories, histories, worldviews, ancestors and

⁵ Law Society of British Columbia, "Why Reconciliation Matters." Accessed July 20, 2020.

⁶ The Royal Canadian Geographical Society/Canadian Geographic, "The Road to Reconciliation" in *Indigenous Peoples Atlas of Canada*. Accessed July 20, 2020.

⁷ National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. "Reclaiming Power and Place." Accessed August 19, 2020.

⁸ Jesse Thistle, "Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada," *Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press*, 2017. Accessed August 25, 2020.

⁹ Palmer and Associates, "Comprehensive Needs and Capacity Assessment of Aboriginal Housing in BC." Accessed November 1, 2019.

stories.”¹⁰ Thistle also identifies specific causes and barriers that contribute to the disproportionate exclusion of Indigenous peoples from safe and affordable housing, including:¹¹

- Displacement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their lands into unsuitable locations, which has contributed to increased poverty and poor housing;
- Underfunding of Indigenous housing by the federal, provincial and territorial governments of Canada;
- Colonial state-imposed laws and acts that were enacted upon Indigenous peoples to assimilate and eradicate them (e.g., the Indian Act); and,
- Assimilation into housing types that are culturally inappropriate and do not correlate with Indigenous definitions of “home.”¹²

Furthermore, Canada’s laws and policies were created based on notions of Indigenous inferiority and European superiority and have facilitated discrimination against Indigenous peoples. These laws resulted in disparities and inequalities between Indigenous peoples and broader Canadian society. To begin addressing these disparities, the TRC published a set of 94 Calls to Action to hold individuals, organizations, and governments accountable to reconciling past harms and inequities against Indigenous peoples.

Reconciliation is about acknowledging and addressing these inequalities and working to establish and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Reconciliation is about ensuring systemic and cultural change to eliminate racist and discriminatory practices, policies, and approaches within organizations and in the business that they pursue as well as building respectful and trust-based relationships.

Reconciliation is a process and not a destination or a singular goal to be achieved. It means instilling a way of thinking and being within the organization that aligns with a decolonized system led by people who are prepared to challenge themselves in a way that asks:

- Am I taking the time to reflect on what reconciliation means to me?
- Am I adapting my way of thinking and doing to reflect what I learn about decolonization and reconciliation?
- Am I working to help recognize and restore Indigenous worldviews, cultural ways and traditions?
- Am I replacing any Western interpretations of history with Indigenous perspectives of history?

¹⁰ Jesse Thistle, “Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada,” Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Accessed August 25, 2020.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² In opposition to the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Thistle offers a more comprehensive definition of Indigenous homelessness that is understood through the lens of Indigenous worldviews. See

<https://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHIndigenousHomelessnessDefinition.pdf>

- Am I actively seeking ways to build my awareness of Indigenous history, including the impacts of colonialism and the history of the land I live and work on?
 - What sources have I drawn on for this information?
 - What is my relationship to this land? What is my personal and family history that brought me to this land?¹³
- Am I creating the space and support for Indigenous peoples to reclaim all that was taken from them?¹⁴

1.1.2 UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Indigenous peoples across the world have been advocating for their rights for many years. Both in response to this and in response to José R. Martínez Cobo's study on the discrimination against Indigenous peoples worldwide, the United Nations established a Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 1982 and began drafting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 1985.¹⁵ UNDRIP set out how governments should respect the human rights of Indigenous peoples and serves as an agreement on how to treat Indigenous peoples.

In 2007, UNDRIP was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations by a majority of 144 states in favour.¹⁶ Although Canada was one of the four Nations that had originally voted against adopting UNDRIP, it has since reversed its position and adopted the declaration in 2016. As the most comprehensive international instrument on Indigenous peoples' rights, UNDRIP represents an important guide for implementing other reconciliation policies and agreements impacting Indigenous peoples.

Significantly, UNDRIP establishes the *minimum* standards for Indigenous peoples' survival, dignity and well-being and includes 46 articles that describe specific rights, as well as

Principles of Decolonization and Reconciliation

- Indigenous-led
- Community-driven
- Collaborative
- Mutual respect
- Reciprocity
- Self awareness and self reflection
- Effective communication
- Flexibility
- Builds capacity
- Upholds Indigenous self-determination

¹³ Indigenous Working Group of the BC Association of Social Workers, "Towards a New Relationship," (May 2016), https://www.bcasw.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Reconciliation-Toolkit-Final_May-11.pdf

¹⁴ Indigenous Corporate Training Inc., Your Guide to Indigenous Relations, <https://www.ictinc.ca>

¹⁵ UN General Assembly, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Accessed July 20, 2020.

¹⁶ Ibid.



actions governments are required to take to respect these rights.¹⁷ In November 2019, the Province of BC passed Bill 41: *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, which implements UNDRIP and aspires to pave a pathway forward for increased transparency, predictability, and respect for Indigenous peoples' human rights.¹⁸ The Province worked with the BC Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs to develop the document, but did not consult with the urban Indigenous, the Métis, and the Inuit populations.

1.1.3 DECOLONIZATION

Decolonization is a central component of reconciliation. It involves addressing power imbalances and deconstructing colonial ideologies and systems of oppression that have maintained the status quo, perpetuated colonial ideals, and privileged Western knowledge.

In order to decolonize, individuals, organizations and governments must first develop an awareness about what colonialism is and how it has negatively impacted Indigenous peoples. Moreover, they must engage in a process of self-reflexivity, which involves looking internally to understand and reflect on how their histories or positions in society have contributed to systems of oppression and colonization. Decolonizing an organization means proactively dismantling the colonial structures that are in place and making room for Indigenous knowledge systems to be brought to the fore.

Past approaches to working with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, however, have often reinforced existing colonial structures and power imbalances. BC Housing's approaches, for example, have centered Western knowledge in housing design and operations, which may have led to perspectives amongst staff seeing themselves as "experts" working for or "helping" First Nations communities. Indigenous Planning practitioners Aftab Erfan and Jessie Hemphill argue that even the idea of "empowering" a First Nation community can be problematic, as it implies that individuals outside of an Indigenous Nation, community, or organization possess more power than the Indigenous members of that Nation, community, or organization.¹⁹ An important first step in restoring power balance is by working by/with (not for) Indigenous communities.²⁰

Building meaningful relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations is also crucial in the process of decolonization. However, organizations should be cautious and ensure that they are engaging for the right reasons. Scholar-activist Libby Porter points out that to Indigenousize their structures, many governments and institutions have taken inauthentic

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Province of British Columbia, *B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. Accessed July 20, 2020.

¹⁹ Aftab Erfan and Jessie Hemphill, "Indigenizing and Decolonizing: An Alliance Story," *Plan Canada* 53, no. 2 (2013): 18, accessed July 20, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.25316/ir-3043>

²⁰ Hirini Matunga, "A Revolutionary Pedagogy of/for Indigenous Planning," in *Indigenous Planning: from Principles to Practice*, ed. Libby Porter et al., pg. 641

approaches to engaging with Indigenous Nations and communities. In addition to leaving these communities exhausted, she writes, “All of the ‘engaging’ is done on the terms of non-Indigenous institutions. One outcome is sheer tokenism. Projects are already designed, plans set, monies committed.”²¹ Rather than actually serving Indigenous communities, these actions might be seen as performative. The intention behind them is not to contribute to sustainable change for Indigenous people but is instead “an exercise of box-ticking.” It is a way to bring in the Indigenous perspectives without decolonizing the organizational structure.

Because Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are incredibly diverse, flexibility is a fundamental principle to working alongside Indigenous people to find solutions. What might have worked for one Nation, community, or organization might not work for the next. In other words, it is important to avoid one-size-fits-all approaches to working with Indigenous Nations and communities.

1.2 Reconciliation Strategy

In the past, BC Housing has approached reconciliation (specifically, Indigenous relations) by pursuing strategies such as:

- Establishing and actively pursuing goals to improve relations with Indigenous peoples;
- Participating in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program;²²
- Creating the Director of Indigenous Relations position internally;
- Strengthening the Indigenous-focused teams within the organization;
- Supporting the creation and operations of the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA);
- Transferring the Indigenous housing stock to AHMA; and,
- Developing an Indigenous Housing Fund program.

While these approaches represent aspects of reconciliation, they do not reflect the full spectrum of principles for reconciliation and decolonization (e.g., collaboration, Indigenous self-determination and self-government). In other words, these strategies do not represent a full relinquishment of control or devolution of decision-making power to Indigenous peoples, nor do they create space within the organization for Indigenous worldviews to be brought to the forefront. As the findings illustrate, these actions or decisions were made by BC Housing and not by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, thereby reinforcing colonial power structures.

Decolonization is a process of eliminating colonialism. In order to decolonize BC Housing’s past approaches to working with Indigenous peoples, the organization should examine their

²¹ Libby Porter, “What is the Work of Non-Indigenous People in the Service of a Decolonizing Agenda?,” in *Indigenous Planning: from Principles to Practice*, ed. Libby Porter et al., pg. 652

²² PAR is a certification program administered by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business that measures an organization’s performance in Indigenous relations.

history to identify current and past colonial practices and policies, acknowledge where mistakes were made, and make amends. For example, BC Housing might consider examining how they have made decisions regarding Indigenous relations and reconciliation in the past, and ask: “Were these decisions made with input from and in collaboration with all of the Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations impacted by them?” If the answer is “no” or “uncertain”, then BC Housing must be open to taking a step back and working with Indigenous partners to amend and improve those decisions.

The development of a Reconciliation Strategy is an important part of BC Housing’s process of learning and commitment to reconciliation and adopting policies and practices based on UNDRIP and TRC’s Calls to Action. The goals of the Reconciliation Strategy are to acknowledge the historic and ongoing marginalization of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia; support an equity analysis in all areas of the organization as it pertains to Indigenous peoples; develop stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia; enhance and support Indigenous self-determination; and, contribute to closing the socio-economic gap between Indigenous peoples and other British Columbians.

1.3 How This Report Was Created

In September 2019, BC Housing initiated the first step in developing a Reconciliation Strategy. This involved initial engagement with BC Housing staff, Board of Commissioners, and Indigenous partners on what they would like to see reflected in the Reconciliation Strategy and ideas for next steps in developing the Strategy. Once developed, the Reconciliation Strategy will serve as a roadmap for how BC Housing approaches reconciliation. It will include clear goals, objectives, and actions that align with Indigenous perspectives and documents such as UNDRIP and the TRC’s Calls to Action. Furthermore, it will be embedded within and centered on BC Housing’s mandate to facilitate the delivery of safe, secure, and affordable housing.

BC Housing commissioned Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) to lead discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing staff, and BC Housing’s Board of Commissioners regarding how to develop a Reconciliation Strategy. Engagement occurred between December 2019 and June 2020 and included organizations with whom BC Housing had a business relationship. The engagement activities included:

- Twenty-three phone interviews with BC Housing staff;
- Seven phone interviews with BC Housing Board members; and,
- Thirty-nine phone discussions and five written submissions from representatives of Indigenous housing providers and organizations, Indigenous non-housing organizations, and Nations with whom BC Housing had an existing relationship.

A large portion of this engagement took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, which placed increased pressure on BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as they addressed COVID-related matters and emergencies. Although TWC’s engagement plan was not significantly impacted by the pandemic, COVID-19 health and safety requirements (e.g., social distancing and restrictions on large gatherings) have implications for BC Housing and the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee as they continue to advance work on developing the Reconciliation Strategy.

The “Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together” Report (the Report) captures the perspectives of all participants on how BC Housing can act on a collaborative basis with their partners to support reconciliation. Key topic areas include understanding reconciliation, transforming organizational culture, building relationships, supporting reconciliation, and measuring success. The Report includes ideas and opinions on reconciliation, including the participants’ personal understandings, concerns, and areas for improvement. It also defines next steps and preliminary recommendations for BC Housing.

1.4 How to Read This Report

This Report includes multiple perspectives that in some cases conflict with one another. The reader should approach the findings with an understanding that different lived experiences will lead to multiple and sometimes overlapping perspectives. For example, questions were asked about potential areas for improvement and comments were provided regardless of whether they believed that current BC Housing activities are working or not.

When working from an equity framework, it is important to recognize and value each perspective. As such, all comments and perspectives were captured regardless of their frequency of occurrence. Throughout this Report, we use the following markers for the scale of responses across surveys, written responses and interviews: “few” means under 15%, “some” means between 15-25%, “several” means between 25-50%, “most” and “majority” means more than 50%, and “all” refers to everyone.

It was important to contextualize the key findings and recommendations within best practices and literature in reconciliation. The “Why This Is Important” textboxes are provided throughout the Report to help the reader understand the impacts and significance of the comments as well as the connections between what we heard from respondents and principles of reconciliation and decolonization, including UNDRIP and TRC’s Calls to Action.

Moreover, preliminary recommendations are provided in each topic area of this Report. They were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and Board. The reader should understand that the recommendations are only meant to serve as a starting point, and that BC Housing will need to work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to co-develop clear and specific reconciliation goals, objectives and actions. Where conflicting recommendations occur, solutions include individualized approaches and flexibility. Flexibility is needed to accommodate unique needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

The content of this Report, which is organized into five theme areas, is intimately interconnected. While the key findings and recommendations offer several options for improving BC Housing’s understanding of and approaches to reconciliation, they should not be read as standalone solutions for “achieving reconciliation.”

Finally, the recommendations included in this Report should not be read as a blanket approach. Because of the vast diversity of BC’s Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, the needs, interests, and protocols should be discussed individually with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

2 OVERVIEW OF THE RECONCILIATION STRATEGY

2.1 Purpose

The development of a Reconciliation Strategy is an important part of BC Housing's commitment to adopt policies and practices based on UNDRIP and the recommendations from the TRC's final report.

Through the Reconciliation Strategy, BC Housing will:

- Acknowledge the historic and ongoing marginalization of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia on these their ancestral and traditional territories;
- Support an equity analysis in all areas of the organization as it pertains to Indigenous peoples;
- Develop stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples in British Columbia;
- Enhance and support Indigenous self-determination and self-government; and,
- Contribute to closing the socio-economic gap between Indigenous peoples and other British Columbians.

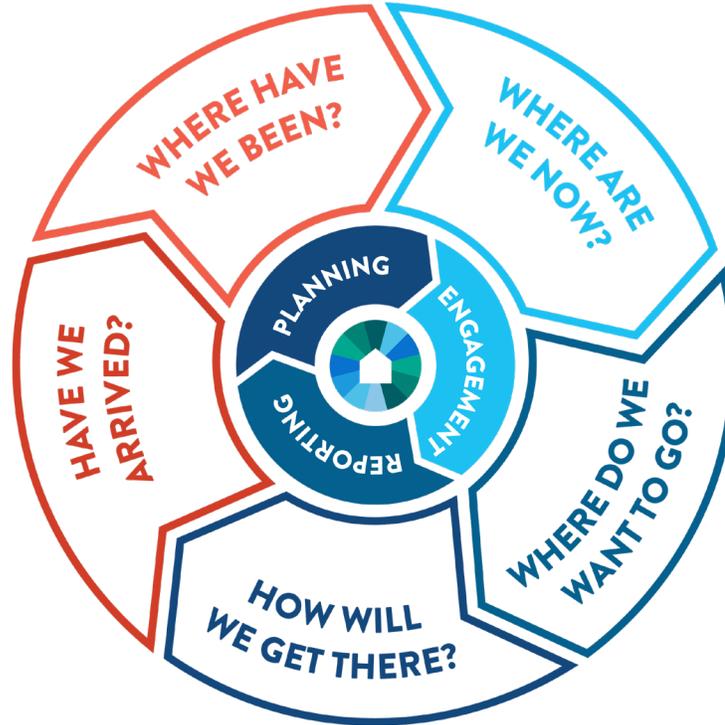
The Reconciliation Strategy will be embedded within and centered on BC Housing's mandate to facilitate the delivery of safe, secure, and affordable housing.

2.2 Process

Developing a Reconciliation Strategy is an iterative learning process and an ongoing journey. Collaborative planning to create this Strategy will be undertaken through a cycle of information gathering, dialogue, action, and review. This cycle includes the following five stages:

- Stage 1: Where have we been?
- Stage 2: Where are we now?
- Stage 3: Where do we want to go?
- Stage 4: How will we get there?
- Stage 5: Have we arrived?

Figure 1: Five Stages of Collaborative Planning



Stages 1 and 2 involve examining the organization’s recent and historical operations to develop a better sense of how reconciliation has been defined and understood to-date within BC Housing. These stages also involve looking at the nature of BC Housing’s relationships and initiatives to support reconciliation. Through this examination, BC Housing can establish a baseline for measuring its progress toward reconciliation. Stages 3 and 4 are focused on the future and on developing clear pathways forward. These stages involve visioning, goal setting, and action planning. Finally, in Stage 5, BC Housing will develop success measures on a collaborative basis with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to determine if they are making progress toward achieving the reconciliation goals. Since reconciliation is an ongoing process, it is recommended that BC Housing repeat multiple cycles of work planning and updating the Reconciliation Strategy to ensure that it stays relevant and meaningful.

2.2.1 WHERE ARE WE IN THE PROCESS?

As mentioned above, this Report represents an important first step within the overall process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy. While the input gathered provided insight that is relevant to all five stages, it is recommended that BC Housing revisit each stage in more depth as they continue the process of co-developing a Reconciliation Strategy.

Creation of the Reconciliation Strategy will be undertaken in collaboration with interested Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations across BC.



The diagram below illustrates the process for completing the Reconciliation Strategy and contextualizes the work to date.

Figure 2: Reconciliation Strategy Process



2.3 Methods

Working collaboratively with the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee, TWC engaged with individuals on reconciliation and reported on key findings and preliminary recommendations. The project was guided by the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee in several ways, which included the co-development of the project methodology and engagement materials; the development of a mandate letter addressed by BC Housing's Minister, Board of Commissioners, and Executive Committee; scheduling interviews with all respondents; and providing feedback and revisions to all draft materials. This section describes the project methodology, including the process and approaches for leading discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing staff and the Board.

2.4 Process

TWC's process for completing the Report was divided into three phases and involved the activities described in the table below:

Table 1: Project Phases

Phase	Activities
Phase 1: Planning (September 2019 – February 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended work planning meetings with BC Housing's Steering Committee. • Developed a Draft Comprehensive Methodology and Work Plan. • Conducted an analysis and review of BC Housing's policies, plans, and strategies. • Prepared an Engagement Plan. • Developed engagement tools and guides. • Revised and finalized the Comprehensive Methodology and Work Plan
Phase 2: Engagement (December 2019 – May 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted interviews with BC Housing staff and Board members. • Held phone discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. TWC used a set of probing questions to help guide the discussions (Appendix E.1). Questions were shared with participants ahead of time.
Phase 3: Reporting (March 2020 – August 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a framework for analyzing input across all interviews. • Performed qualitative analysis to identify common themes. • Developed a draft Report. • Received feedback on the Report from the Steering Committee, the Board, and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations interviewed. • Revised and prepared a final Report.

2.5 Approaches

2.5.1 RESEARCH

Western approaches to data collection have historically been undertaken from the perspective of collecting information on Indigenous people rather than with Indigenous people. These historical methods of collecting data have utilized standard tools which have not always recognized Indigenous ways and practices, nor cultural diversity. Indigenous Nations have expressed that research is something that has been done to them versus with them.

When commencing engagement, it is important to understand the information that has been gathered to date and what discussions with Indigenous Nation, communities, and organizations have taken place. When TWC began its initial research and data collection, they looked at what we know and what Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations had shared previously, rather than asking the same questions. This involved developing an understanding of what engagement had occurred to date by BC Housing with Indigenous organizations and communities and what was heard during this engagement with respect to housing. This process involved conducting a review of BC Housing's internal documents, including all those related to the organization's certification in Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR). Specifically, the document review included:

- Building BC: Indigenous Housing Fund Overview;
- 2018 Progressive Aboriginal Relations Report;
- 2018 Progressive Aboriginal Relations Verifier Report;
- 2019 Progressive Aboriginal Relations Report;
- 2019 Progressive Aboriginal Relations Verifier Report;
- 2018/2019 BC Housing Corporate Business Plan;
- 2019/2020 BC Housing Corporate Business Plan;
- 2019-2022 BC Housing Three-Year Service Plan
- 2018/2019 BC Housing Annual Service Plan Report;
- 2019/2020 BC Housing Annual Service Plan Report;
- BC Housing Diversity and Inclusion Framework;
- Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples;
- Indigenous Procurement Policy; and,
- 2019 Internal Assessment Report.

TWC employed several decolonized/Indigenous research methodologies and approaches for building trusting relationships and working collaboratively with Indigenous groups throughout each phase of the project. These included:

- Using respectful language and communication;
- Ensuring that engagement content was accessible (e.g., using jargon-free wording);
- Providing an opportunity for participants to review data collection methods and tools prior to engagement;
- Discussing anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality prior to collecting data;
- Providing opportunities for groups to learn more about the project;
- Providing summary notes to participants following the engagement; and,
- Sharing key findings with all participants to ensure transparency.

TWC's instruments and process were also directed by guidelines within the Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession requirements (OCAP) as described in Appendix C.

TWC takes the approach that data is information, and this means that the ways and methods of gathering any stories or information through data collection were pursued using understanding, transparency, and appreciation for those who are sharing their knowledge and understanding.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Researcher Bias and Data Disaggregation

During the research phase, it is important for researchers to position themselves within their work (e.g., to understand their ancestry, biases, privileges, and subjectivity), identify potential barriers to participation, find ways to minimize the exclusion of under-represented perspectives and design engagement tools that collect various types of equity data.

Our team spent time reflecting on our roles as researchers as we worked through the three project phases. We took a thoughtful approach to how our own ancestry, biases, privileges, and experiences might have influenced our relationship with the data. We aimed to check these biases along the way and include all the perspectives shared with us.

Limitations:

To protect privacy from the small sample size, our interview guides excluded questions on identity factors such as gender, race, class, sexuality, ability, and others. Our team recognizes that this impacted our ability to disaggregate the data and apply an equity framework to the results.

Recommendations:

It is important to be able to disaggregate data to see how different groups are impacted by the systems of oppression. Moving forward, TWC recommends that BC Housing adopts a standard of collecting information on diversity, equity and inclusion factors, while at the same time ensuring that participants are given an option to ‘opt-out’ for privacy concerns.

2.5.2 ENGAGEMENT

The engagement process began with BC Housing’s CEO Shayne Ramsay sending out an initial invitation letter to participate in engagement and BC Housing’s Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee sending out subsequent communication to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing’s Board of Commissioners, and BC Housing staff. For the purposes of this first step in the development of the Reconciliation Strategy, Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that had a business relationship with BC Housing were contacted to participate. The Steering Committee used the following criteria to select which Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to invite to participate in the process:

Table 2: Criteria Used to Select Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations to Participate

Category	Criteria
Development or Capital Renewal Projects	The Nation, community, or organization was engaged in a Development or Capital Renewal project with BC Housing that was in any of the following stages:



Category	Criteria
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRO (proposed, emerging project, not yet submitted to Executive Committee) • Initiated (proposed and for which there is a degree of public awareness either by announcement, news release, public consultation, municipal permitting process in progress, etc.) • PDF (preliminary development funding) • PPA (provisional project approval/In development) • FPA (final project approval/under construction) • COM (committed, project approved by ExCom) • Active (project currently housing people, ready to house, or undergoing renovation)
Existing Operating or Program Agreement	Nation, community, or organization has an existing operating agreement in place with BC Housing or the Aboriginal Housing Management Association

The purpose of conducting interviews was to collect in-depth, qualitative information on BC Housing’s past, current, and future relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and efforts to improve these relationships. The input collected included views and perspectives regarding the strengths and weaknesses of BC Housing’s current approaches to reconciliation, as well as suggestions and opportunities for working within a reconciliation framework. All interviews were conducted over the phone. TWC shared interview summaries with each participant following the interviews for their review and validation.

To conduct the interviews and phone discussions, TWC completed the following steps:

- Developed interview guides for Indigenous Nation/communities/organizations, staff, and Board members in collaboration with the BC Housing Steering Committee (Appendix E);
- Coordinated with BC Housing who scheduled the interviews;
- Tested the interview guides with seven BC Housing staff;
- Conducted the interviews with the three engagement groups;
- Prepared summary notes and shared these with participants for validation; and,
- Tabulated and analyzed the data obtained from the interviews.

Our engagement methods evolved over the course of the project to consider potential risks and benefits associated with each method. At the start of the project, our team had discussed a combination of in-person and virtual engagement methods, including phone discussions, focus groups, and regional listening sessions. Also, the presence of COVID-19 impacted the ability to have in-person meetings. In the end, interviews were chosen due to the following benefits:

- The potential ability to reach out to more Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations;
- Enabling open discussion because the conversations are “private” and not held in a group setting;
- Encouraging a more individualized approach to information collection;
- Ability to engage in conversation about reconciliation to inform the Strategy in a meaningful way; and,
- Creating an opportunity to find out from Indigenous people how they would like to be further engaged on reconciliation.

TWC recognizes the importance of face-to-face meetings with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. We recommend that in the next phase of the project, BC Housing and the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee expand the scope of engagement to include in-person methods such as focus groups, listening sessions or regional workshops taking into consideration the current situation regarding COVID-19.

2.5.2.1 Staff and Board Interviews

TWC conducted 30 phone interviews with BC Housing staff and the Board, including 7 interviews with BC Housing Board members and 23 interviews with BC Housing staff. Determining factors in selecting staff representatives included duration of employment with BC Housing, role in engaging with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as well as gender-based analysis (GBA+) factors, including gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical ability. Consideration of GBA+ factors helped ensure adequate representation across the organization within the sample of staff and Board members interviewed. BC Housing's Steering Committee was responsible for determining which staff would be invited to be interviewed. All eight members who were on the board at the time of engagement were invited to be interviewed.

2.5.2.2 Phone Discussions with Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

TWC conducted 39 phone discussions with representatives of Indigenous housing providers and organizations, Indigenous non-housing organizations, and Indigenous Nations with whom BC Housing has an existing relationship. To identify participants, BC Housing prepared a contact list that reflected the organization's business relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations (see Table 2 for criteria used to define business relationship). All groups identified were then invited by BC Housing's CEO and Steering Committee to participate in a phone discussion. Of those that responded to the invitation, BC Housing coordinated with TWC to set up teleconference discussions.

2.5.2.3 Written Submissions from Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

An option to submit written responses was provided as an alternative to phone discussions if respondents preferred. BC Housing's Steering Committee invited Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to submit written feedback via a written submission guide or Survey Monkey. TWC used a similar set of questions as the BC Housing staff interview guide to develop the written submission guide for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations (Appendix E.2). In total, 5 written submissions were received, including one through the written submission guide and four through Survey Monkey.

Figure 3: Regional Distribution of Respondents

WHO WE HEARD FROM



BC Housing Staff and Board

7 Board Members

23 Staff

BC HOUSING BRANCHES:

- » Corporate Communications
- » Corporate Services
- » Development Services and Asset Strategies
- » Human Resources
- » Licensing and Consumer Services
- » Operations



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Representation and Inclusion Constraints

An equitable approach to engagement involves asking the question: whose voice gets heard. Indigenous Community Planner Rachel Wuttunee emphasizes that a best principle in equity is addressing the systemic constraints that are needed to dismantle the barriers and asking, “Who is included or excluded in the data?”²³ An equitable engagement approach also includes active listening and creating space within conversations to explore the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion.²⁴

During the engagement phase, TWC approached equity by encouraging the Steering Committee to apply GBA+ criteria to their selection of staff participants. This helped ensure that we engaged with a diverse cross-section of perspectives. We also worked to create a safe and open space for dialogue through active listening and respectful communication.

Limitations:

The engagement approach involved phone interviews and written submissions over a three-month period during the COVID-19 pandemic. TWC recognizes this as a limitation because there may have been interested individuals who wanted to participate but did not have the time or capacity to engage within the required timeframe.

Recommendations:

To address the above limitations, TWC recommends that BC Housing adopt flexible timelines in projects with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to allow for a ‘pause’ when local issues or priorities arise (e.g., global pandemic, state of emergency, natural disaster).

2.5.3 ANALYSIS

TWC conducted qualitative data analysis once interview summaries were validated by participants. The purpose was to identify key themes, recommendations, and next steps. As data was validated, each interview transcript was analyzed using an inductive coding method, which involved assigning codes to each response and combining these codes into groups to identify the most common themes for each interview group (BC Housing staff, BC Housing Board members, and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations).

²³ Rachel Wuttunee, “Indigenous Equity Data,” pg. 9

²⁴ SPARC, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Learning and Next Steps, pg. 11.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Applying an equity lens to the reporting phase includes diverse data aggregation and examining the intersectionality of respondents within the data ²⁵ (a framework developed by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw that describes how overlapping social identities intersect and influence an individual's experiences of oppression), and amplifying the perspectives of under-represented groups.

Our team worked to ensure that all perspectives were represented in the Report; not only those that were captured by the main themes. As TWC conducted analysis, perspectives that were not widely shared amongst respondents were still given a space and amplified in each of the "What We Heard" sections.

Limitations:

Due to the small sample size and need to respect privacy, our team did not collect data on identity factors. Without this data, we were unable to disaggregate or examine the intersectionality of social identities during qualitative analysis. However, wherever it was possible to include analysis based on identity factors, our team made sure to capture these comments throughout the report.

Recommendations:

As mentioned above, TWC will recommend that BC Housing collect information about identity factors. During this phase, the project team might consider disaggregating the results for any further engagement and examining the intersectionality of respondents.

²⁵ Ibid.

3 BACKGROUND

The following section establishes a context for understanding BC Housing's roles and responsibilities with respect to reconciliation and Indigenous housing.

3.1 History of Reconciliation in BC Housing

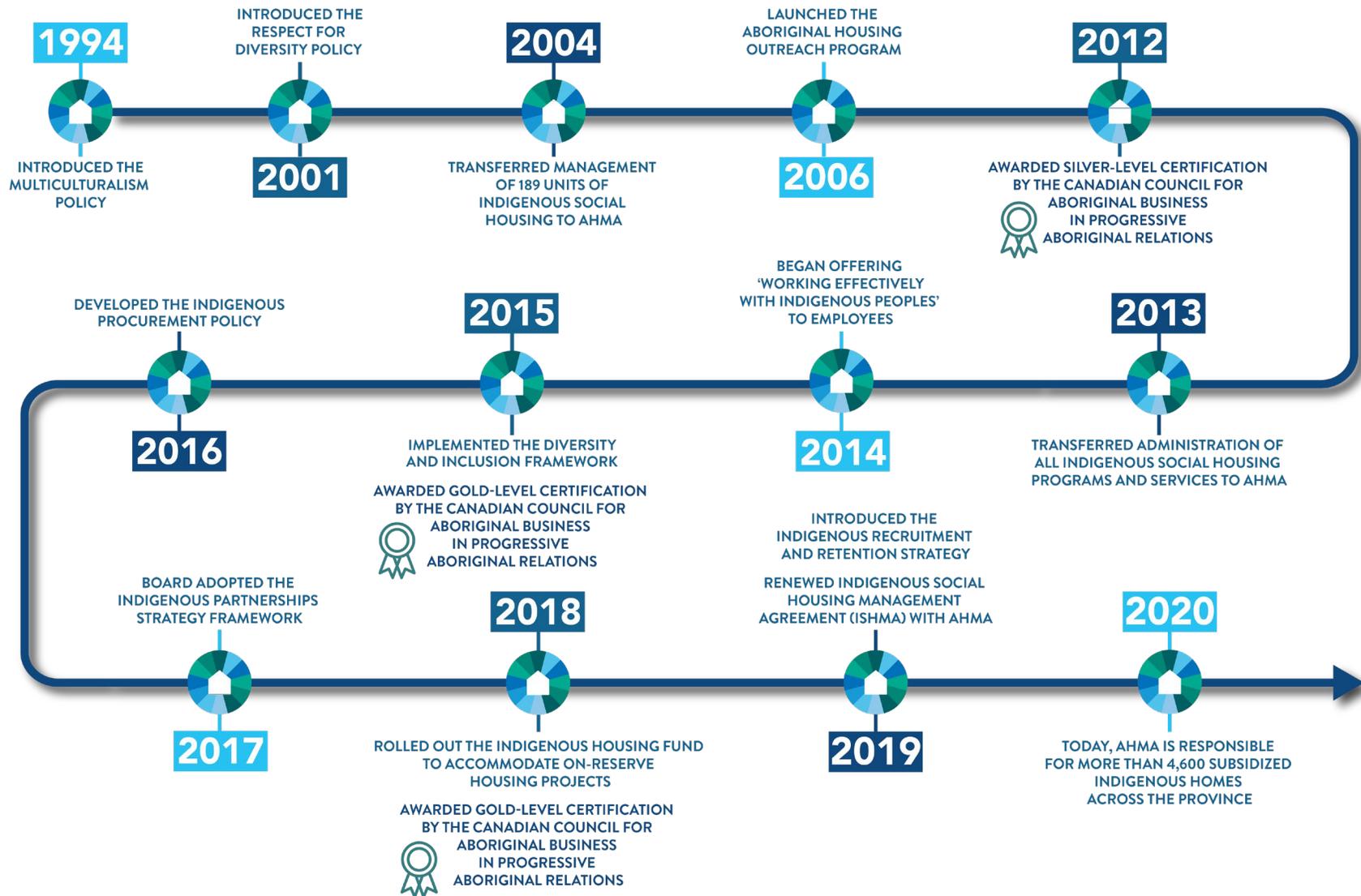
Exploring BC Housing's history and reconciliation journey fits within the first stage of the Reconciliation Strategy process. It addresses the question, "Where have we been?" and examines the organization's past initiatives, programs, and strategies for supporting reconciliation. This step recognizes the important moments and work that have helped shape BC Housing's current understandings of reconciliation. It also helps establish a preliminary baseline from which BC Housing can begin to measure its progress.

In November 2019, TWC conducted a review and analysis of BC Housing's past reconciliation-related policies, plans, frameworks, and reports²⁶. In addition, TWC team analyzed secondary source information from BC Housing's Research Centre. The following section summarizes the key findings and speaks to the organization's past efforts within its internal and external operations.

Since being established, steps have been made toward reconciling its relationships with Indigenous peoples and establishing a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion, however there is substantial work to be done in this area as the findings demonstrate. The following timeline provides an overview of key moments in BC Housing's journey.

²⁶ In the past, BC Housing defined their reconciliation initiatives as "Indigenous Relations." In recent years, there has been a shift toward using the term reconciliation.

Figure 4: Reconciliation Timeline



3.1.1 INTERNAL OPERATIONS

Within the organization, BC Housing has supported reconciliation by making a commitment to recruit and retain Indigenous employees through developing policies, setting goals and researching best practices; training staff organization-wide to develop a stronger cultural awareness through optional courses such as *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* and mandatory training in anti-discrimination and anti-bullying; and by developing and implementing policies to improve the organization's business practices in areas such as procurement, recruitment, retention, and diversity and inclusion.

These efforts have been reported by staff as key activities being undertaken within BC Housing in an effort to support reconciliation. To ensure that these actions are not being implemented as token gestures, it is critical that a full understanding of what reconciliation means be developed through further engagement with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. With an improved understanding of reconciliation, BC Housing can assess the extent to which their activities and actions support implementation, including building positive relationships, recognizing Indigenous self-determination and rethinking program decision-making. Importantly, although BC Housing currently makes reference to the importance of UNDRIP and TRC, the organization has not yet developed resources to support the application of these two documents to the staff's day-to-day work practices. As such, TWC recommends that BC Housing commission a comprehensive review of its business practices and policies for adopting or implementing reconciliation and identify knowledge and resource gaps. This review process could be led or developed in collaboration and partnership with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

3.1.1.1 Recruitment and Retention

Regarding Indigenous recruitment and retention, Indigenous staff make up less than 2% of the organization's overall staff population.²⁷ In 2018, BC Housing employed 718 full-time staff in six locations across the province. Twelve of those staff self-identified as Indigenous, three of which were in management roles.²⁸ Out of all the staff employed by BC Housing, three of them hold positions with "Indigenous" in their titles.

Several steps were taken by BC Housing to help address this disparity. In 2019, BC Housing updated their Diversity and Inclusion Framework to include a strategy for increasing the number of self-identifying First Nations, Métis and Inuit employees within the organization.²⁹ BC Housing also started targeting their job advertisements to Indigenous candidates through online platforms, consultation with Indigenous Nations, and Indigenous-focused programs.³⁰ Currently, the organization is pursuing goals to improve its self-disclosure and tracking

²⁷ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ BC Housing Diversity and Inclusion Framework, 13.

³⁰ Ibid.

processes, expanding its recruitment advertising channels, and pursuing community outreach and relationship-building opportunities.³¹

BC Housing aims to experience at least 20% growth and less than 10% turnover of Indigenous employees annually.³² To accomplish this, the organization is increasing staff's cultural understandings through training such as *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples*. BC Housing also aspires to start researching best practices and conducting key informant interviews with Indigenous staff.³³

3.1.1.2 Training

BC Housing offers several training opportunities to enhance staff's cultural understanding and awareness, which are highlighted in Table 3. Workshop topics include building a culture of inclusion, promoting respect in the workplace, and working in partnership with Indigenous peoples.³⁴ The scope of this Report did not include an audit of these offerings for efficacy in reconciliation, equity, or anti-racism. As such, TWC recommends that BC Housing commission a review of its current course offerings to assess their efficacy.

Furthermore, TWC suggests that BC Housing expand their course offerings to include other useful courses on the topics of reconciliation, decolonization, and cultural sensitivity. Appendix B: Recommended Training Courses includes several additional options for BC Housing's consideration.

Table 3: Training Opportunities Offered to BC Housing Employees

Training Opportunity	Details	Description
Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples	Optional; open to all staff	Led by Bob Joseph from Indigenous Corporate Training, this one-day workshop is offered to all BC Housing employees to help them build a stronger cultural understanding and develop more respectful and collaborative approaches to working with Indigenous communities and groups. It covers the topics of Indigenous history in BC and Canada, relationship-building, cultural issues, effective communications, UNDRIP, and TRC's Calls to Action. While half of BC Housing's employees have participated in this workshop, it is not currently mandatory.
Working Together to Build Respectful Workplaces	Mandatory for all staff	All BC Housing staff are required to take this workshop, which focuses on ensuring a discrimination-, bullying-, and harassment-free work environment. Training is provided in the areas of respectful communication, self-awareness, and teamwork.
Leading Respectful Workplaces	Required for all managers and supervisors	BC Housing managers and supervisors are required to take this workshop for managing respectful workplaces. It trains management-level staff in recognizing workplace situations that need early intervention or attention.

³¹ PAR Internal Assessment Report 2019.

³² Ibid.

³³ BC Housing Diversity & Inclusion Framework 2019; PAR Internal Assessment Report, 2019.

³⁴ BC Housing Diversity & Inclusion Framework 2019.

Training Opportunity	Details	Description
Annual Diversity and Inclusion Forums	Optional; open to all staff	BC Housing's Diversity and Inclusion Committee host this optional forum that serves as a safe and open space for BC Housing staff to discuss diversity and inclusion within the organization.

Source: BC Housing Document Review, 2019.

3.1.1.3 Policies and Planning

BC Housing has developed policies to increase its collaboration with Indigenous Nations and promote culturally sensitive approaches. While the organization is developing goals and objectives that align with equity and reconciliation, based on the evidence and results of the document review, it remains unclear whether the organization is effectively implementing them or if they remain aspirational. We heard from multiple respondents that the intents of BC Housing's CEO and leadership team do not always translate down to other staff in the organization, and that this is a gap that needs to be addressed.

This section provides a review and analysis of only the existing policies and plans in BC Housing. As mentioned above, TWC recommends that BC Housing commission a comprehensive review of its business practices and policies, including a gap analysis to identify policies that might be missing (e.g., anti-racism), and an assessment of existing policies to determine if they are effective, current and consistent with reconciliation. Moreover, the gaps in BC Housing's policies and practices will be more clearly identified through further engagement with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of a Reconciliation Strategy.

The *Indigenous Procurement Policy* uses procurement practices to support Indigenous business development. BC Housing sets aside 10% of procurement for Indigenous businesses and in some cases, sets aside procurement exclusively for Indigenous businesses.³⁵ In 2018, the organization actively worked with 19 Indigenous-led vendors on new projects and led outreach in Prince George and Kamloops.³⁶ BC Housing's procurement initiatives have also led to the employment of Indigenous youth through internship opportunities and programs such as BladeRunners and Tradeworks. However, BC Housing does not set specific targets in this area,³⁷ which might make it challenging to achieve sustainable outcomes in Indigenous youth employment.

In 2016, BC Housing adopted an *Indigenous Strategy* that provides a clearer direction for enhancing their Indigenous partnerships. This strategy is embedded within the organization's annual service plans and is intended to help address housing issues such as "over

³⁵ BC Housing Policy: Indigenous Procurement Policy 2018.

³⁶ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018.

³⁷ Ibid.

representation of Indigenous peoples within the homeless population and in housing that is not adequate or affordable.”³⁸

Corporate business plans outline BC Housing’s commitment to enhancing Indigenous partnerships and include more detailed and specific reconciliation goals and objectives for all the organization’s corporate branches. In the past two years, reconciliation goals and objectives have included statements such as:

- Issuing a proposal call to target low income Indigenous seniors and families;
- Mentoring AHMA's Operations staff (assigning one BC Housing staff per region as the point person);
- Expanding the SkillsPlus program to two or three new communities in BC and the Yukon; and,
- Developing an asset management plan and initiate capacity building with 5 on-reserve First Nations groups.³⁹

Analysis of the 2018/2019 and the 2019/2020 Corporate Business Plans reveals that progress may be slow in achieving goals and objectives relating to education, training, and policy implementation. Although quarterly reports on the Corporate Business Plans shows advancement in these areas, the following goals and objectives are ongoing and have remained on BC Housing’s agenda since 2018:

- Providing staff with opportunities to gain a stronger understanding of the cultural aspects related to Indigenous partnerships. Include new learning offerings on UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action;
- Expanding Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) programming, including new training offerings and ongoing development of an employee resource group. Update D&I Framework and Implementation plan.
- Developing an Indigenous engagement strategy for the 2020 Homeless Count;
- Making training opportunities available to the Indigenous Housing Sector;
- Continuing to build partnerships and strengthen the position of the DTES Learning Center as a community resource for learning and development.

To better understand where the above reconciliation goals and objectives fit within the work of developing a Reconciliation Strategy, TWC recommends that BC Housing revisit the 2018/2019 and the 2019/2020 Corporate Business Plans. The organization should assess the advancements made, update the goals and objectives relating to enhancing Indigenous relationships, and continue implementing specific actions.

In 2017, the Board adopted an *Indigenous Partnerships Strategy Framework* that outlined specific approaches for creating more housing options for Indigenous peoples, improving the

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ This objective has led to the signing of three Asset Management MOUs that are building capacity in three different regions among nine First Nations (see [Section 3.1.2.4 Building Capacity](#)).

housing conditions on-reserve, promoting Indigenous employment and training opportunities, building a stronger Indigenous housing sector, and improving BC Housing staff’s cultural understandings.⁴⁰

Within their *Diversity and Inclusion Framework*, BC Housing provides an *Aboriginal Recruitment & Retention Strategy* with “one of their major focuses going forward” being that recruiting for all positions be intentional about including Indigenous people.⁴¹

3.1.2 EXTERNAL OPERATIONS

Principles of reconciliation are also reflected in BC Housing’s external operations, which include building relationships and partnerships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, offering support to Indigenous communities through various funding opportunities, respecting consultation and community engagement requirements, and building the capacity of Indigenous groups through knowledge exchange and collaboration.

3.1.2.1 Partnerships with Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

BC Housing has an intention to build strong relationships with Indigenous peoples in BC and has a goal to enhance its Indigenous partnerships. As of November 2019, the organization has established relationships with over 100 Indigenous housing providers, BC First Nations, and Indigenous organizations (Figure 5). As shown in Figure 4, the organization has also been awarded gold-level in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) program twice - in 2015 and in 2018. PAR is a certification program administered by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business that measures an organization’s performance in Indigenous relations.



Figure 5: Established Relationships

In 1995, BC Housing supported the creation of the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA). It was the first Indigenous Housing Authority in Canada and is made up of 41 Indigenous housing providers representing Indigenous families and individuals across British Columbia.⁴² BC Housing transferred all administration and management responsibilities for provincially funded Indigenous housing stock to AHMA. As a partner, BC Housing provides advice, support, and resources to the organization as needed and when requested. BC Housing provides approximately \$34 million annually to support AHMA’s operational responsibilities.⁴³ Today, AHMA is responsible for more than 4,600 subsidized Indigenous

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² AHMA 2020.

⁴³ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018

homes across the province. In 2019, BC Housing and AHMA renewed the Indigenous Social Housing Management Agreement (ISHMA).

Of the 819 housing providers that BC Housing works with, the organization has a network of 55 Indigenous housing providers that deliver housing to Indigenous families and individuals in 71 communities across the province.⁴⁴ Between 2005 and 2013, BC Housing went through a process to transfer the Indigenous housing portfolio to AHMA. This included transferring all 40 of BC Housing's operating agreements with Indigenous housing providers over to AHMA.⁴⁵ Today, BC Housing's relationships with Indigenous housing providers mostly flows through AHMA. However, relationships continue to exist in a more direct manner through partnerships to increase the self-reliance in the housing sector and through BC Housing's Development and Asset Strategies Branch, which works with Indigenous housing providers on the development of new housing projects.⁴⁶

In addition to AHMA, BC Housing is starting to build a relationship with the First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council (FNHIC), which is a community-driven, First Nations-controlled Housing and Infrastructure Council in BC. The FNHIC is in its early stages of development; however, once developed, it aims to assume responsibility and accountability for designing and delivering housing and infrastructure programs and services to BC First Nations. Moreover, the FNHIC aims to assume the federal government's authorities and will have the ability to determine its own programs, services, and delivery agents similarly to provincial and federal governments.⁴⁷ The FNHIC are working closely with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to negotiate the terms of transferring authority of housing and infrastructure from the Government of Canada to the FNHIC.⁴⁸ The role of the Province of BC (including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and BC Housing) is still being determined. However, the FNHIC have stated that they will "continue discussion with the provincial government to determine what opportunities exist for collaboration to support its goal to harmonize on and off reserve housing and blur the boundary between what have historically been separate and uncooperative jurisdictions."⁴⁹

BC Housing has also established relationships and partnerships with several First Nations communities, and is collaborating with Nations on housing projects, strengthening their capacity in asset management, hiring Nation members, and procuring Indigenous-owned businesses.⁵⁰ In some cases, partnerships are formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). MOUs are in place with East Kootenay area bands (Shuswap Indian Band, Tobacco Plains Indian Band, and ʔaq̓am Community) Kwikwetlem First Nation,

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ BC Housing 2013.

⁴⁶ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018

⁴⁷ "FAQ," First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council, Accessed August 25, 2020.

<https://www.fnhic-bc.ca/faq>

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018

Musqueam Indian Band, Nicola Valley Group (Lower Nicola Indian Band, Upper Nicola Indian Band, Coldwater Indian Band, Nooaitch Indian Band, and Shackan Indian Band), Nisga'a Lisims Government, and Squamish First Nations.⁵¹

In addition to relationships with First Nations and Indigenous housing providers, BC Housing has partnered with or sponsored several other types of organizations on various projects serving Indigenous communities. Some examples of these include:

- Great Bear Initiative;
- BladeRunners Program;
- Indigenous Caucus of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA);
- Indigenous Community Planning stream at the University of British Columbia's School of Community and Regional Planning;
- LiFT Philanthropy;
- Fraser Basin Council; and,
- Yukon Housing.

Recently, BC Housing's Director of Indigenous Relations and Board members worked collaboratively on creating a more in-depth strategy to enhance the organization's Indigenous relations. This includes working with Indigenous communities to develop relationships and partnerships with the Canadian Housing Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) and the Department of Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and developing relationships with organizations such as the First Nations Health Authority.⁵²

3.1.2.2 Funding Opportunities

BC Housing supports Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations through various funding opportunities. This includes the Indigenous Housing Fund, a housing program and proposal process that expanded support to on-reserve housing projects in 2018 and represents a historical moment with BC being the first province in Canada to provincially fund "on-Nation"⁵³ housing.⁵⁴ An overview of all funding opportunities is provided in Table 4 below.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ In recent years, BC Housing has started to use the term "on-Nation" internally (with staff and Board) to describe on-reserve and in-community contexts. The term "on-Nation" was adopted by the Ministry of Housing as an alternative to "on-reserve."

⁵⁴ PAR Internal Assessment Report 2019.

Table 4: Funding Opportunities Available to Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

Opportunity	Description
Indigenous Housing Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$550 million over 10 years to support 1,750 newly created housing units • Open to Indigenous non-profit housing providers, First Nations, for-profit developers wanting to partner with Indigenous housing providers • 100% ownership by Indigenous housing providers • Housing provider must hold a mortgageable interest in the land and be able to obtain CMHC insured mortgage
Community Housing Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.9 billion over 10 years to deliver 14,350 affordable new rental homes • Open to municipalities, non-profit housing providers, housing co-operatives, and Indigenous organizations
Women's Transition Housing Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$734 million over 10 years to build and operate 1,500 new units of housing including transition houses, safe homes, second-stage and long-term housing
Supportive Housing Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.2 billion over 10 years to build and operate 2,500 units of supportive housing for those that are homeless or at risk of homelessness

Source: BC Housing Document Review, 2019.

3.1.2.3 Community Engagement and Consultation

When developing projects, staff at BC Housing seek to receive input from Indigenous partners through regular meetings and discussions. BC housing informs Indigenous Nations whose territory overlaps with the project location and follows up with discussions to allow impacted communities to comment on the development.⁵⁵

3.1.2.4 Building Capacity

Offering workshops and mentorship are two ways that BC Housing supports capacity-building with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Past initiatives include:

- Signing Asset Management Memorandum of Understandings with Indigenous Nations which include capacity building regarding capital planning and repairs, construction standards, health and safety, energy efficiency, property maintenance, and redevelopment process and principles;
- Delivering SkillsPlus workshops to on-reserve communities, including in-class and online delivery options through BC Housing's Enterprise Learning Management software system. Training modules include:
 - Common building maintenance
 - Electrical safety and troubleshooting
 - HVAC safety and troubleshooting
 - Janitorial
 - Plumbing
- Presentations to on-Nation communities to share how operating agreements work; and,
- Training in asbestos management, Rapid Damage Assessment, and more.

⁵⁵ BC Housing PAR Submission 2018.

3.1.2.5 BC Housing's Limitations of Authority

“Making sure there's enough affordable housing in B.C. is a joint responsibility across all levels of government.” – Province of British Columbia

To better understand the findings and recommendations in this Report, it is helpful to know how various levels of governments operate together to provide affordable housing across Canada. Table 5 provides context for understanding the roles and responsibilities of the federal, provincial, and local governments with respect to housing.

Table 5: Housing Responsibilities of Governing Bodies in BC and Canada

Governing Body	Responsibilities
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each First Nation is unique and provision of housing to community members varies, but responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing community housing strategies and plans Obtain funding from the Canada Housing Mortgage Corporation Responsible for managing and maintaining housing and infrastructure portfolios
Government of Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners with provincial governments Invests in affordable and social housing and provides funding for affordable housing projects Provides financial assistance through tax credits and exemptions (e.g. the First Time Home Buyer's Tax Credit, Home Buyers' Plan and capital gains tax exemption) Provides mortgage loan insurance Researches the housing market and related topics through the Canada Housing Mortgage Corporation (CMHC) Holds land titles for reserve lands and has jurisdiction over land and title systems under the <i>Indian Act</i> CMHC and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) administer on-reserve housing programs Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) administers <i>Reaching Home</i> funding off-reserve, and has an Indigenous homelessness stream for urban centres Implements the <i>National Housing Strategy</i>, a 10-year commitment to reinvest in affordable and social housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMHC administers the National Housing Strategy funding off-reserve, mainly through bilateral agreements with provinces and territories, as well as direct agreements with non-profits, local governments, and developers The National Housing Strategy Act (June 2019) requires that the Government of Canada “develop and maintain a national housing strategy to further the housing policy, taking into account key principles of a human rights-based approach to housing.” The <i>National Housing Strategy's</i> First Nations programs are being developed and will be administered through ISC
Government of British Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the BC Treaty Commission and the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, the Government of BC is involved in treaty negotiations with First Nations and the federal government The Government of BC mandates for all ministries (including the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing) and crown corporations (including BC Housing) to incorporate the <i>Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act</i> and Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulates real estate development and marketing, home warranty insurance, landlord-tenant relations, land use planning and development finance Provides the legislative framework for strata housing and strata developments



Governing Body	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners with local governments, non-profit agencies, and housing stakeholders through BC Housing • Maintains the BC Building Code and creates efficiencies so that it is easier to approve options such as secondary suites • Develops uniform technical standards that simplify building code compliance • Addresses housing affordability through the <i>Homes for BC: A 30-Point Plan for Housing Affordability in British Columbia</i>. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the main ministry responsible for implementing this plan
BC Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops, finances, manages, and administers a wide range of subsidized housing options across the province, including providing funding for on- and off- reserve housing • Partners with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and stakeholders (including approximately 800 housing providers) to address critical gaps across the housing continuum • Provides asset management and redevelopment expertise and funding • Licenses residential builders • Administers owner/builder authorizations • Conducts research and guides education that benefits the residential construction industry and consumers • BC Housing is responsible for delivering the funding and operating programs in the <i>30-Point Plan</i>; specifically, the Building BC funding programs, including Indigenous Housing Fund and rental assistance programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BC Housing’s role also supports other key strategic areas of responsibility for the Government of BC, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction’s “Together BC - Poverty Reduction Strategy” ▪ The Ministry of Health’s “A Pathway to Hope: A Roadmap for Making Mental Health and Addictions Care Better for People in British Columbia” • Delivers Canada-BC bilateral housing programs, including programs under the <i>National Housing Strategy</i> • Funds emergency shelters, outreach services, transition housing • Provides social housing (landlord) • Works with the housing sector to advance housing policy and programs (e.g., the federal government, BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA), AHMA, private developers)
Local Governments and Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts growth strategies and plans that encourage affordable housing units • Nurtures a regulatory environment that is "housing-friendly" by allowing secondary suites or promoting increased density and housing options • Provides pre-zoned land for development and higher-density transit • Offers property tax incentives and targeted reductions to build or renovate affordable housing • Streamlines development approval processes

Source: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/affordable-and-social-housing/role-of-government>

BC Housing’s scope of power is partially limited by their role as a crown corporation. In the province of BC, crown corporations receive direction from the provincial government through mandate letters that communicate an annual strategic direction and priority for their

corporation.⁵⁶ They are also required to prepare and issue three-year service plans, which must demonstrate alignment with the Province of BC's [Strategic Plan](#) and be approved by the public sector organization's board and responsible minister.⁵⁷

Despite these limitations, BC Housing has the power to influence strategic direction at a provincial and federal level through collaboration with federal and provincial governing bodies. For example, they can influence their own strategic direction by collaborating with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the development and preparation of the annual mandate letters. BC Housing is also a signatory to bilateral agreements with the federal government and works with provincial and territorial governments to influence policy decisions at the federal level. Furthermore, BC Housing can influence at an operational level through their partnerships with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, regional health authorities and the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

TWC recognizes that some of the recommendations included in this Report are not the sole jurisdiction of BC Housing (e.g., recommendations around land and advancing self-government). As recognized thought leaders in affordable housing, BC Housing should seek to use their scope of influence to implement these recommendations and coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies.

⁵⁶ "Plan and Report for Crown Corporations," Province of British Columbia, accessed August 25, 2020, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/public-sector-management/plan-report/crown-corporations>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

4 UNDERSTANDING RECONCILIATION

4.1 Overview

“[Reconciliation] is a long process and it isn’t going to happen overnight... In order to undertake the type of work we are embarking on, we see it as a multi-generational approach, whereas I think sometimes BC Housing and other colonial constructs may see it as having a ceremony, exchanging some nice words, and we are all better.” – Indigenous Nation

Building an understanding of reconciliation means having knowledge about the effects of colonial policies and practices implemented through history, which created harm to and the discrimination of Indigenous peoples and taking action that addresses these impacts. It also means that having a true understanding of past harm brings awareness by government of the need to work in ways that address discrimination and create equity and fairness within policies, programs, and practices

4.2 Preliminary Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and Board. They are intended to support a deepening understanding of what reconciliation can and should mean in working with Indigenous peoples to support and address critical housing needs through equity and fairness.

Table 6: Preliminary Recommendations for Improving BC Housing's Understanding of Reconciliation

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Understanding Reconciliation		
Phase 1	Define the core elements and principles of reconciliation within BC Housing based on knowledge and understanding learned through ongoing discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.	Synthesize information on principles and key elements of reconciliation from this initial engagement.
		Complete a comparison of this information with a review of principles and key elements identified in legislation and reconciliation documentation.
	Provide additional training to staff and Board members on the topics of cultural humility, cultural sensitivity, and cultural safety and provide additional stages of training for staff on how to apply cultural awareness and knowledge	Make cultural awareness training mandatory for all staff and available to Board members and expand BC Housing’s course offerings to include other useful courses on the topics of reconciliation, decolonization, and cultural sensitivity. Appendix B: Recommended Training Courses includes



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Understanding Reconciliation		
	to their work (e.g., learning about how increased understanding of Indigenous histories and colonial practices helps build positive relationships with Indigenous people and supports their goals to reclaim self-determination).	several additional options for BC Housing’s consideration.
		Undertake research on these core topics as they relate to Indigenous engagement.
		Engage with staff on their interests and learning goals in these areas.
		Research existing training programs on topics of cultural humility, cultural sensitivity, and cultural safety to support employee learning.
		Identify specific training options for staff to include in their performance plans.
		Commission a review of BC Housing’s current course offerings to assess their efficacy.
		Following completion of the <i>Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples</i> training, engage with staff on their skill requirements to support Indigenous engagement.
		Create a competency framework that identifies these skills sets.
		Build understanding of these skills and competencies in staff performance evaluations.
	Continue to engage in discussions at BC Housing semi-annual meetings on reconciliation and how understanding cultural safety, humility, and sensitivity translates into decolonized policies and practices.	Identify Indigenous resources and speakers for staff meetings (virtual as needed) to share knowledge and engage in discussions on how shifting culture leads to decolonized practices and approaches.
	At the board level, develop a deeper understanding of reconciliation and adapt Board	Identify key Indigenous speakers and guests to engage in open and participatory discussions on reconciliation.



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Understanding Reconciliation		
	decision-making and governance processes based on the principles of reconciliation.	Complete a review of Board governance in light of reconciliation.
		Implement changes to governance practices within the Board.
Phase 2	Undertake further internal research on BC Housing’s own colonial history based on the evolution of the role of housing within the province, including past failures.	Commission a comprehensive review of BC Housing’s business practices and policies for adopting or implementing reconciliation and identify knowledge and resource gaps. This review may be led or developed in collaboration and partnership with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
		Document these research findings and analysis in the Reconciliation Strategy.
		Identify facilitators to engage staff in a discussion on what this colonial history means with respect to current culture, practices and policies.
		Through these discussions, identify what changes in practice and culture would support decolonization within the organization - part of a Reconciliation Action Plan.
Phase 3	Dedicate resources for BC Housing staff to action the recommended changes arising out of the analysis described in Phase 2.	Determine through staff discussions what resources are required for specific changes including policy, recruitment, training and program implementation.
		Complete an analysis of critical budget requirements over three years.
	Review current BC Housing communication practices and guidelines to support	Based on this review, identify gaps in communication practices based on the review of BC Housing’s history and identified cultural shifts.

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Understanding Reconciliation		
	reconciliation and decolonized messaging.	<p>Engage with Indigenous organizations on ways that BC Housing can improve its communications messaging and processes.</p> <p>Based on this dialogue, develop clear communication messaging to enable consistent internal and external communication approaches.</p>

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing’s direct jurisdiction or authority and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

4.3 What We Heard

4.3.1 INDIGENOUS NATIONS, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

4.3.1.1 Defining Reconciliation

We heard from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that reconciliation is a process of acknowledging past and current wrongs against Indigenous peoples. It involves recognizing that colonial policies and practices harmed Indigenous peoples and contributed to socio-economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. For example, one respondent shared how the creation of the reserve system harmed their community, and stated:

"... A lot of the people are saying that this [the colonial past] is why most of our people are homeless. It is because we were forced to move three towns over to where we are now, which is not our traditional territory. - Indigenous Nation

We also heard that the pursuit of reconciliation requires education and engaging in an ongoing process of learning about Indigenous peoples, including their experiences, histories, cultures, languages, and ways of knowing and being. In addition, some respondents emphasized that it is important to acknowledge Indigenous peoples' rights and title to their traditional territories. A few Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations discussed that they are committed to a process of learning and generating awareness within their own organizations. Some organizations have implemented training for all their staff members because they recognize that everyone's experience and level of understanding is different. We heard from a couple of respondents that reconciliation is a long process that will require time and commitment to deepening understandings:

"Reconciliation is far more than just a point or a paper, it's a process—a long process that needs a deeper understanding. It's something that's taken generations and generations to get here. It will take time for the effects to be addressed and for healing to take place. - Indigenous Housing Provider

Why This Is Important

Reconciliation should not be used in an unauthentic way as an empty word. It needs to have meaning within BC Housing and be supported by action.

Why This Is Important

Reconciliation is a long-term learning process; it is about multiple, complex, and often uncomfortable conversations to truly embrace what reconciliation means and the time needed for healing. TRC's Calls to Action suggest that organizations like BC Housing educate their management and staff on Indigenous history, rights and title, cultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism (TRC).



Furthermore, several people also noted that reconciliation is about trying to close the socio-economic gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. A few respondents mentioned that there is a need to improve the livelihoods of Indigenous Nations and communities by providing them the same opportunities that non-Indigenous Canadians receive in housing, health, education, economy, and other socio-economic areas.

“It is about recognizing that there’s a problem —that Indigenous people were mistreated and taken advantage of. It is about trying to make that right for lack of a better word. - Organization

Building relationships was another common theme that emerged with respect to how individual respondents defined reconciliation. Several people commented that reconciliation is about governments and Indigenous Nations and communities working together to find common ground or define a path forward. A couple of people also stressed that building relationships should happen at all levels within governments, Nations, communities, and organizations.

Some Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations also commented on their own experiences in building relationships with Indigenous communities. They emphasized the importance of building relationships that are guided by principles such as respect, authenticity, reciprocity, and effective communication.

A few respondents expressed that reconciliation is about giving Indigenous peoples enough control to manage their own affairs and make decisions. One respondent elaborated that true reconciliation would mean governments relinquishing control to create space for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to make decisions without needing to seek approval from governing bodies such as BC Housing.

“Reconciliation is about continuing to look at how systems can restrict Indigenous people from taking control of their own affairs and being open to a variety of new perspectives on that. - Indigenous Service Provider

Why This Is Important

The legacy of colonization has resulted in socio-economic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. TRC’s Calls to Action call upon corporate businesses and organizations to ensure that Indigenous peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and educational opportunities in the corporate sector (TRC).

Why This Is Important

Reconciliation is about recognizing how colonial history has impacted the ability of Indigenous Nations and communities to retain self-determination and self-governance; and the significance of BC Housing working to recognize and restore self-determination and self-government. Article 3 of UNDRIP emphasizes Indigenous Peoples’ right to self-determination, meaning the right to determine their political status and decide how they wish to pursue economic, social, and cultural opportunities (UNDRIP).



We heard from a couple of respondents that the term “reconciliation” does not resonate with some Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. One person explained that this is because it is a term that does not belong to Indigenous people. One respondent also noted that as a concept, reconciliation is too vague to be useful in addressing the core issues impacting Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. These perspectives speak to the issue that reconciliation is a term adopted to address a process and addressing past harm – and so in order to ensure that reconciliation is not just considered or defined as a state in time or a singular issue, it means awareness and action toward progress.

A few people commented that reconciliation is about building healthy communities. This includes creating a sense of belonging, as well as addressing issues within communities to support the well-being of the collective membership. The past harms caused to Indigenous peoples within Canada resulted in impacts on the health and economic well-being of Nations and communities. Indigenous communities have been going through healing to be able to help their people build healthy communities and gain economic success.

A few respondents suggested that reconciliation needs to be supported with action. One person mentioned that this means addressing core issues that Indigenous Nations and communities face, as opposed to “saying all the nice words and developing little programs” (Indigenous Housing Provider). This perspective raises the issue that reconciliation is an action word and a meaningful process of commitment to addressing the core needs of Indigenous people arising from colonial forms of discrimination.

A couple of respondents emphasized that reconciliation requires a focus on hiring Indigenous staff and organizations to lead the process of learning. This means that Indigenous people need to speak about Indigenous people and share their own stories. The sharing of stories by Indigenous people is one of the most important ways for BC Housing staff to learn day-to-day about what being Indigenous means and what their needs are.

A respondent indicated that reconciliation includes addressing past discriminatory actions or policies implemented by the government that resulted in the loss of access to cultural resources for Indigenous Nations or communities to teach their own people. Sometimes it is assumed that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have the resources to teach their citizens about cultural practices. This is often evidenced in the area of Indigenous languages where Nations lack the capacity and resources to teach their languages and cultures to their citizens.

A couple of people emphasized that reconciliation is about recognizing and respecting the unique experiences of each Indigenous Nation, community, or organization. It means moving beyond the UNDRIP definition⁵⁸ of Indigenous peoples to include the experiences of the urban

⁵⁸ Although an official definition of “Indigenous” has not been adopted by any UN-system body, the United Nations’ factsheet on Indigenous Peoples has developed an understanding of this term based on several factors, including “having a strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources.” (https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf) This understanding of reconciliation excludes the interests of the urban Indigenous population.

Indigenous population. Moreover, it means avoiding blanket policies for all Indigenous peoples, and instead choosing to treat each Indigenous Nation or community uniquely. Indigenous people have diverse histories, cultures, knowledge, and practices. As noted in these comments, this means that BC Housing needs to understand Indigenous cultural diversity and undertake their work in a way that adapts to the specific needs and aspirations of communities.

“The government falling back to distinction-based groups and the concept of reconciliation through government-to-government relationships because that’s how it’s defined in UNDRIP is missing the reality of those 60-80 percent [of the urban Indigenous population] that are not going to get captured in the government-to-government relations, but those are important and essential.” - Indigenous Housing Organization

4.3.1.2 How BC Housing Supports Reconciliation

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations commented that BC Housing demonstrates reconciliation by providing and expanding its support to Indigenous housing projects, building collaborative relationships, and engaging in a process of learning.

Several respondents discussed ways that BC Housing provides support to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Most notably, they commented on how BC Housing recently expanded its support to on-reserve housing projects through the Indigenous Housing Fund. A couple of people also mentioned that BC Housing’s mandate to meet Indigenous housing needs through affordable housing programs is a good example of how they support reconciliation.

Another common theme that emerged was that BC Housing builds collaborative relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. A few people shared that BC Housing’s staff take the time to listen to them and understand their concerns. Some people also noted that BC Housing shows commitment by being readily available (e.g., through phone, email, or video conferencing) and attentive to their needs.

Why This Is Important

Indigenous groups recognize that the work BC Housing is doing to support housing in communities is an important aspect of reconciliation. The expansion to on-reserve housing was an important step in expanding action toward addressing Indigenous housing needs and issues.

“BC Housing has gone out of their way to help us. They came out here 2-3 times already. We had really decent meetings with them. From when I first contacted them, they’ve been pretty prompt on things.” - Indigenous Nation



We also heard that BC Housing is dedicated to learning about how they can do things in a better way. Several respondents mentioned that BC Housing is listening intently and taking their recommendations into consideration. A few people have also noticed changes in BC Housing's understanding of reconciliation within recent years. For example, some respondents mentioned that the organization's engagement and business practices (e.g., when they do land acknowledgments) are beginning to feel more authentic and genuine.

A couple of people suggested that the creation of roles such as the Director of Indigenous Relations within BC Housing helped to demonstrate BC Housing's commitment to reconciliation. This perspective addresses the issue that Indigenous people should be speaking for Indigenous people and staff should be undertaking ongoing education on Indigenous culture and practices.

We heard from a few respondents that there is some confusion for Indigenous housing providers, Nations, and communities because they do not always know who to turn to for different issues when they arise. We also heard that having internal Indigenous-focused positions within BC Housing (e.g., a Director of Indigenous Relations and Director of Indigenous Asset Management) has contributed to tension or a conflict of interest between BC Housing and AHMA. Some respondents mentioned that having these positions in BC Housing duplicates the work of AHMA. Building capacity with and within Indigenous communities and organizations is viewed differently depending on the perspective. This can mean recruiting and retaining Indigenous staff within BC Housing to engage with Indigenous people or it can mean recognizing that Indigenous communities want to make decisions over housing for their own people. While this is a matter for further discussion with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing needs to ensure that the Indigenous capacity within BC Housing should not be built at the cost of diminishing housing capacity within Indigenous communities and organizations.

One person indicated that BC Housing supports reconciliation by being flexible and recognizing the cultural needs of their organization. They commented that BC Housing has been open to discussing different approaches to housing design to ensure that it is culturally responsive. This comment reflects the fact that there are successes being experienced from an Indigenous perspective. This is important because circumstances where an approach is working needs to be recognized and dissected to determine why it is successful. This does not mean duplicating this exact approach for other situations but being aware of the key elements that made the approach successful.

Why This Is Important

BC Housing has made changes that are being reported as more positive and authentic. This is important because there are actions and steps to build on; however, this needs to be looked at alongside other comments about how BC Housing should support meaningful Indigenous input into housing development as well as Indigenous decision-making processes.



One person commented that language around reconciliation is often used in BC Housing’s program and project descriptions that have an Indigenous focus. However, they noted that reconciliation is not often used within non-Indigenous program descriptions, objectives, or purposes. This statement means that reconciliation is not necessarily viewed as a process for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Having said that, BC Housing needs to review how reconciliation is used and whether it is viewed as a process involving Indigenous and non-Indigenous people as well as a process between Indigenous people and government.

Why This Is Important

BC Housing needs to use the term reconciliation and speak about what it means – understanding past harms and taking corrective action – and ensuring discriminatory practices do not occur now or in the future. This comment means that those interacting with BC Housing hear the words but do not see how what reconciliation stands for is actually being implemented.

A handful of people were not aware of ways that BC Housing supports reconciliation. We also heard from one person that BC Housing engages in conversations about reconciliation and TRC’s Calls to Action but does not support reconciliation through specific actions. They shared, “I feel [BC Housing] speaks a lot about [reconciliation] and the Truth and Reconciliation, but when it comes down to it, they don’t really back it up.”

4.3.1.3 Areas for Improvement

Many Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations expressed that BC Housing’s past approaches to reconciliation have felt colonial or paternalistic. For example, some people mentioned that steps such as becoming PAR certified or devolving the Indigenous housing portfolio to AHMA seemed unauthentic or like BC Housing was trying to “tick a box” on a reconciliation checklist. We also heard from one respondent that the Indigenous Housing Fund is not fully reflective of a decolonized approach to reconciling with Indigenous peoples. They explained:

“Indigenous organizations are vying for funding. It’s very colonized. The funding is like a carrot being dangled on a stick by the government and everyone is chasing the money. - Indigenous Housing Provider

Why This Is Important

These comments regarding paternalism and decolonized approaches speak to the need for BC Housing to build a deeper meaning of reconciliation and demonstrate action consistent with this meaning – understanding past harms caused to Indigenous people and supporting meaningful self-determination, equity and fairness.

Several people suggested that BC Housing needs to develop a deeper understanding of reconciliation and decolonize their approaches. We heard from multiple respondents that reconciliation is a long process and that it will take time to see progressive change within BC Housing.



“Reconciliation requires a deep commitment to understanding and knowledge. And I think that we have only peeled back the first layer maybe and we have a long way to go. - Indigenous Nation

4.3.2 BC HOUSING STAFF

4.3.2.1 Defining Reconciliation

From a personal perspective, almost half of respondents defined reconciliation as:

- Acknowledging past harms against Indigenous people and taking measures to prevent future harm;
- Building respectful, trusting, collaborative, and balanced relationships; and,
- Practicing cultural humility by listening and learning about the experiences of Indigenous peoples.

Over one-third of respondents defined reconciliation as acknowledging and addressing disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. This means that there are underlying factors to explain the social and economic disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. However, this perspective needs to be discussed further within BC Housing about whether these factors or the history is understood.

We heard that being flexible and responding to unique and diverse needs of Indigenous Nations is important to reconciliation as well as building the capacity of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to be self-sufficient. Staff stated that BC Housing needs to change the way they provide supports to be more flexible in building housing, providing amenities, and landscape design.

“Reconciliation is not going to be a one-size-fits-all strategy or a one-size-fits-all definition. Things that define reconciliation will be different depending on [the] community. – BC Housing Staff

Why This Is Important

While some flexibility in housing occurs, Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are wanting more control over and input into the type and nature of housing developed in their communities – size, cultural uses, and designs to address needs. Article 23 of UNDRIP emphasizes Indigenous Peoples’ right to be actively involved in developing and determining housing affecting them (UNDRIP).

A couple of respondents indicated that reconciliation includes the recognition and upholding of Indigenous rights and title which includes the duty to acknowledge that there are Indigenous rights to the lands on which BC Housing works.



Staff familiarity with UNDRIP and the TRC Calls to Action varied. While three-quarters of the staff respondents showed familiarity with these documents, eight indicated they had only some or little familiarity, and two indicated they had no familiarity.⁵⁹ A couple of respondents keep UNDRIP and TRC booklets (provided by BC Housing Human Resources) at their desks. There was a general sense that UNDRIP and TRC are important, but most respondents did not or could not describe relevant articles or sections. One respondent indicated that BC Housing did not encourage them to become familiar with the documents.

When asked how they embrace and implement reconciliation within their work, most staff responded that they work to build respectful or collaborative relationships with Indigenous Nations. This includes responsive and ongoing communication, listening, building relationships built on trust, and taking the time to understand Indigenous communities' needs, frustrations, and how BC Housing can perform their work in response.

"I keep in touch, follow up, and check in with communities. I want to keep the conversation going to build the relationship. I try and get to know people outside of the work bubble—I personally think that when we work with a community it is more than just work—you are building a friendship. – BC Housing Staff

One third of respondents commented that they respect cultural diversity and the unique needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations through their work. One example provided was being sensitive to the specific needs of Indigenous peoples in the design of a shelter (e.g., programming and staffing) and cultural considerations (e.g., layout). Staff expressed that they have a lot to learn with working on-Nation.

While there was an overall sense of respect for Indigenous peoples, colloquial language was sometimes used when discussing reconciliation. For example, terms and phrases such as 'lifting them up', 'impoverished', 'training them how to do things in a more efficient way' were used when describing Indigenous peoples or what BC Housing was doing for and with Indigenous

Why This Is Important

BC Housing needs to facilitate knowledge and understanding among staff throughout the organization on the key components and impacts of UNDRIP and TRC through engaging Indigenous speakers and knowledge holders. Providing booklets for staff to retain on their desks for reference is not sufficient to building a deep and meaningful understanding.

Why This Is Important

These perspectives indicate a wide range of understandings and views regarding reconciliation. Working to address disparities is important to reconciliation; however, this should be done with Indigenous people and not for Indigenous people. Understanding whether and how reconciliation applies to BC Housing's work requires discussion and education among staff – how can BC Housing play a role in addressing past harms and ensure discrimination-free practices in their work.

⁵⁹ One respondent did not answer.



communities. This stereotypical or paternalistic language can be seen to perpetuate discrimination. One respondent talked about Black and Indigenous people as one and the same. The comment was intended to draw similarities between the discrimination of Indigenous Africans and Indigenous people in Canada based on colonial practices and oppressive government policies. Based on the oppressive treatment, both groups experienced significant harm which resulted in a legacy of hardship and inequality.

Three respondents share information about reconciliation and raise awareness amongst their colleagues. One respondent stated that they shared what they learn from Indigenous communities (e.g., differing perspectives on how various aspects of housing can be approached through an Indigenous lens) with their colleagues. Another respondent indicated that they are open and willing to share what they know about Indigenous issues with colleagues and that they create space for colleagues to ask questions.

Two respondents communicated that their work is valuable in terms of addressing disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples within housing. They further explained that their work involves providing housing and shelter for Indigenous peoples, thus supporting reconciliation.

One respondent was unsure if reconciliation is applicable to their work. This perspective raises the issue that reconciliation can be seen as a siloed action and that it is not everyone's responsibility to uphold.

One respondent was not fully supportive of the term 'reconciliation' as it pre-supposes a good relationship between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This perspective speaks to the issue that reconciliation is a term adopted to implement a process for addressing past harm and to ensure that reconciliation is not just considered to be based on a positive relationship.

4.3.2.2 How BC Housing Currently Operationalizes Reconciliation

Staff were generally not aware of how BC Housing defines reconciliation or indicated that there was no agreed-upon definition; however, two respondents interpreted BC Housing's definition of reconciliation as building, enhancing, and repairing relationships with Indigenous peoples, another by delivering housing on-Nation, and another by acknowledging and addressing inequities against Indigenous peoples.

The majority of staff interviewed indicated that BC Housing currently promotes reconciliation by supporting collaborative or respectful relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Examples stated by staff members include the creation of an Indigenous Procurement Policy in 2016 and the transfer of responsibilities for provincially funded Indigenous housing stock to AHMA.

We heard that building capacity within BC Housing to support reconciliation through hiring practices and training is an important part of operationalizing reconciliation. Examples provided for hiring practices are:

- Hiring Indigenous employees and those with lived experience so the corporation can be representative of those they serve;
- Job opportunities promoted on Indigenous hiring sites, in Indigenous communities, and with Indigenous organizations, including an Indigenous student co-op program; and,
- Quantitative data collection on self-identified Indigenous hires per year.

BC Housing provides staff optional training opportunities such as *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples*, informal 'lunch and learns', internal presentations on projects with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, and project specific cultural heritage training. The *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* training is offered on a voluntary basis. This training should be mandatory for all staff as it is important to build an understanding regarding relationship-building throughout the organization. There is a gap in the continuum of training such as training focused on what does cultural awareness mean in practical ways when communicating and working with Indigenous people.

We also heard from a few respondents that BC Housing currently promotes reconciliation by:

- Providing support to Indigenous groups (through funding, training, and capacity building);
- Improving work culture and business practices through actions such as giving land acknowledgments during media events and branch meetings, hiring people who have worked with Indigenous communities or have lived experience, and by listening to and collaborating with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on housing projects;
- Adapting to the needs of Indigenous peoples;
- To varying degrees and depending on the business area, BC Housing staff are learning about reconciliation, Indigenous history/experiences and best practices; and,
- Applying Indigenous approaches or frameworks to work.

4.3.2.3 Areas for Improvement

Staff suggested the following ways to improve the organization's level of understanding and commitment to reconciliation:

- Make the *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* training mandatory;
- Provide more time to engage in discussions about reconciliation at staff meetings and day-to-day;
- Increase education and training opportunities for BC Housing staff
 - Teach staff how to apply principles of decolonization, reconciliation, anti-racism and anti-discrimination to their day-to-day work practices; and,
- Increase diversity within the organization to include more Indigenous staff members.

4.3.3 BC HOUSING BOARD

4.3.3.1 Defining Reconciliation

Board members generally agreed that reconciliation is a process of learning and improving one's understanding of Indigenous peoples and history, and that this involves acknowledging the discrimination and past harms committed by the Canadian government and mainstream society against Indigenous peoples. We also heard that reconciliation is about addressing the inequalities that have resulted from this history.

One member suggested that there is still a lack of understanding amongst many non-Indigenous Canadians about Canada's colonial history and that BC Housing should provide more education to its staff and Board members on topics such as the residential school system. They shared that having a workshop might be beneficial in deepening their understandings:

"I think having some kind of workshop or having someone come in and share their story could be really beneficial to providing a deeper layer of understanding to the Board members so we can do this work right. We need to understand, connect, and feel what this is really about—not just thinking cognitively. – BC Housing Board Member

Moreover, the Board also suggested that reconciliation is about building and repairing relationships with Indigenous peoples and that relationships should be built on the principles of mutual trust and respect. While Board members recognized that reconciliation requires ongoing communication, collaboration, and partnerships, none of them provided any tangible examples that would demonstrate what

Why This Is Important

TRC's Calls to Action require that corporate businesses and organizations like BC Housing educate their management and staff on Indigenous history, including rights and title, Indigenous law, Crown relations with Indigenous peoples, human rights, and anti-racism (TRC). Although BC Housing currently offers staff the opportunity to take the *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* course, it is optional. It is also the only course that BC Housing offers, despite other options being available to supplement it (see Appendix B). Reconciliation is an ongoing process of learning and requires that staff and Board stay up to date and continue to learn. Many Ministries in the province have made Cultural Safety Training mandatory. BC Housing should follow suit.

Why This Is Important

Reconciliation without action is meaningless. It is important that BC Housing consider ways to translate theory into action by identifying concrete ways to apply principles from documents such as UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action, and best practices in decolonization.



collaboration might look like in the context of their work.⁶⁰ Board members commented that they want to continue to have regular discussions regarding reconciliation and have Indigenous speakers help to build their understanding. These discussions could focus on how concepts of reconciliation can be implemented within BC Housing's work and the work of the Board.

"It's something that we do every day. It's ongoing relationship building, communication, and collaboration. I don't think it's something that can be book-marked. Once we have this Strategy, our work isn't complete. – BC Housing Board Member

Several Board members also commented on accountability and that reconciliation is about individuals and organizations implementing the principles of UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action in their daily work practices. In addition, a couple of members mentioned the concept of self-determination and suggested that reconciliation is about creating space for Indigenous peoples to lead decision-making processes and manage their own housing.

4.3.3.2 How BC Housing Currently Operationalizes Reconciliation

We heard that BC Housing currently supports reconciliation through relationships and partnerships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, funding for Indigenous housing projects, and training for its staff in cultural sensitivity.

Board members shared that BC Housing has several strong and longstanding relationships with Indigenous housing providers and organizations. They suggested that BC Housing supports reconciliation through its ongoing relationship with AHMA. The Board also mentioned that BC Housing is supporting these relationships through listening, capacity-building, and involving Indigenous operators in the management of Indigenous housing projects.

Why This Is Important

TRC's Calls to Action suggest that corporate businesses and organizations need to focus on building respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples and respect the duty to consult on decisions that impact them (TRC). What we heard from Board members confirms that BC Housing is at the very least intentional about wanting to build relationships with Indigenous peoples.

"I have seen BC Housing's role with respect to housing in Indigenous communities expand since 2019 through BC Housing's ongoing relationship with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA), which is one of the largest Indigenous-managed Indigenous housing organizations in Canada and perhaps the world – BC Housing Board Member

⁶⁰ To address this gap in understanding, TWC recommends that the Board set aside some time during one of their upcoming meetings to reflect, discuss, and identify specific ways to improve their collaboration, communication and partnerships with BC Housing's Indigenous partners.



The Board also emphasized that BC Housing is demonstrating its commitment to reconciliation through the creation of the Indigenous Housing Fund, employment of Indigenous community members in housing projects, and the organization's dedication to educating staff on reconciliation through cultural sensitivity training and break-out sessions during the organization's semi-annual meetings. As mentioned in Section 3.1.1.2, BC Housing staff are provided cultural sensitivity training mostly through the *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* training course, which is an Indigenous-led course for staff to build stronger cultural understandings and develop more respectful and collaborative approaches to working with Indigenous peoples. It is important to note that this training course is not mandatory or reinforced in BC Housing's long-term strategies.

Why This Is Important

TRC's Calls to Action emphasize the importance of educating staff on topics such as Indigenous history, rights and title, and Indigenous law. It also encourages businesses to ensure that Indigenous peoples are provided equitable access to jobs, training, and educational opportunities (TRC). BC Housing has taken steps in the right direction through the Indigenous Housing Fund, employment of community members, and educating staff. There is room to expand these efforts to go beyond what might be surface-level initiatives.

4.3.3.3 Areas for Improvement

The Board suggested the following ways to improve the organization's level of understanding and commitment to reconciliation:

- Ensure accountability to reconciliation through increased opportunities for learning and identifying ways to apply UNDRIP and TRC principles to work practices;
- Increasing the representation of Indigenous peoples within the organization, including on the Board; and,
- Repairing, enhancing, and developing respectful and trusting relationships with Indigenous peoples through ongoing conversations and cooperative partnerships, including inviting Indigenous groups to provide input into decisions.

5 TRANSFORMING ORGANIZATION CULTURE

5.1 Overview

"It has to start at the top with BC Housing. They have to look at the inherent structural barriers. How many of their employees are Indigenous or on their governance board? That would be a first step. The more people that are on the ground working internally and bringing forth a different worldview, the more likely we can bring forward change. – Housing Provider

Culture represents the values, principles, and practices of the organization. Transforming organizational culture in the context of reconciliation means acting and working with respect, trust and understanding. The organization culture underpins the planning and daily operations of the organization. In the context of reconciliation, transforming BC Housing means that having a true understanding of past discrimination brings awareness of the need to work in ways that address discrimination and create equity and fairness within policies, programs, and practices.

5.2 Preliminary Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and Board. They are intended to identify ways that BC Housing can ensure that its culture is based on non-discriminatory and respectful values and practices.

Table 7: Preliminary Recommendations for Transforming BC Housing's Organizational Structure

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Transforming Organization Culture		
Phase 1	Implement a standardized framework for conducting land and territorial acknowledgements with input from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.	Review the different land acknowledgements used by BC Housing.
		Create a protocol for acknowledging Indigenous lands and territories in meaningful ways, allowing flexibility to adapt acknowledgements to local Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
	Review staff and board identity factors for recruitment and retention (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, age,	Complete a review of recruitment practices and policies with a diversity lens.
		Eliminate bias in recruitment practices and policies.

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Transforming Organization Culture		
	economic standing) to achieve diversity.	Hire an external expert as needed to complete a neutral perspective to the review.
	Review BC Housing policies to establish a zero tolerance for discriminatory behaviours.	Identify all policies that should be part of a review.
		Mandate Human Resources to review these policies.
		Recruit external expert identified above, as needed, to provide guidance on this policy review.
	Review BC Housing’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy.	Ensure that it includes statements on anti-racism and equity and a process for addressing issues.
		Develop practices for addressing situations and appropriate remedies.
		Develop new policies focusing on anti-racism, anti-discrimination and equity. Include a mandate for the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB) as part of this process. ⁶¹
	Identify a department with an appointed champion within BC Housing to lead implementation and monitoring of the Diversity Committee.	Review the mandates of departments to determine the roles and scope of work.
		Determine a few key criteria important to the successful leadership for the Committee such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a broad impact; • Has a strong focus on people and communities; • Has access to resources; and,

⁶¹ Since the development of this Report, BC Housing has implemented the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB), who will serve as a lead for recommended actions relating to diversity, equity and inclusion.

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Transforming Organization Culture		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can work effectively with other government agencies and Ministries.
		Ensure that the BC Housing’s Executive Committee and other departments support the decision.
		Seek a champion from within the department through a request for interest from within the department.
	Following the review of staff and board identity factors for recruitment and retention, adopt a standard of collecting information on diversity, equity, and inclusion factors, while at the same time ensuring that participants are given an option to ‘opt-out’ for privacy concerns.	Recruit an expert in diversity data collection, privacy and data base management through a competitive process.
		Complete a review of existing data and information policies, processes and standards within BC Housing (where and how is data collected, what does the information tell us).
		Identify gaps in data and create a Diversity Data Framework with principles, collection and use guidelines and data standards.
		Communicate this Framework within BC Housing and to partners for dialogue and input.
Create accountability within BC Housing planning, budgeting and decision-making that aligns with this Framework.		
Phase 2	Include the topic of reconciliation as a standing agenda item for Board meetings and provide time for members to discuss and identify ways to incorporate reconciliation, decolonization, and equity practices into their board culture.	Identify and engage Indigenous speakers and guests to discuss reconciliation with Board members.
Recruit a facilitator from time to time to manage discussions at meetings on ways that the Board can implement reconciliation based on BC Housing’s work toward a Reconciliation Strategy.		

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Transforming Organization Culture		
	Build upon the review of recruitment practices and policies (see Phase 1 recommendations) to update strategies and hiring practices to align with an equitable and racism-free workplace.	Compile information on all hiring practices, policies and strategies.
		Review any identified recruitment and hiring goals.
		Identify training to help BC Housing achieve their hiring and recruitment goals and objectives.
	Support staff and board members with a list of current resources related to Indigenous peoples and housing such as reports (e.g., <i>UNDRIP, Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action, Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls</i>), podcasts, documentaries, and film and provide space to enable discussions on how this information is essential to making progress on decolonizing organizational practices including BC Housing's operations, programs and approaches to building and sustaining positive relationships.	Identify a lead staff member in BC Housing to be responsible for creating and updating this resource list.
		Create accountability for utilizing this list for staff learning and education within staff performance plans (including a section on planned resource learning and how staff used this learning).
		Ensure there is a process for gathering emerging and new resources in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing's direct jurisdiction or authority and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

5.3 What We Heard

5.3.1 BC HOUSING STAFF

5.3.1.1 Current Organization Culture

When asked if respondents had observed or experienced inequitable or discriminatory activities or practices within BC Housing, one staff indicated they were uncertain, seven staff indicated they had, and 12 indicated that they had not.⁶² This means that 40% of all staff interviewed are uncertain about experiencing discrimination or have experienced discrimination. BC Housing needs to provide further education internally and to explore what forms of discrimination have taken place or are occurring within the organization. If the organization's goal is zero tolerance, then it is important to build understanding on the forms and types of discrimination.

Respondents who indicated they had not observed or experienced these behaviours expressed that BC Housing is a diverse and respectful workplace with a safe internal culture.

One respondent who identified as a white male, reflected that while he has not observed or experienced anything inequitable or discriminatory, he has never been subjected to discrimination and therefore might not be able to recognize it.

"I have never experienced or observed inequitable or discriminatory activities or practices internally within BC Housing's workplace. You hear things like a joke that are so common in our culture, and after a week you think about it and think, "That may have been something." But I can't think of anything specific. – BC Housing Staff Member

Why This Is Important

In order to work effectively with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing's culture cannot tolerate discriminatory treatment. Staff who commented that they had not experienced or observed discrimination generally advised that BC Housing is a diverse and respectful workplace. This comment should also inform internal discussions regarding what creates the safe internal culture and a respectful workplace. In addition, education is critical where individuals are not sure if discrimination exists.

Of the seven staff that indicated they had observed or experienced these practices, the following examples were provided:

- Micro aggression through the use of racist and discriminatory language by BC Housing staff (e.g., using the term 'those people' in a meeting while talking about Indigenous peoples, talking about another person's skin colour or hair, disparaging comments about Indigenous peoples framed as a joke, casual racism such as calling a colleague racial slurs);

⁶² Three respondents did not respond to this question.



- Structural inequities such as:
 - A limited ability for staff to move up in the company (e.g., opportunities for an administrative assistant to move to a higher-paid position are limited);
 - Hiring practices (e.g., discriminatory job descriptions that include a requirement to own your own car and the feeling that applicants are judged based on check boxes, staff not reflective of the people BC Housing serves, non-equitable pay maintained and entrenched practices within BC Housing⁶³, low racial diversity within senior leadership, no staff that have professional experience in equity, no staff with visible disabilities);
 - Inability of BC Housing’s Human Resources to deal with inequitable and discriminatory behaviour that is brought to their attention.
- Cultural appropriation within BC Housing work -sanctioned events;
- A colonial patriarchal culture;
- The feeling that racism is swept under the rug;
- Complaints from external partners to staff regarding discrimination, inequitable practices, and bullying they experienced from other BC Housing staff; and,
- Inequitable funding model (e.g., inadequate funding provided for Indigenous projects compared to non-Indigenous projects, westernized funding call and application process that does not consider an Indigenous lens).

Why This Is Important

Article 2 of UNDRIP states that Indigenous peoples have the right to be free from any form of discrimination based on their Indigenous identities or origins (UNDRIP).

This list of barriers indicates that there are several factors creating inequity and discrimination. Some are process and policy related (e.g., hiring practices), some pertain to awareness and training (human resource management) and others are value-based. In any case, this range of factors and issues points to the need to examine and address discrimination within BC Housing from different levels and sources. This includes addressing the issue that staff may not be aware that discrimination is happening.

BC Housing’s corporate culture does not allow every voice to be heard (e.g., no space for pauses of thought or contemplative answers), therefore lacking respect and cultural safety. This comment is fundamental to the work that BC Housing undertakes with Indigenous organizations. Further exploration of how this occurs within the organization is important to

⁶³ When staff move to another position, their salary is adjusted by a maximum of 10% or to the lowest amount within the pay band for their position if the 10% still falls short of the pay band. Evaluation of internal candidates combined education, experience and service history with the organization are not considered when promoting from within nor is evaluation of the value to the organization in the job duties.

determine where the barriers exist and what are the causes. Not enabling all voices to be heard can stem from discrimination, ignorance, or non-inclusive processes within the organization.

5.3.1.2 What is BC Housing Doing?

When asked what practices or approaches BC Housing implements internally to ensure an equitable, anti-racist, and discrimination-free work environment, nearly three quarters of respondents commented on BC Housing's training and learning opportunities. Several staff brought up the mandatory training in anti-harassment and anti-bullying, as well as the optional training courses listed in Table 3: Training Opportunities Offered to BC Housing Employees.

It was reported that some respondents felt there was a general awareness about equity and anti-racism within BC Housing. They suggested that the organization creates a safe and open space for dialogue and promotes learning through annual lunch and learns, semi-annual meetings, seminars, workshops, newsletters, and multi-cultural days. Moreover, a few staff shared that BC Housing's semi-annual meetings invite guest speakers to lead discussions in topics such as inclusion, reducing workplace discrimination and unconscious biases, UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action, and more.

Over half of respondents emphasized that BC Housing maintains an equitable work culture through its internal policies and practices and by holding each other accountable to anti-discrimination. Many respondents stated executive leadership makes it clear that racism and discrimination are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Specific examples were not provided; however, a couple of respondents indicated a former BC Housing employee who no longer works at BC Housing had acted in a racist or discriminatory way. Diversity is reflected through BC Housing's hiring practices and diverse employee population; respondents indicated that more women and people of colour have been hired in leadership roles within the organization. No specific hiring practices or employee population information related to Indigenous peoples was referred to.

BC Housing responds to employees' specific needs (e.g., varying schedule needs for cultural activities and work styles). Respecting diversity and equity means understanding and responding to the cultural and unique needs of individual staff. Being able to provide flexibility

Why This Is Important

The comments in this section provide only general insights into current approaches to address inequities and anti-discrimination. There needs to be further assessment of what practices are in place and what is needed. In the earlier section, there were perspectives offered by some staff that there is discrimination and another view that it was not clear if there was or not.

All staff interviewed were asked what could be improved to create and support an anti-racist and non-discriminatory workplace regardless of whether they experienced this issue or not. Responses provided focused on ways to add or enhance actions aimed at ensuring a discrimination-free workplace.

BC Housing currently does not offer staff equity and anti-racism training; Unconscious bias training was provided for the first time in early 2020 for Executives and was an optional training for senior management.



in the workplace to honour and support cultural and diverse interests contributes to a respectful work place.

BC Housing’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy does not include an anti-racism or equity statement. There are conflicting perspectives provided regarding what policies and practices BC Housing supports internally for staff. For example, comments are provided about holding each other accountable to anti-discrimination and that BC Housing creates awareness about equity and anti-racism.

5.3.1.3 What Can BC Housing Be Doing?

With respect to how BC Housing can ensure an equitable and racism-free workplace, we heard that staff may benefit from revised training requirements and further learning opportunities. Many spoke to the need for mandatory training specific to reconciliation.

We also heard that increasing diversity and cultural sensitivity through hiring practices is important. Staff would like to see more Indigenous people hired by BC Housing. Moreover, it is also important to hire for the ethics BC Housing hopes to achieve.

Respondents discussed the need for BC Housing to go beyond the ‘surface-level efforts’ such as multi-culturalism events, lunch and learns, and Indigenous peoples Day. We heard there is a desire to have more real conversations and action within BC Housing around white fragility, discrimination, and racism.

“We need to do more than our multi-cultural lunch and learns – we need to go deeper and truly promote diversity. – BC Housing Staff Member

Why This Is Important

There were a number of suggestions provided by staff to support anti-racism and equity in the workplace. One critical aspect was the reference to meaningful efforts rather than more superficial kinds of initiatives and practices. This means that BC Housing needs to understand how anti-racism, anti-discrimination and equity are discussed or addressed in learning opportunities and how these concepts need to be embedded in all core policies and within decision-making processes.

We heard that staff want to have an anti-discriminatory and equitable work culture and decolonized work practices standardized.

An external professional should develop a comprehensive equity strategy for BC Housing. This comment speaks to a need for a neutral and objective party to review the formal and informal policies and practices within BC Housing that support and/or hinder the achievement of equity and anti-discrimination. It could take the form of an audit which would need to look how BC Housing operates through all of its “systems” including decision-making, budgeting, hiring, policy-making, communications (internal and external), and engagement and consultation.

Human Resource data regarding BC Housing’s pay equity, number of Indigenous employees, etc. should be gathered and reported out. Typically, this is part of a policy on diversity and equity where baseline data is established and monitored on a regular basis, at least annually. The other aspect of monitoring is also tracking policy development and implementation to ensure that it adheres to equity and anti-discrimination guidelines.

With the support of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Human Resources department needs to address the true problems BC Housing is facing and increase its empathy. This is a broad statement and the role of this Committee would be part of an external equity review. Given the need to revise existing policies or develop new policies focusing on anti-racism, anti-discrimination and equity, the role and mandate of the Office of Equity Diversity Inclusion and Belonging and its team could be looked at as part of this process.

Why This Is Important

There is a unanimous view among all the Board members interviewed that there is openness, respect and learning occurring within the Board. This Board environment is conducive to respectful and fulsome discussions of reconciliation. Board members openly discussed how they share common values despite their diverse backgrounds.

5.3.2 BC HOUSING BOARD

5.3.2.1 What is the Board Doing?

When asked about which practices and approaches the Board implements to ensure equitable and culturally respectful decision-making, most Board members indicated that they encourage a safe and open space for diverse perspectives to be heard. Members shared that there is a strong sense of respect, openness, and collaboration around the Board table. For example, one respondent shared that Board members are also willing to admit when they do not have an answer, and that this provides room for them to then explore difficult topics or issues together. Another respondent shared how at every meeting, somebody on the Board asks the question, “How does this impact Indigenous communities?”

Why This Is Important

The Board is emulating key approaches and practices to support reconciliation. This is evidenced by the perspective shared that they are willing to ask questions and also having honest conversations to increase their understanding.

We also heard that the Board is open to having honest conversations with each other and with BC Housing staff to determine how they might improve or enhance their understandings. It was noted by a few respondents that the Board is extremely open to listening, learning, and improving. They also consider how their work or decisions might impact Indigenous communities.

"I think it's a very collaborative environment. I come from lived experience and there's not always spaces where I feel like sharing that; but here, they've really created space where everyone's voices are heard – BC Housing Board Member

In the past, Board members have participated in training and worked with external consultants to identify ways to foster a culture of equity and respect. They recently implemented a practice of giving land acknowledgements at the beginning of meetings.

Several people emphasized that there is a high level of respect and diversity around the table. Although Board members come from a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences, they noted that they share a common set of values that includes respect, honesty, and accountability.

"Anti-racism and decolonization are big topics, and I am very interested to see how we can move forward with a Reconciliation Strategy under a government that was set up in colonization. – BC Housing Board Member

5.3.2.2 What Can the Board be Doing?

With respect to how the Board might improve their understanding and application of equitable, decolonized and culturally sensitive practices, we heard that Board members might benefit from more education and engagement on topics such as reconciliation, UNDRIP, TRC's Calls to Action, and power dynamics. Some respondents suggested incorporating time into Board meetings specifically for these agenda items.

"We haven't really addressed decolonization and anti-racism in our work specifically. We've started to talk about our relationships, which gets at that, but there's lots of opportunity. – BC Housing Board Member

Why This Is Important

Expressing a willingness to learn more about creating and following equitable and decolonized practices is important to developing knowledge about reconciliation and how we can support this process on an individual and organizational level.

Importantly, members also identified the need for BC Housing to address any existing power imbalances within its relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Specifically, we heard that BC Housing needs to examine its Indigenous partnerships with organizations to ensure that there is no paternalism there.

One Board member emphasized that equity should be reflected through the outcomes of the organization's policies and practices. For example, BC Housing's commitment to equity in its hiring practices should be clearly demonstrated by the number of Indigenous and racialized staff employed by the organization.

Respondents also discussed the need to gather feedback and engage with broader audiences when making decisions. This might mean seeking input from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations when making decisions that impact their communities.

In addition to engagement, a few members suggested that the Board share decision-making authority with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and reconsider how provincial authorities and organizations like BC Housing govern. However, we also heard that the Board has not yet addressed how to decolonize its governance methods, and that it has not yet developed a clear understanding of shared decision-making. As one respondent explains,

"I am not clear yet if we have completely resolved what 'shared decision-making' means. BC Housing makes decisions and delegates current management and discussions about planning to AHMA, but I think at some point down the road, the vision would be the other way around. – BC Housing Board Member

Why This Is Important

Engaging more broadly with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as well as looking at sharing decision-making are two fundamental concepts to support advancing reconciliation. It is important for BC Housing to building relationships with diverse communities and groups and to look at what sharing or devolving more authority looks like.

BC Housing should continue developing and strengthening its policies and plans to help maintain organization-wide practices in equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation. This comment speaks to the fact that addressing these concepts in a real and meaningful way is an evolving and ongoing process. There needs to be checkpoints and assessments throughout the implementation of practices and plans to ensure that the organization is on track – based on input from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.



6 BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

6.1 Overview

“Respectful relationships between [BC Housing] staff [and Indigenous organizations] means focusing on collective learning and nurturing improvements. All of that requires more time. In the colonial world, when someone does something wrong, they get a slap on their wrist and we move on. We are very much about continually learning and growing though.” – Housing Provider

Mutually respectful relationships include transparent communication, trust, honesty, and understanding. Building, maintaining, and strengthening relationships with Indigenous peoples in the context of reconciliation means moving away from a colonial, paternalistic relationship to creating mutually respectful ones. It requires a consistent and long-lasting relationship that occurs both inside and outside of Project communication. It also means diving deeper into Indigenous ways of creating and maintaining relationships, which are unique to each community.

6.2 Preliminary Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and Board. They are intended to identify ways that BC Housing can move towards more meaningful relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Table 8: Preliminary Recommendations for Building Relationships with Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Building Relationships		
Phase 1	Develop and share with the Board, Indigenous organizations, and all BCH staff an infographic sheet that illustrates BC Housing’s organizational structure and responsibilities.	Clarify through discussions with Indigenous organizations the information they require on BC Housing.
		Assign a lead staff member to compile the information for the infographic.
	Develop and distribute a quarterly bulletin to AHMA, Indigenous Nations, communities, and other Indigenous organizations to provide updates on	Either produce the infographic in-house or have the infographic produced externally.
		Develop an outline for a bulletin and seek the input of Indigenous organizations on the purpose and their interest in supporting the bulletin.

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Building Relationships		
	what is happening both in housing and within BC Housing and provide opportunities for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to share their stories or experiences on a voluntary basis (e.g., what is happening with on-nation housing projects).	<p>Determine if Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have stories to share.</p> <p>Create a process for developing and producing the bulletin.</p>
Phase 2	Ask Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations for input on how they want to build or improve their relationship with BC Housing and embrace a range of diverse approaches based on this input.	<p>Based on this initial engagement, follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on ongoing engagement.</p> <p>Offer opportunities to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to discuss what relationship-building means to them.</p>
Phase 3	<p>Build a regional Indigenous relationship model within BC Housing to achieve more representation and delegated responsibility in each geographical region. This will ensure that there is enough capacity internally to accommodate Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations who have identified in Phase 2 that they wish to work directly with BC Housing.</p> <p>Discuss relationship-building roles with the Board and confirm their commitment to identify ways for members to participate in relationship-building activities with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations</p>	<p>Engage with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the scope and purpose of a regional housing development model.</p> <p>Explore how a regional housing engagement and development model would support Indigenous capacity-building for housing development and management.</p> <p>Review Indigenous recruitment practices to align with a regional Indigenous model.</p> <p>Engage Indigenous staff in discussions with the Board on relationship-building.</p> <p>Focus on recruiting additional Indigenous Board members.</p> <p>Seek the guidance of the current Indigenous Board member on ways to facilitate discussions on Indigenous relationship-building.</p>



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Building Relationships		
	<p>Offer to engage in virtual discussions and “visits” with and to Indigenous communities, and organizations based on the interests of Indigenous communities and organizations.</p>	<p>Communicate with Indigenous communities and organizations about ways to learn more about their interests and their practices.</p> <p>Determine from Indigenous communities and organizations what kind of discussions they prefer to have – in-person or virtual.</p> <p>Schedule appropriate dialogue sessions and prepare joint agenda.</p> <p>Note: Depending on COVID-19 gradually look at in-person meetings but not at a risk to communities and organizations.</p>
	<p>Sponsoring cultural events or volunteering at cultural events are two building blocks to relationship building on the ground. Note: Participating in any events or gatherings within communities will depend on the COVID-19 situation; methods will be adapted accordingly.</p> <p>Being present in the community is the easiest and best way to draw connections. Take time to be out in community and get to know community members or tenants through local activities such as sharing a meal or helping with a community garden through collaboration with Indigenous communities and organizations.</p> <p>The same consideration regarding COVID-19 applies to this recommendation. These informal in-person visits will depend on COVID and the safety of communities.</p>	<p>Discuss internally and with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations how they would like to see BC Housing staff involved with cultural events in their communities.</p> <p>Based on this input and feedback, build an online toolkit of best practices on approaches to “being present” in communities in good ways and in ways that align with the protocols and interests of Indigenous Nations and communities.</p> <p>Ensure that discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on these approaches are ongoing and respect Indigenous timelines, priorities and interests.</p>

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Building Relationships		
	Utilize virtual tools, if necessary, to have informal conversations.	
	Explore with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations the interest in practicing more informal approaches to relationship-building such as inviting Indigenous partners out to share a meal or meet for coffee.	In the current situation with COVID, engage in exploratory discussions within pandemic guidelines with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations about what is desired and possible.
	The same consideration regarding COVID-19 applies to this recommendation. These in-person conversations will depend on COVID and the safety of communities.	Create an “engagement preference” information tracker for ensuring that the interests of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are respected.
	Gather information on various Indigenous events, conferences and gatherings held annually and give consideration to BC Housing involvement to share information and build positive connections.	Ensure there is regular dialogue to update BC Housing’s understanding and information regarding visits to communities and organizations.
		Compile information regarding upcoming events in Indigenous communities – virtual or in-person.
		Discuss opportunities to connect virtually or in person with communities and Nations.
		Look at ways to be involved on a virtual and online basis.

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing’s direct jurisdiction or authority, and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

6.3 What We Heard

6.3.1 INDIGENOUS NATIONS, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

6.3.1.1 Nature of BC Housing's Relationships

More than half of the forty-four Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that provided input described their relationship with BC Housing as being positive.

Respondents used the words good, respectful, and supportive to describe the nature of these relationships. We heard that BC Housing provides support through the following ways:

- Being accessible and responsive by phone, email, and in-person visits;
- Providing funding (e.g. grants, capital funding programs);
- Sharing information about the available funding programs; and,
- Explaining the processes for applying to funding programs.

Several people mentioned that the organization is very open, flexible, and attentive. They noted that BC Housing is taking the time to listen and communicate with them. Multiple respondents expressed that BC Housing is responsive to their emails and phone calls.

One fourth (11 out of 44) of the Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations interviewed suggested that their relationship with BC Housing exists in a more formal or indirect manner. Several respondents mentioned that they work mostly through the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) or that they operate at a distance from BC Housing. A few respondents also indicated that they only communicate with BC Housing for the purposes of reporting or receiving updates.

We heard from some people that their relationships with BC Housing felt imbalanced or transactional. For example, a couple of people mentioned ways in which BC Housing asserts control over them, including through imposing processes that do not belong to the communities/organizations or by requiring monthly reporting. Another respondent noted that

"They made sure we were okay during the COVID-19 state of emergency. They sent us masks, gloves, and laptops. – Indigenous Housing Provider

Why This Is Important

There were mixed perspectives shared regarding relationships with BC Housing. This inconsistency means that BC Housing needs to examine what makes the relationships successful and what are the barriers to achieving greater success. For example, the reference to having imbalanced (power imbalanced) and transactional relationships speaks to the existence of colonial practices where Indigenous communities are not able to support self-determination.



the BC Housing's infrequent communication, check-ins, and in-person visits made the relationship feel transactional. They explained,

"BC Housing can improve their relationship with us by building that trust factor by picking up the phone, saying, 'How are you doing, checking up on you and the Nation, how things are going?'" We don't get those kinds of calls. That is the switch – turn that dial away from the transactional relationship. Come to [our community] and see who your client is. Have a cup of coffee with them and get to know your client. – Indigenous Nation

The remaining respondents described the nature of their relationships with BC Housing as either new or improving. One respondent described their relationship as cursory and not in depth. Some mentioned that they have noticed a cultural shift within BC Housing in recent years and that the relationships have continued to improve with time.

6.3.1.2 Concerns within the Relationships

The top concerns that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations expressed regarding their relationships with BC Housing included a lack of communication and transparency, use of colonial approaches or practices and inherent structural barriers within the organization. These were themes that were expressed by at least one fifth of the respondents (e.g., more than 8 of the 44 respondents).

Communication and Transparency

Approximately one fifth of the respondents (9 out of 44) discussed issues relating to their communication with BC Housing. For example, six respondents indicated that BC Housing needs to enhance their transparency and make information more publicly and readily available. For example, we heard from some respondents that when it comes to major decisions, BC Housing has not always communicated the announcements, details or rationale for their decisions in the most effective manner.

“One of our applications was placed on a B-list. The communication needed to be better regarding how the process works in terms of funding. The measurables should be more transparent and communicated better to us... It was frustrating for me because I don't know where we lie compared to other First Nations – Indigenous Housing Provider

With respect to the Indigenous Housing Fund, a couple of people expressed frustration with not having received all the necessary information to understand the requirements or procedures at the beginning of their projects. They explained how they completed requirements that BC Housing had requested only to be met with additional requirements that were not communicated upfront.

A couple of respondents also mentioned that they would like to know about BC Housing's internal operations and what is happening within the organization.

Why This Is Important

TRC's Calls to Action call upon Canada's corporate sector to commit to meaningful consultation and building respectful relationships (TRC). Effective communication is critical to building positive relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This is true in particular when communicating about what is happening in BC Housing, critical program practices, and how decisions are made and why. While there is a need to manage communications to avoid overload, it is critical for BC Housing to find out from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations when and on what issues communication is important.

“It would help us make plans if we knew what was intended for us, because we feel like we are just in a bubble and not being communicated with. From an agency perspective, I’m quite disappointed because I am only told about things after the fact, rather than being part of the conversation. – – Indigenous Housing Organization

A few people commented that they had experienced slow response times when communicating with BC Housing. For example, one organization shared how they were contacted at the beginning of their project, but that they were not kept in the loop when it was put on hold. They indicated that they have not been able to reach anyone at BC Housing despite multiple attempts to contact them.

We also heard from one respondent that when a perceived conflict or tension arises, BC Housing withdraws itself from the situation, instead of working with the Indigenous Nations, communities, or organizations to find a solution. Communicating consistently is important. BC Housing needs to look at its communication practices and protocols during the full program implementation and housing development cycle and ask whether the timing, scope and type of communication is clear and handled consistently.

Colonial Practices

Approximately one-fifth of the respondents (9 out of 44) indicated that BC Housing sometimes applies colonial practices or approaches to working with Indigenous Peoples and that this negatively impacts their relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

“On-reserve is a totally different scenario, so sometimes it is kind of like putting a square peg in a round hole. BC Housing is obviously a large organization and they have a way they like to do things and it doesn’t always fit for a reserve. – Indigenous Nation

We heard from three individuals (7 percent of respondents) that BC Housing does not adapt

Why This Is Important

Timely and responsive communication is important in order to build and maintain respectful relationships. Communication needs to occur on a consistent and ongoing basis to ensure openness and a two-way flow of information and feedback. Issues raised such as communicating when there are housing program changes, adjustments to timeframes or conflicts require more intensive and open communication.

Why This Is Important

Supporting flexibility and acknowledging the diversity across Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations is a key aspect of reconciliation. This comment was provided in other contexts indicating that the unique interests of urban and rural and on-/off-reserve communities are not also recognized and addressed by BC Housing.

Moreover, Article 32 of UNDRIP states that Indigenous peoples have the right to determine how they use their lands and resources. This right includes the freedom to decide how and for what purposes Indigenous Nations or communities choose to use their land.



their policies or practices to suit the diverse needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, or organizations. For example, there is a requirement to set up a society to receive funding through the Indigenous Housing Fund. A couple of the Nations interviewed suggested that this requirement has become an “extra hoop to jump through.” One respondent also elaborated that it has prevented them from being able to use their land for the community’s intended purposes, stating:

“I was so angry because we – the Band – wanted to add to the tax base. So here was BC Housing giving me the money that I thought would create a positive plus situation. But no. Because we have a housing society, the funding would become tax exempt because it is a non-profit society. – Indigenous Nation

We also heard that current operating agreements and operational funding does not adapt to the needs of urban Indigenous housing providers. One respondent noted that while the previous Urban Aboriginal Program included funding for a Tenant Relations Coordinator, current operating agreements are missing this important piece and are not flexible enough to address other Indigenous programming needs (e.g., programs that incorporate educational and health components).

Some respondents expressed discontent with BC Housing’s Indigenous relationship model.⁶⁴ Three people (7 percent of respondents) suggested that using AHMA as an intermediary body is not reflective of reconciliation. One person suggested that this is because AHMA does not reflect a government-to-government relationship. Another respondent explained that the way in which the relationship was set up felt oppressive because BC Housing did not ask their organization if they wanted to be in a relationship with AHMA:

Why This Is Important

These comments speak to the diversity of interests across Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. They should be the ones to decide how they prefer to have housing developed in and for their communities and organizations, as well as how they prefer to develop a relationship with organizations such as BC Housing. This diversity will always exist, and BC Housing should recognize that there are multiple pathways and approaches to address these interests.

⁶⁴ Under the current model, several Indigenous Nations and communities have a government-to-government relationship with BC Housing and work directly with them on the development of new housing projects. In contrast, 41 Indigenous housing providers have a less direct relationship with BC Housing, because they are under the mandate of AHMA. As mentioned above, BC Housing transferred the Indigenous housing portfolio to AHMA in 2013, including 40 of its operating agreements with Indigenous housing providers. Today, the majority of BC Housing’s relationships with Indigenous housing providers flows through AHMA.



“We find our current situation to be like a forced relationship. We weren’t asked to be a part of the Aboriginal Management Housing Association (AHMA). It was forced upon us. – Indigenous Housing Provider

However, we also heard that BC Housing’s efforts to enhance its Indigenous-focused positions internally has created confusion for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and that it is not clear to them who they should turn to for different issues. They also suggested that this could potentially be contributing to tension or a sense of competition between BC Housing and AHMA because there is a duplication of services. In response to the idea that AHMA does not represent a government-to-government relationship, some respondents urged BC Housing to go beyond the UNDRIP definitions of only acknowledging government-to-government relationships to include the perspectives of the urban Indigenous population, which make up nearly eighty percent of the Indigenous population.

Inherent Structural Barriers

About one fifth (9 out of 44) of the respondents raised the issue of inherent structural barriers within BC Housing such as limited organizational capacity and ‘staff being on different pages.’

Six of the respondents (14 percent) mentioned that there is currently not enough internal capacity within BC Housing to build, maintain and enhance its Indigenous relationships. Specifically, we heard from a couple of people that Indigenous Relations within BC Housing is supported by only one individual, which not only places pressure on that staff member, but also presents challenges in terms of being able to build close relationships with the vast amount of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations across the province. We also heard that staff in other areas of the organization (e.g., Women’s Transition Housing and Supports) need additional support as well.

“With folks like BC Hydro, you see them at every Indigenous conference, and you start to build a relationship with them. You learn about their new programs coming out that will reach the communities. – Indigenous Nation

A few respondents said that because there are varying levels of understanding reconciliation within BC Housing, it sometimes leads to problems with respect to BC Housing’s relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. A couple of people noted that there is a strong level of understanding and intent at the executive and leadership level of BC Housing, but that the level of understanding decreases as you go further down the organization’s internal structure.

“Because the BC Housing CEO’s intent doesn’t always translate down to his staff in trying to understand reconciliation, they end up throwing their hands up and walking away, instead of

Why This Is Important

This is a useful and important observation and perspective for BC Housing to learn. Further education, training and discussion within BC Housing will be important to help build and sustain positive relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.



saying, 'Okay, how do I make this easier for you?' – Indigenous Housing Organization

6.3.1.3 Suggestions for Improving the Relationships

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations suggested several ways that their relationships with BC Housing can be improved, which are provided in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations' Suggestions for Building, Maintaining, and Enhancing Relationships

Category	Suggestions
Improve Communication and Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest more time into having regular check-ins and ongoing dialogue with Indigenous Nations/communities/organizations, as opposed to only engaging when an opportunity comes up. • Visit Nations, communities, and organizations in person and increase face-to-face interactions. • Pursue more informal relationship-building opportunities such as sharing a meal or helping with community activities (e.g., community garden). • Show up at Indigenous events and conferences, particularly when considering hiring or procuring Indigenous businesses and organizations. • When a perceived conflict arises between BC Housing and partner, or may arise, take the necessary time to engage in an open discussion with the Indigenous Nation, community, or organization on how to move forward in a good way.
Decolonize Approaches to Relationship-Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with acknowledging BC Housing's role in colonial history, including any of its institutional failures (e.g. policies and practices) that may have historically harmed Indigenous Nations and communities. • Recognize the authority of Indigenous Nations and communities, including their leadership and rights and title to their traditional territories. • Involve Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in BC Housing's decision-making and planning processes. • Collaborate with Indigenous Nations to develop housing programs, operating agreements, and budgets. • Be flexible to the diverse needs of Indigenous peoples. • Work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to create increased flexibility in the requirements of the Indigenous Housing Fund to recognize and accommodate the unique cultural and community needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations (such as single and multi-person housing; gathering spaces; larger kitchens; housing to accommodate multi-generational families). • Discuss with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations how BC Housing can support their interests in housing development and management in a way that recognizes capacity needs, builds relationships and advances decolonized partnerships (e.g. through AHMA and/or with Indigenous Nations, communities, and other Indigenous organizations)
Address Inherent Structural Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit Indigenous staff and Board members. • Increase staff resourcing of Indigenous Relations at BC Housing and have more representation in each geographical region. • Develop a shared understanding of what reconciliation means as a process embedded within BC Housing and a course of action undertaken consistently over time to decolonize policies, programs, and practices with staff across the organization: • Deliver standardized training in the areas of Indigenous cultural humility, safety, and sensitivity.



Category	Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate the principles and objectives of decolonization and reconciliation, validated with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, in all BC Housing “systems” including strategic planning, partnership agreement negotiations, policy development and implementation, budgeting, program design and evaluation, hiring and staff performance management – at a branch, department and organization-wide level.

6.3.2 BC HOUSING STAFF

6.3.2.1 Nature of BC Housing’s Relationships

Nearly half of the staff interviewed described BC Housing’s relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as positive. They agreed that the overall relationships are strong and built on mutual respect.

However, several staff also indicated that the nature of the relationships tends to vary. We heard that the quality of relationships ranges from respectful and productive to strained and problematic. One person explained that this is because BC Housing has not invested enough resources to ensure that the relationships are consistent across the organization:

“I would say we have not given space or time to ensure we have representatives or comprehensive relationships across the board. I think there is lots of uncharted territory that could certainly use more mapping to determine how we can work together in that space. – BC Housing Staff Member

Nevertheless, a few staff also expressed that BC Housing’s relationships are improving with time. As one respondent stated,

“I have observed relationships move towards those based on respect, reconciliation, and collaboration in the last 5-6 years. – BC Housing Staff Member

With respect to building and enhancing relationships, staff shared that BC Housing demonstrates a strong level of commitment to collaboration, learning and improvement. Many respondents mentioned that BC Housing works closely with Indigenous

Why This Is Important

There may be alignment in perspective between some Indigenous communities and organizations and staff. However, overall, the comments from staff indicating positive relationships and those from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations means that there is a difference in perspective regarding what makes a positive relationship and what reconciliation means. One example is that an Indigenous community may feel that the relationship is purely transactional and focused on the business of building housing units and the staff may believe that they are sharing information and communicating well from the perspective of completing a project. These comments also speak to the need for continued and mandatory training for staff on reconciliation.

Nations, communities, and organizations on projects and strives to develop equitable partnerships with them.

Furthermore, staff also commented on the organization's dedication to learning and improvement. A few of them discussed that BC Housing tries to listen to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and adapt their approaches to meet the needs that are expressed to them.

"We can all learn and try to do better, and BC Housing encourages us to go to workshops on reconciliation and on research approaches that are more inclusive and that respect different cultures. – BC Housing Staff Member

6.3.2.2 Suggestions for Improving Relationships

Staff mostly agreed that BC Housing needs to invest more time and resources into relationship-building. We heard from multiple people that the organization can improve its efforts by taking the time to engage in more conversations with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, visiting communities in person, being proactive through its planning practices, and redirecting BC Housing's available resources toward building relationships.

We also heard that training staff to be in respectful partnerships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations is key to improving these relationships. A few staff recommended making the *Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples* training mandatory so that all staff approach their work with the same level of understanding.

A couple of staff also shared that they think BC Housing should take more individualized approaches to building relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and emphasized the need for flexibility when working with Indigenous peoples. Specifically, we heard that BC Housing's rigidity in project processes has hindered Indigenous organizations from operating in ways that work for them.

One staff member shared that BC Housing should create space to hear from all Indigenous perspectives and voices, as opposed to being selective about who is given a seat at the table.

Why This Is Important

These comments from BC Housing staff provide a sample roadmap for making progress on reconciliation:

- Time for staff to devote to relationship-building through project development.
- Resources to support the efforts of relationship-building perhaps for events, capacity development, etc.
- Adapting program approaches to meet the needs and interests of diverse Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Article 34 of UNDRIP emphasizes the importance of respecting cultural diversity, and states that Indigenous peoples have the right to their own structures, laws, and traditions. This suggests that BC Housing should adapt their project processes to accommodate (and not hinder) Indigenous organizations to operate in ways that work for them.



This means undertaking engagement and relationship-building with more Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to diversify input and dialogue on housing issues.

A couple of staff members explained that BC Housing needs to practice transparency and share information more openly with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. For example, before an Indigenous Nation, community or organization enters into an MOU or agreement with BC Housing, BC Housing should clearly explain their intent and what the expectations are once the agreement is signed.

Hiring Indigenous staff and recruiting Board members that represent the individuals BC Housing is trying to build relationships with is important. One staff member suggested that BC Housing look to the YVR Airport for a best practice in this regard, explaining how YVR has a policy that all self-identifying Indigenous people are automatically qualified for an interview.

“Sometimes the engagement doesn’t seem authentic or that it’s more about our image or the individuals involved and where they are coming from (guilt). Well intentioned and wanting to help, but not necessarily allowing Indigenous communities to lead. – BC Housing Staff Member

“How and when we choose/select to invite different people to the table says a lot about our focus and mandate. So, when I see people that don’t have a voice or a space at the table that’s really problematic for me. I think that that is a vibe that is felt across the various Indigenous-serving community groups and Indigenous communities and hasn’t gone unrecognized. – BC Housing Staff Member

6.3.3 BC HOUSING BOARD

6.3.3.1 Nature of BC Housing’s Relationships

Overall, the Board described BC Housing’s relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as positive. Their understanding is that BC Housing is available to assist and provide support to Indigenous housing providers in the form of funding.

Board members noted that BC Housing works collaboratively with AHMA. In the past, the Board has worked with AHMA to co-develop training materials for housing providers to ensure cultural sensitivity within housing provision. However, we also heard that there may be room to improve the ways in which AHMA and BC Housing work together.

The relationship between BC Housing’s Board and Indigenous organizations is still relatively new and being explored. Several members mentioned that the Board is taking small steps to pursue relationships, including

Why This Is Important

The Board’s perspective is that BC Housing has a positive relationship foundation between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. However, supporting Indigenous communities and organizations is primarily through funding. The Board noted that there can be improvements and that members are interested in exploring their role in building these relationships.

having an informal dinner with the AHMA's Board members to support relationship-building. As one member explains,

"We are just getting to know each other, which is important because it goes a long way in giving importance to the Indigenous community. – BC Housing Board Member

Board members expressed an interest in playing a larger role in relationship-building with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and that there is still room to expand their efforts to organizations and communities outside of AHMA.

A couple of people also highlighted the need to re-evaluate the nature of BC Housing's relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and alluded to a power imbalance between BC Housing and Indigenous groups due to dynamics resulting from the funder and recipient roles. They further elaborated that this has led to paternalism within some of the relationships. One Board member suggested that BC Housing focus on enhancing cooperation, partnership, and co-design within their relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

"We need to think about the power dynamics in relationships. There is a dilemma where people who have power and influence speak about their role and responsibility to empower someone else. If someone has that role and responsibility, it means that they stay in that position of power. – BC Housing Board Member

6.3.3.2 Suggestions for Improving Relationships

Board members suggested that conversations with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations need to be occurring on an ongoing basis and that relationship-building will require that the Board and BC Housing keep in touch with groups and meet with them more than just one time.

Furthermore, we heard that it is important to remain open to feedback from Indigenous groups about how to improve the relationships.

One Board member offered insight regarding the relevance of keeping an open mind when developing relationships built on reciprocity and respect. They stated,

"We need to ensure that if we are confronted with something that we don't get defensive, but we stay open and curious. We need to have reciprocity in our relationships – we need to look at how we do it instead of how we speak to it. – BC Housing Board Member

Why This Is Important

A key message provided by Board members is to listen to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations regarding ways to improve relationships. This statement also emphasizes the need to listen and to learn what is working and what is not – understanding that this is an important aspect of building relationships.



Another common suggestion shared by the Board was to visit communities to meet with Indigenous groups, rather than having meetings primarily in BC Housing offices. This would provide the opportunity for Indigenous groups to meet in a space that is their own and where they feel comfortable. Someone also raised the possibility of holding Board meetings in Indigenous communities where BC Housing has projects.

One respondent emphasized the need to increase BC Housing's transparency within its decision-making processes. They also suggested that the organization be more proactive in finding ways to partner with and give authority to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations within decision-making processes.

One Board member suggested that the Board support more capacity-building and educational opportunities for Indigenous organizations, communities, and individuals. This might include supporting Indigenous students to get into programs such as UBC's Indigenous Community Planning program.

One person shared that BC Housing should consider bringing provincial leadership and elected officials into their conversations with Indigenous leaders, organizations, Nations, and communities. They suggested that this would contribute to developing trust with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

"We need to remove the 'black box' element of decision-making and have transparency. We could be pushed a little more into just looking for ways to really and truly partner and to delegate those decisions to Indigenous organizations, rather than have them just made by our development people at BC Housing. – BC Housing Board Member

7 SUPPORTING RECONCILIATION

7.1 Overview

“If I am the head of BC Housing and really truly interested in reconciliation, I would be interested in how I could jumpstart housing projects and then hand the baton entirely over to the First Nation communities to get people into housing, manage the housing, and get people into housing ownership. I would be asking how I could make myself irrelevant. We need to reduce the dependency on the current system, allow communities to manage their own people, and make community members self-determined. – Housing Provider

Supporting reconciliation is the next step following understanding and transforming the organizational culture based on the principles of respect, trust, openness, and inclusion. It means pursuing meaningful action focused on building strong relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and removing barriers to the achievement of Indigenous self-determination and self-government. For BC Housing to move toward supporting true reconciliation in the form of self-determination this means building a devolution plan and thinking about the vision and role of BC Housing moving forward.

7.2 Preliminary Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and the Board. They are intended to identify ways that BC Housing can take action to support reconciliation.

Table 10: Preliminary Recommendations for Supporting Reconciliation

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Supporting Reconciliation		
Phase 1	Continue to offer the Indigenous Housing Fund, and collaborate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the program’s requirements to ensure that it is flexible enough to meet their community’s needs.*	Utilize the preliminary findings from the initial engagement on reconciliation to identify the main issues regarding the Indigenous Housing Fund.
		Follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to offer discussions on specific issues.
		Summarize this additional feedback and report out to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on actions taken or planned.
	Create increased flexibility in project timelines and housing program requirements and	Adopt flexible timelines in projects with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to allow for a ‘pause’ when local



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Supporting Reconciliation		
	<p>designs to accommodate the unique cultural and community needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations (such as single and multi-person housing; gathering spaces; larger kitchens; housing to accommodate multi-generational families).</p>	<p>issues or priorities arise (e.g., global pandemic, state of emergency, natural disaster); create a plan to maintain communication on the status of this pause and to ensure that work is “restarted” in a respectful way.</p>
		<p>Assess the specific comments regarding program flexibility received to date through this initial engagement.</p>
		<p>Collate the flexibility considerations into categories and frame as a set of defining questions.</p>
		<p>Communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to seek more specific input.</p>
		<p>Review any changes to the program to increase flexibility with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
	<p>Communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations early in the program design stage and be upfront about the process and mandatory requirements.</p>	<p>Review current communication messaging and timing under the Indigenous Housing Program.</p>
<p>Develop a communication strategy for the Indigenous Housing Fund which includes more frequent communication.</p>		
<p>Seek feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the revised communication plans.</p>		
Phase 2	<p>Devolve decision-making power to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on all matters impacting them by establishing a standard practice of collaborating and sharing power with Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Develop a decision flow diagram for the Indigenous Housing Fund and determine what decisions are made at each stage and who is involved.</p>
		<p>Review this flow diagram based on the comments received to date from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
		<p>Create a decision-making lens document to share and discuss with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to jointly</p>



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Supporting Reconciliation		
		determine what sharing power and devolved decision-making looks like.
		In collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, create a staged implementation plan for the decision-making (sharing power) process.
	Establish an Indigenous partners table to review and co-develop BC Housing’s Indigenous housing policies, plans and programs through a cultural safety lens and based on a jointly developed Terms of Reference. Invite all Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to be involved.	Develop a preliminary purpose statement and concept for an Indigenous partners table.
		Share this broad statement and concept with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and seek their interest.
	Given the COVID situation, this can be a virtual partners group where issues of interest to all groups participating are brought forward. This partners table offers an opportunity to discuss the decision-making/sharing power lens document.	
Phase 3	Support training for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in housing maintenance and construction, but seek ways to enhance or expand course offerings to larger audiences.	Review the results of this engagement with respect to interests in learning more about training in maintenance and construction.
		Gather information from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to seek information and clarification regarding their preferred interests and approaches.
	Share resources and expand training opportunities with Indigenous housing providers and organizations on topics such as housing policies, development, management, and how to set up a housing society.	Collate information from this initial engagement to define a list of needed resources and training.
		Seek feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on what further information and resources may be needed, and how these resources can be shared.
	Work collaboratively with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on maintaining current resources and information.	
Building on BC Housing’s <i>Interim Guide to Indigenous Housing Development and Design</i> , collaborate with	In connection with the above recommendation regarding sharing resources, communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to confirm they are aware of the	



PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Supporting Reconciliation		
	<p>Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on updating the guide or developing a new resource that includes tips and lessons learned – a roadmap - on how to develop or operate housing developments.</p>	<p>guide and seek feedback on what should be added or changed.</p> <p>Explore ways that the guide can be updated and made as accessible as possible to all Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
	<p>Work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in the development of housing projects that enable access to critical support services close to or within housing developments.</p>	<p>Collate information from this initial engagement on the range and type of services of interest to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations connected to housing developments.</p> <p>Reach out to other ministries (e.g., Ministry of Health and Ministry of Children and Family Development), provincial and local health authorities (e.g., First Nations Health Authority, Vancouver Coastal Health), and other provincial agencies and institutions to collaborate on finding ways to link critical health and other support services to housing development focusing on the needs of Indigenous families, women, youth, and Elders. To help address challenges Indigenous communities face, housing and support services need to be simultaneously offered.</p> <p>Undertake research on different housing models and approaches with integrated services including gathering examples and best practices from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p> <p>Consider how these approaches impact the development of housing and inform the Indigenous Housing Fund program guidelines.</p>
	<p>Work with Indigenous, federal, and provincial</p>	<p>Research different examples of policies from housing organizations and Indigenous Nations,</p>

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Supporting Reconciliation		
	<p>departments and agencies to put in place a clear policy and approach that enables Indigenous renters on- and off-reserve to transition into becoming homeowners, including funding to support housing maintenance.*</p>	<p>communities, and organizations with respect to home ownership.</p> <p>Determine what information or data are required on renting and home ownership in Indigenous communities.</p> <p>Prepare a short set of questions to collect information that addresses data gaps from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This would not be a separate request but would be linked to continued engagement by BC Housing and the creation of an Indigenous partners table.</p>
	<p>Consider increased opportunities to transfer ownership of housing developments to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and support necessary capacity-building within Indigenous communities and organizations.*</p>	<p>Collate information from this engagement regarding the capacity needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to develop and manage housing.</p> <p>Determine how current BC Housing work supports capacity development and identify gaps.</p> <p>Work with Indigenous housing providers to validate capacity needs and engage with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on their interests in advancing home ownership.</p>
	<p>Increase collaboration with the federal government and local governments on tri-partite arrangements to support Indigenous development and management of housing.*</p>	<p>Collect information to summarize the range and scope of engagement with the federal government.</p> <p>Engage a third-party facilitator to provide guidance on intergovernmental approaches, gaps and alignment opportunities.</p> <p>Involve Indigenous housing providers on a collaborative basis in this work; at a minimum, seek input and feedback from Indigenous housing providers, as they are willing to provide.</p>

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing’s direct jurisdiction or authority and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

7.3 What We Heard

7.3.1 INDIGENOUS NATIONS, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

7.3.1.1 Indigenous Housing Issues and Needs

The top priorities that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations identified with respect to Indigenous housing needs included:

- Increasing the housing supply;
- Diversifying the housing stock (e.g., unit sizes, types of housing);
- Supporting long-term and sustainable housing solutions;
- Incorporating Indigenous culture and needs into housing designs;
- Building the capacity of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations;
- Improving the quality of housing;
- Taking a holistic approach to housing by addressing other social determinants of health such as education, employment and healthcare; and,
- Providing safe and accessible housing for vulnerable populations.

Table 11 summarizes what we heard from respondents within each of the above priority categories.

Table 11: Top Priorities within Indigenous Housing for Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

Category	Housing Issues or Needs
Increasing the Housing Supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are commonly experiencing overcrowding in households and long waiting lists. • There is a major shortage of housing both on- and off-reserve. • Some off-reserve members are interested in moving home but are unable to given a lack of on-reserve housing.
Diversifying the Housing Stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized approaches are needed to address the diverse and unique needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. • While there are needs along the housing continuum, housing for Indigenous families, Elders, youth, and vulnerable populations is especially needed.
Supporting Long-Term Housing Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term planning is needed to identify and address Indigenous housing needs across the province. • Communities need support in identifying the housing needs of their members. • Opportunities for home ownership, equity, and sustainable housing options are needed. • Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations mentioned requiring support in developing long-term housing strategies, policies and plans.

Category	Housing Issues or Needs
Incorporating Indigenous Culture and Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing design needs to respect and reflect the diversity of Indigenous cultures and adapt to the unique needs and values of each Nation and community. • Culturally appropriate spaces are important to Indigenous Nations and communities to gather with family, celebrate and mourn (e.g., outdoor spaces for people to connect with the land, larger kitchen sizes). • There is a need for larger living spaces and 4-5-bedroom homes to accommodate larger family sizes as well as smaller housing for individuals. • Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations commented on the importance of avoiding separating Elders from their families. One person proposed the option of 'in-law' suites within family homes, so that Elders can continue living in the same household. Another respondent indicated they receive many requests, particularly from seniors, to adapt their homes to their ageing needs.
Building Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to build the capacity of housing managers to be able to leverage funding opportunities and develop long-term housing strategies for their communities. • There is also a need to develop the skillsets of community members to enable them to maintain or repair their homes.
Improving Housing Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of homes built under the Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC) programs in the 1950s was lacking, below standard, and has contributed to widespread issues for on-reserve housing such as mold, poor air ventilation, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Although the federal government is beginning to provide funding for renovating these homes, it is not nearly enough.
Taking a Holistic Approach to Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We heard that housing is inherently connected to all other social determinants of health, and that it is therefore important to provide funding for support services in housing projects. • Respondents recognized that BC Housing's mandate is primarily housing but pointed out that addressing the housing needs of Indigenous populations will require addressing needs related to health, education, employment, food security, etc.
Providing Safe and Accessible Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing is needed to ensure the safety of women and children fleeing abusive situations. • Transitional housing for vulnerable populations dealing with homelessness or addictions is also needed. • Housing design should consider accessibility requirements for people with disabilities. • Consideration should be given to the ease of access to transportation and other services.

Most Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations agreed that BC Housing currently addresses Indigenous housing needs by providing funding and housing programs that support the Indigenous population. For example, we heard that BC Housing's \$550 million investment into the Indigenous Housing Fund has made a significant difference in the Indigenous housing sector and that many Nations and communities are taking advantage of the opportunity. One person pointed out that it has resulted in the province delivering more Indigenous housing units than anywhere else in Canada.

7.3.1.2 Areas for Improvement

Several themes that emerged with respect to how BC Housing can better support Indigenous housing needs included supporting Indigenous ownership, streamlining the housing development process, taking a holistic approach to housing, adapting the design standards to suit Indigenous cultural needs and building the capacity of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to plan for or manage their own housing.

Supporting Indigenous Ownership

Several people commented that BC Housing's role as a Crown Corporation in the Indigenous housing sector undermines the jurisdiction of Indigenous Nations and communities. Respondents recommended that BC Housing relinquish control and find ways to advance Indigenous rights, title and jurisdiction. This might take the form of promoting equity through Indigenous home ownership and ownership over land and assets.

Approximately a quarter of the respondents mentioned that BC Housing should be supporting Indigenous ownership within the housing model, including providing Indigenous renters the ability to transition into becoming homeowners and finding ways to transfer land and assets to the Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This might entail working with government agencies such as Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) to provide options for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to purchase off-reserve land or compensating Indigenous Nations and communities for lands that were lost due to colonial policies and practices.

Why This Is Important

These comments identify a continuum of improvements from capacity building, implementing Indigenous home ownership, and the direct management of housing. Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have expressed the need for more control over housing for their communities, clients, and citizens. This means that a flexible approach to improving housing outcomes for and with Indigenous people may be the ideal approach.



Streamlining the Process

Several people commented that there seems to be a disconnect between municipal, provincial, and federal housing policy processes. They indicated that there needs to be more collaboration between BC Housing and other governing bodies such as ISC, Canadian Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and local municipalities in order to streamline the housing model and processes for Indigenous Nations and communities. Importantly, these conversations should involve Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations as equal partners.

Why This Is Important

This section is important because it speaks to the need to take a comprehensive approach to understanding the mechanisms and pathways to support more collaboration between agencies and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. In addition, this collaboration needs to explore advancing Indigenous self-determination within the housing development and management context.

Taking a Holistic Approach

Respondents also emphasized the connection between housing and health and the need to address other social determinants of health in order to meet Indigenous housing needs. Several people spoke to the importance of offering supportive services to tenants, particularly in life skills and healing from trauma. Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations urged BC Housing to collaborate with governing bodies and organizations outside of housing (e.g., the health sector). They suggested that BC Housing enhance their partnerships with the Ministry of Health, First Nations Health Authority, Vancouver Coastal Health, and other health agencies.

“... We pushed the fact that it is not just about housing, but that it is about meeting the educational needs, the food security needs, tenant support, and mental health issues. – Indigenous Housing Provider

“[BC Housing] has an opportunity to say Housing First approaches need to also incorporate spiritual and cultural supports for healing trauma. – Organization

Adapting to Cultural Needs

We heard that BC Housing's design standards and requirements are too rigid to meet Indigenous cultural and community needs. Some respondents have experienced pushback from BC Housing when they requested design choices that were more culturally appropriate for their communities. They explained that BC Housing denied their request for more community amenity spaces, larger unit sizes and suitable appliances for gathering because those design choices were viewed as "unnecessary" or "too expensive."

"It always comes down to guidelines, square feet, number of bedrooms, and being told, "You don't need that much amenity space." Yes, we do. – Indigenous Housing Provider

"BC Housing needs to understand the values of First Nations people. What are the values of First Nations people? Family, coming together, living together, culture, food, gathering, children, Elders, taking care of each other. – Indigenous Nation

Why This Is Important

The right to cultural identity is an important theme within UNDRIP. Article 8 protects Indigenous cultural identity by declaring that Indigenous peoples have the right to not be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their cultures.

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have unique housing needs and interests based on their diverse histories, cultures, and traditions. Adopting a decolonized approach within BC Housing means considering services and programs as investments in and support for Indigenous housing management and control. It is important that programs can adapt to and support these diverse needs.



Building Capacity

Many respondents expressed that BC Housing's current approach to addressing Indigenous housing needs is often in the form of financial support. They suggested that this approach does not help Indigenous Nations, communities, or organizations that do not yet have the capacity to develop housing within their communities.

"In terms of keeping it maintained, Nations could use some help there. You'd have to approach that delicately though. You don't want to come in and make assumptions that they can't manage the property, but it could be done in the form of educational resources to support Nations with construction standards and managing rental homes. – Indigenous Nation

Several people mentioned that Indigenous peoples are looking for a "hand up," as opposed to a "handout." They emphasized needing support with enhancing/enforcing policy and developing long-term housing strategies and plans. We also heard that sharing information about BC Housing program processes would help Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations understand the processes better. One respondent also explained that lack of clarity and transparency from government bodies about program processes perpetuates a paternalistic relationship. They suggested that BC Housing communicate details about the program process such as the length of the Ministerial Loan Guarantees (MLGs) and the number of MLGs that Indigenous Services Canada can provide each year. Another respondent shared,

"If there could have been some more discussion or if they could have provided a flowchart showing the different stages of the approval process that would have been helpful. – Indigenous Nation

Another common suggestion for improvement was to create a mentorship network and to connect Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations with each other to share resources about the development process and lessons learned. Particularly with the Indigenous Housing Fund, respondents commented that it would be helpful if BC Housing could support relationship-building between Nations and communities going through the process. A couple of respondents emphasized that if BC Housing played a role in the facilitation of relationship-building between Indigenous organizations, it would demonstrate a shift from a 'handout approach' to a 'hand up approach.'

Why This Is Important

Article 21 of UNDRIP calls upon governments to take action in supporting Indigenous people's pursuit of economic and social well-being, including housing. UNDRIP emphasizes that special attention should be given to satisfying rights and needs of Indigenous Elders, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities (UNDRIP).

The comment that BC Housing support for Indigenous housing is primarily financial reflects a transactional relationship with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. The concept of a transactional relationship reflects a more colonial approach - an approach that lacks in cultural understanding, doesn't focus on building capacity and is prescriptive.



7.3.1.3 Indigenous Self-Determination

When asked how BC Housing involves Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in decision-making, many respondents indicated that BC Housing is participating in dialogue, providing support, adapting to needs of communities, and focusing on relationship building. Table 12 summarizes what we heard from respondents within each of these categories.

Table 12: Ways BC Housing Involves Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations in Decision-making

Category	Examples
Participation in dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides project update e-mails to Indigenous Nation, community, or organization • Includes Indigenous Nation, community, or organization on e-mails between BC Housing and consultants (e.g., architects) • Participates in frequent project meetings (e.g., bi-weekly, monthly) • Listens to what community housing needs are • Asks Indigenous Nation, community, or organization what they would like to see in a project • Ensures Indigenous Nation, organization, or community is front and centre while identifying and selecting consultants and project design • Actively seeks input and collaboration from Indigenous partners • Provides suggestions, but ultimately the decision is that of the Indigenous partner • Has included Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in this reconciliation process
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Housing's Indigenous Relations is a new source of support • Provides examples of bylaws, constitutions, and tenancy agreements to assist communities in setting up their own non-profit housing societies • Prioritizes community procurement • Looks for opportunities to bring value to the project (e.g., comes to meetings well equipped with models and ideas from other projects) • Provides project guidance (e.g., where the plans are, what the Indigenous partner needs to do) • Doubled the capital grants compared to non-Indigenous housing
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates and is flexible; works outside of the box to find resources and meet the needs of communities • Works out of their comfort zone; has the mentality of, 'Ok, this is what you want, we will support you with that.'
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enters into Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with Indigenous Nations and ensures projects are based on the Nations' way of knowing • Fosters relationships between new projects and successful projects • Attempts to create enhanced relationships • Accepts the colonial history; intention comes across as honoring the past but also moving forward • Facilitative and well attuned to listening, recording, and surfacing new ideas

We also heard that BC Housing is not involving Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in decision making. Table 13 summarizes what we heard from respondents.



Table 13: Ways BC Housing Has Not Involved Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations in Decision-making

Category	Examples
Participation in dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No room for Indigenous peoples to make their own decisions within BC Housing’s current structure and processes; BC Housing is trying to stick a round peg in a square hole Instructed an Indigenous Nation to use a specific consultant against the Nation’s wishes Conveys BC Housing will do something but then does not follow through Indigenous Nations not feeling heard No ongoing communication unless a new project is being built Dialogue is not prioritized; BC Housing provides information on funding programs and tells the Indigenous Nation or organization to apply if their idea conforms with the funding programs Historically did not include all Indigenous organizations in Indigenous Housing Fund processes and feedback
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has not reached out to organizations to ask what their needs are
Adaptability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveys that BC Housing worries about what the non-Indigenous population will think about their Indigenous approach instead of just asking, ‘What is the right thing to do?’
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not collaborative Has a self-serving mentality Engagement can come across as a box on a check list rather than the realisation that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are a part of the fabric of reconciliation and should be seen as valid partners Relationship building feels like one step forward and two steps back in terms of continuity in respect and empowerment. BC Housing currently holds all the power in the relationship.

7.3.1.4 Areas for Improvement

The top themes that emerged with respect to how BC Housing can better support Indigenous self-determination included improving communication, building capacity, adaptability, and moving autonomy and authority to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Many respondents emphasized that communication needs to happen in a more significant manner, both in terms of speed, consistency, and transparency. There was a sense of frustration that BC Housing through its decision-making processes does not support Indigenous self-determination in part because BC Housing’s current structure does not allow for it; many used the analogy of trying to stick a round peg into a square hole. Suggestions on how to improve communication included:

- More in person meetings;
- Regular meetings with Chief and Councils to discuss how communities can work towards self-determination and how BC Housing can support these efforts;

Why This Is Important

The right to free, prior, and informed consent is a key theme of UNDRIP. It is the idea that Indigenous peoples have the right to obtain all the information necessary to consult or make a decision on matters that impact them (UNDRIP). This speaks to the need for BC Housing to be more forthcoming and transparent within communications.

Article 18 describes the right of Indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making processes that impact them.

- Continuation of collaborative communication and planning, regional and local conferences to consult Indigenous housing and service provider organizations on their needs; and,
- Create Indigenous working groups to formulate culturally safe processes and policies. A respondent stated that while Indigenous Nations are always made to be accountable through reporting, BC Housing does not have the same transparency with its decisions.

A few respondents expressed that their Nation or organization lacks internal capacity to work towards self-determination. Suggestions for improvement included providing funding for internal positions (e.g., housing coordinators) to allow for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to support community housing needs as well as to participate in MOUs with BC Housing that define principles, objectives, shared interests and processes for working together. The focus is for Nations, communities, and organizations to develop a sustainable revenue stream without external help.

A respondent commented that BC Housing's internal Indigenous capacity should increase to be better equipped in assisting communities with their own capacity building.

Several people also commented on the need to involve Indigenous people in decision-making processes within BC Housing. For example, one person indicated that Indigenous groups should be invited to provide input on policy development as opposed to just program development. We also heard from a respondent that BC Housing should move the decision-making authority to Indigenous peoples by devolving capital projects to AHMA. They explained that capital projects are initially managed by BC Housing before they are passed along to AHMA for the rest of operations. Transferring the housing development process to AHMA or another Indigenous organization would directly support Indigenous self-determination.

Why This Is Important

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations commented that they need to grow their own internal housing expertise. Often times the work in communities and organizations on housing is one of several portfolios for a staff member. This is a critical aspect of capacity building to support the process of Indigenous communities and organizations being able to engage on an equal footing with government agencies.

"They need to continue handing over decision-making power and autonomy to communities even if it goes sideways. – Indigenous Nation

"I think BC Housing (like all governments) still has issues of control and ownership and a hard time letting go of some of that control. – Indigenous Organization

"But going back to UNDRIP, the key message is to get out of the way, step out of it and let Indigenous communities manage resources. We are going to fall down, scrape our knees, but get up and try again. We have capacity in Indigenous communities to move projects forward. – Indigenous Organization



“BC Housing needs to give up the paternal position of thinking [they know] what is best for us. – Housing Provider

7.3.2 BC HOUSING STAFF

7.3.2.1 Indigenous Housing Issues and Needs

With respect to Indigenous housing issues and needs, the top priorities noted by staff were increasing the housing supply, diversifying the housing stock, improving housing conditions, and centering Indigenous cultural and community needs in housing designs.

Staff generally agreed that there is a significant need to increase the supply of Indigenous housing. Several people suggested that new housing units on-reserve are needed. They shared that there are off-reserve community members wanting to move home but are unable to because of a major shortage of housing.

Four staff emphasized the need for affordable housing off-reserve. A couple of staff indicated that this is a key issue because Indigenous peoples are at a disadvantage due to discrimination in the housing sector and lingering impacts of colonization.

Why This Is Important

Article 21 covers the rights of Indigenous peoples with respect to economic and social wellbeing. It states that Indigenous peoples have the right to improve their economic and social wellbeing and that governments must take action to support them in that endeavor (UNDRIP).

These priorities reflect significant issues and needs. All these items are reflective of key concepts for reconciliation - Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have control over the amount and type of housing development and whether this housing addresses community needs. Improving housing conditions represents the ultimate goal in successful housing development.

“One of the things we don’t talk about is discrimination in the housing sector, how communities are being discriminated against and the up-stream impacts of how people are encountering their housing needs. Exclusion from economic empowerment means that people need affordable housing. – BC Housing Staff

We also heard about the need to diversify housing stock, improve the quality of housing and incorporate Indigenous cultural needs into housing designs. Suggestions identified by staff within these categories are summarized in below.

Table 14: Top Priorities within Indigenous Housing

Diversify the Housing Stock:	Improve the Quality of Housing:	Incorporate Indigenous Needs into Housing Design:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there is a need for housing across the spectrum, staff pointed out that housing for Indigenous families, women, individuals, youth and Elders is especially needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current housing needs to be brought up to a livable standard. There are unique challenges to developing housing on reserve, including access to safe water and remoteness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural safety and sensitivity need to be taken into consideration when creating programs and building housing that support the Indigenous population.

Diversify the Housing Stock:	Improve the Quality of Housing:	Incorporate Indigenous Needs into Housing Design:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each community is unique. Therefore, the housing design should fit their specific needs and values. • Many Indigenous communities like to gather with family, so the design should consider ways to meet those needs (e.g. larger kitchens).

Most staff agreed that BC Housing addresses Indigenous housing needs through providing funding and programs, assisting with research to identify Indigenous housing gaps and needs, and collaborating with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to create new homes or repair existing ones. Nearly half of the staff interviewed highlighted that BC Housing provides support to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations through the Indigenous Housing Fund.

A couple of staff shared that BC Housing is building the capacity of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations by providing educational opportunities to learn about topics such as how to preserve the life of a building and its assets. In reality, building capacity needs to be undertaken in collaboration between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. It is important to seek the feedback of Indigenous communities and organizations regarding how these educational opportunities have worked and being supportive of how the outcomes are implemented.

One respondent also mentioned that BC Housing is conducting a pilot project to create modular housing inclusive of cultural supports.

7.3.2.2 Areas for Improvement

The most common areas for improvement noted by staff with respect to addressing Indigenous housing needs included providing more flexibility in funding program requirements, addressing structural barriers within BC Housing, and increasing collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities.

Addressing Inherent Structural Barriers

We heard that BC Housing needs more dedicated resources within the organization to advance reconciliation. Specifically, staff mentioned the following needs:

- Expand staff resourcing of the organization’s Indigenous Relations and Indigenous Asset Management departments, and the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee;

Why This Is Important

These are important reflective comments. Further exploration of these topics requires fulsome engagement with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. They are important and complex topics requiring dialogue and specificity.

- Engage staff at all levels within the organization to be involved with the implementation of the Reconciliation Strategy; and,
- Create a database for tracking information on Indigenous housing projects (e.g., population statistics, approval processes, etc.).

One staff member pointed out that BC Housing could consider assessing and redirecting its existing resources to address these structural barriers.

Increasing Flexibility

Just over half of the staff interviewed suggested that BC Housing needs to adopt a more flexible approach to developing and executing Indigenous housing projects. A few staff members indicated that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations sometimes have trouble accessing or pursuing BC Housing programs because the requirements or processes do not fit their situations (e.g., project timing differs).

Moreover, we also heard from staff that there should be some versatility within the housing programs and designs. Specifically, staff suggested that BC Housing support culturally appropriate housing and supports for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Why This Is Important

Article 8 of UNDRIP protects Indigenous cultural identity by declaring that Indigenous peoples have the right to not be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their cultures. The emphasis on flexibility and adaptability based on understanding diverse cultures and listening to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations is critically important.

“We are designing buildings on reserve land by following exactly what a white man’s development, city, or house would look like. Nobody has taken the time to see what we have taken away from the Aboriginal people. We took away their culture. BC Housing is not trying to restore it; we are trying to continue assimilation and give Indigenous communities the same housing we give to others. We are not customizing anything for them. – BC Housing Staff Member

A couple of staff mentioned the need for BC Housing to offer capacity-building opportunities to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in areas such as developing or updating housing policy, applying for funding, etc. This also includes providing opportunities to learn about BC Housing (e.g., available programs). Recognizing the need to support Indigenous capacity-building is important to developing housing that meets the needs of

Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. However, capacity-building is a broad term and needs definition and clarification.

Three respondents suggested that addressing Indigenous housing needs will require working together with other government bodies (provincial and municipal), as well as others in the private sector. This statement reflects the need for partnerships to support the housing needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. The ability to develop partnerships means ongoing collaboration and dialogue.

"I have heard from a number of people who are working with Indigenous communities that while BC Housing provides a lot of money, the communities themselves don't have enough staff resources to implement the funding. That is a key miss – we need to be building capacity within the community.
– BC Housing Staff Member

"BC Housing is attempting to address the existing housing issues and needs of BC's Indigenous population, but it is everyone's problem, and we need municipalities and governments working alongside us. We need the private sector to be involved.
– BC Housing Staff Member

Why This Is Important

Indigenous self-determination is a fundamental concept within UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action. It is the idea that Indigenous peoples have the right to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, cultural, and social development (UNDRIP). Often, this concept is interpreted as applying only to Nation-to-Nation relationships. However, it is important to not discount the experiences of the urban Indigenous population who are not captured in those types of relationships. These approaches are all important aspects of self-determination and supporting Indigenous control over housing. Demonstrating what these actions actually mean is important - talking about how to implement action is different than discussing broad concepts.

7.3.2.3 Indigenous Self-Determination

When asked how BC Housing involves Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in the decision-making and planning processes of development projects on their traditional territories, many staff shared that BC Housing is undertaking the following approaches:

- Seeking guidance from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations by inviting them to provide input into the decisions being made with respect to individual housing projects;
- Working collaboratively and closely with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to make decisions together; and,
- Making room for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to take the lead on decisions within individual housing projects.

Significantly, over half of the staff interviewed suggested that BC Housing's collaborative approaches to project planning demonstrates its commitment to involving Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in decision-making processes. Several respondents mentioned



that BC Housing is working closely with its Indigenous partners to determine what projects will look like.

“I have found that sometimes Indigenous communities are in shock when BC Housing asks them how they want the housing to be structured. There is still a process, but there are parts of it where we work collectively. We educate the Indigenous communities on what the process is and what it means to them. – BC Housing Staff Member

Why This Is Important

Paternalistic tones are sometimes apparent when BC Housing staff are talking about Indigenous self-determination. This speaks to the need for BC Housing to build a deeper meaning and understanding of reconciliation and action it through supporting meaningful self-determination.

We also heard that BC Housing has shifted its approaches to project planning in recent years to allow more room for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to take control of the projects and lead decision-making processes. For example, staff emphasized that projects and proposals under the 2018 Indigenous Housing Fund were driven by community needs. As one staff member explained,

“Indigenous communities are not being involved in BC Housing projects; BC Housing is being involved in Indigenous communities’ projects... We are not deciding that we need to build a project in a specific location. Nations are deciding that. – BC Housing Staff Member

Why This Is Important

The concepts shared in relation to decision-making and control are important and fundamental to reconciliation. The approach needs to reflect Indigenous rights and Indigenous self-determination. It is not so much about making room but acknowledging and recognizing self-determination.

7.3.2.4 Areas for Improvement

We heard from several staff that BC Housing could be doing more to approach reconciliation from the perspective of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. They suggested that BC Housing learn about the frameworks Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations operate under (e.g. decision-making and approval processes) and adapt their approaches to fit within these frameworks. A few staff also recommended that BC Housing recruit talent from within Indigenous communities where possible and take a strengths-based approach by

Why This Is Important

There are many insights offered into understanding and supporting reconciliation. More exploration is needed regarding how BC Housing can undertake increased learning on an ongoing basis in order to meaningfully adapt its decision-making and approval processes.



“truly acknowledging the strength, skills and resilience Indigenous communities bring rather than viewing them as being helpless” (BC Housing Staff).

Furthermore, we also heard that BC Housing should continue to engage in dialogue and consultation with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. However, as a couple of staff pointed out, BC Housing should also find ways to involve Indigenous communities more meaningfully as decision-makers. They emphasized that giving Indigenous peoples decision-making authority requires more than inviting them to participate in engagement, consultations, and discussions. It involves inviting them to take the lead on decisions (e.g., in drafting housing program frameworks). As one staff member suggests,

“The attitude I would like to see is that we are helping to bring in housing expertise, but it is the community who makes the key decisions and identifies what their needs are. – BC Housing Staff Member

Another recommendation noted by some staff was to adopt or modify the organization’s business practices, including mandatory training in cultural humility and sensitivity, implementing standardized practices of giving territorial acknowledgements, and creating a meeting space that would encourage reflection and thoughtful decision-making. With respect to the territorial acknowledgement, one respondent stressed that it needs to be consistent and that there needs to be a genuine intent behind it. They commented on an instance where someone within the organization acknowledged the wrong Nation during an internal meeting, and it went unnoticed by other staff. Reflecting on this experience, this staff member elaborated:

“I think there needs to be more understanding and education for our staff on the history behind whose traditional lands we are actually on. If it was a situation where there were Indigenous people in the room, would they have been offended? If it is done incorrectly it does come across as ignorant and possibly disrespectful, so we really need to know what we are saying, why we are saying it, and what is the meaning behind it – it shouldn’t just be a check box exercise. – BC Housing Staff Member

One respondent stated the overarching systemic aspects of Canadian society do not allow for self-determination for Indigenous communities. This is an important comment and means that BC Housing should look at all of its internal processes to assess colonial aspects of their culture and operational practices.

One respondent suggested that BC Housing consider developing an external committee of Indigenous representatives to inform decision-making processes and work together to identify the top priorities and needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations across the province.

We heard from one staff member that BC Housing’s reconciliation efforts might be a little misguided if they are not actively trying to restore what has been historically been taken away from Indigenous peoples. This is a significant statement and needs to be looked at in the scope of BC Housing’s role and mandate. Key questions will need to be addressed with

respect to how BC Housing can rectify past harm and use this knowledge to build reconciliation.

A couple of people emphasized the need to hire or procure services directly from Nations and communities. One staff member explained that hiring someone from within a community is a more effective strategy than hiring external consultants since community members have knowledge and expertise about the community, as well as well-established relationships.

7.3.3 BC HOUSING BOARD

7.3.3.1 Ways BC Housing Supports Reconciliation

We heard from Board members that reconciliation is currently supported by BC Housing through collaborative relationships and funding opportunities. A few members commented on BC Housing's partnerships with Indigenous communities. They highlighted the work that BC Housing and communities are doing to put relationship protocols in place. They also shared that they believe that BC Housing does a good job listening and asking communities what their needs are.

A couple of people see AHMA as playing an essential role in BC Housing's reconciliation journey. As one member explained,

"...We really rely on organizations like AHMA. We indicate to them that they need to reach out to other organizations and communities and bring this feedback to BC Housing. That's how the current process works. – BC Housing Board Member

In terms of funding, members shared that BC Housing sets aside specific funding for Indigenous housing projects through AHMA and the Indigenous Housing Fund.

7.3.3.2 Areas for Improvement

Transparency and inclusion are important values of reconciliation. We heard that BC Housing could be doing more to enhance transparency and involve Indigenous groups in decision-making and planning processes. Board members stressed that Indigenous groups need to be informed about how or why a decision gets made, and also be given the opportunity to inform the decision-making processes (e.g., decisions such as the Indigenous Housing Fund).

Why This Is Important

The fundamental aspects of reconciliation are provided in these comments. These include open communication, supporting Indigenous autonomy, expanding relationships, ongoing dialogue, and broader engagement.

Some Board members further elaborated that the goal of reconciliation should be to support Indigenous autonomy and self-determination. From this perspective, BC Housing should be moving authority to Indigenous groups to lead the decision-making processes. One Board member suggested that this could take the form of an Indigenous advisory committee that



informs decisions in collaboration with BC Housing and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Another common suggestion noted for improving the organization's reconciliation efforts was maintaining, expanding, and enhancing BC Housing's relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. The Board expressed an interest in working together with BC Housing staff to enhance and preserve existing Indigenous relationships and to build and explore new ones.

One Board member indicated that an important element of maintaining relationships is participating in ongoing dialogue with Indigenous groups to listen, learn, and seek feedback on what their needs are, ways that BC Housing can support those needs and areas for improvement. Within these dialogues, one respondent suggested that BC Housing also consider "getting the story out" to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations about what BC Housing does and the resources that are available to them.

Moreover, a couple of people also urged BC Housing to consider speaking to a larger cross-section of Indigenous communities and organizations, as opposed to only leadership and executive-level staff.

To better serve the needs of Indigenous Board members, the Board should consider ways to be more flexible with timelines, agendas, and governance methods. This might mean seeking ways to invite Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the Board's work practices and meetings. These are important points to focus on in the recruitment of Indigenous Board members.

8 MEASURING SUCCESS

8.1 Overview

“Having an approach that’s adaptive and sets expectations around how that strategy is implemented by different organizations and different communities is important, as well as finding ways to support that. This is important especially in BC, because we have so much diversity in our history and cultures. It will not always be one size fits all”. – Indigenous Organization

Developing measures to track progress and success is important to understanding the impacts of BC Housing’s work and the demonstrable shifts in the organization’s culture. It requires establishing ways to measure reconciliation and developing clear goals and objectives in partnership with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Measuring progress toward reconciliation means assessing the effectiveness of BC Housing’s actions and not just the words.

8.2 Preliminary Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the key findings and suggestions offered by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, as well as BC Housing staff and the Board. They are intended to identify ways that BC Housing can develop and maintain success measures to support and address reconciliation needs.

Table 15: Preliminary Recommendations for Measuring the Success of the Reconciliation Strategy

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Measuring Success		
Phase 2	Establish clear reconciliation goals and objectives and integrate them into the organization’s corporate planning (including annual service/strategic plans).	Collaborate with Indigenous groups and apply the S.M.A.R.T method, which requires that each objective consider the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S – Specific: the objective describes a specific desired result • M – Measurable: the objective can be measured • A – Achievable: the objective is possible and realistic to achieve given the available resources • R – Relevant: the objective is related to the overall vision and goals • T – Time-based: the objective takes into consideration the specific time frame for achieving it

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Measuring Success		
		<p>Review BC Housing’s Corporate Business Plans as a starting point for the organization to work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of reconciliation goals and objectives. See Section 3.1.1.3: Policies and Planning for sample objectives to build from.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Business Plans are linked to BC Housing’s Branch and Personal Performance Plans. Commitment to reconciliation requires goal setting, reflection, and measuring progress at all levels within an organization, including the individual, branch and corporate levels.
	<p>Develop success measures in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>	<p>Develop overall success measures for the Reconciliation Strategy and review at the board level.</p> <p>Once these measures have been finalized then specific KPIs for Executive members and other staff should be developed. Possible topics for KPIs could include: Did that employee increase their personal knowledge? Did they advance their project work with Indigenous people effectively? Were there issues that involved that employee? – etc. The KPIs would be developed during the process of drafting the Reconciliation Strategy.</p>
Phase 3	<p>Gather feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to determine their satisfaction with BC Housing’s advancement of reconciliation.</p>	<p>Find out from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations whether, or how, they want to provide feedback to BC Housing on the results of the Strategy.</p> <p>Develop potential tools for seeking feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the success of BC Housing’s Reconciliation Strategy. This might include engaging people through polls, surveys, roundtables, focus groups, sharing circles,</p>

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Measuring Success		
		interviews, and other methods of collecting input.
		Follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on how any feedback received is being implemented or utilized.
	Measure BC Housing’s progress toward reconciliation by using quantitative metrics, such as targets, benchmarks, and criteria in policies, plans, and agreements.	Review scope and types of data currently collected on housing development projects.
		Identify gaps in information and methods for collecting this information.
		Work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on principles for the collection and use of community data (OCAP).
		Create simple tools to collect targeted information to help assess BC Housing’s progress in addressing reconciliation goals.
	Housing developments should have an assessment tool or process, which could include a collaborative and honest dialogue about what worked and what did not between the partners and possibly stakeholders. Results of the assessment would result in long term relationship improvements.	Seek feedback and input from Indigenous housing providers regarding how they would prefer to have discussions regarding what worked and what did not with respect to housing development projects.
		Create a lessons learned template for Indigenous Housing Providers to collect joint information as agreed.
		On a collaborative basis, translate these lessons learned into program and policy changes.
	Research and track socio-economic indicators to determine the impact of BC Housing’s actions toward progress on reconciliation (e.g., number of housing units, number of Indigenous people	Establish a baseline of existing socio-economic indicators and measures currently used or contemplated.
	Research examples of additional indicators used for housing development.	

PHASE	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
Measuring Success		
	employed by BC Housing, number of Indigenous students enrolled in housing programs, percentage of Indigenous population that is homeless over time, being housed by BC Housing, and/or receiving BC Housing services).	Share these findings with Indigenous housing providers and engage in an open discussion regarding to what extent these indicators measure impacts and what other indicators should be identified.
	Revisit BC Housing’s PAR Submission Reports and Corporate Business Plans and update/implement actions relating to enhancing Indigenous relationships.	Review BC Housing’s use of PAR. Is PAR an appropriate and useful tool in reconciliation?
		Review and create a synopsis of current BC Housing commitments and actions for enhancing Indigenous relationships.
		Review these commitments as part of the process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy and action plan with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
Review the alignment of PAR with development of a future Reconciliation Strategy.		

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing’s direct jurisdiction or authority and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

8.3 What We Heard

8.3.1 INDIGENOUS NATIONS, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

8.3.1.1 Measuring Success

The most common suggestion for measuring the success of BC Housing's Reconciliation Strategy was seeking feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This could take the form of checklists, polls, questionnaires, interviews, roundtables, needs assessments, and storytelling to reveal satisfaction with the Reconciliation Plan, and if BC Housing has been conducting themselves and their work in a culturally safe, open, and inclusive way. Many respondents indicated increased and better communication, including visiting Indigenous communities, is essential for BC Housing to gather informed feedback. Further elaboration on this point included an emphasis on ongoing dialogue and communication about how the relationships and partnerships are going.

Why This Is Important

There are various ways that measures to track progress can be developed. The important message is that any measures need to be identified through discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Hearing from Indigenous people about what has worked and what has not is the essential approach.

As Article 38 of UNDRIP states, it is important that governments work in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples to take appropriate measures to honour Indigenous rights.

"There should be an evaluation that asks, "How did [BC Housing] do? Are we doing alright? Are we doing what we said we would do?" – Indigenous Housing Provider

"The true measurement is not from the [Western] perspective but should be more reflective of how we define success. – Indigenous Nation

"[Measurement of success] should include storytelling. [Stories] need to be heard because they speak to the impact of what has happened. – Indigenous Housing Provider

Many respondents recommended that the success of the Strategy be measured through quantitative metrics, such as targets, benchmarks, and criteria in policy, plans, and agreements. The idea of including measures of success in agreements was noted during the interviews. Potential options for quantitative metrics are shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Suggested Quantitative Metrics to Measure for Success

Source	Metric
BC Housing Internal Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Indigenous staff hired by BC Housing
Agreements between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) signed between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations Number of current MOUs that successfully achieve agreed-upon benchmarks
Socio-economic Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total number of Indigenous housing units built (both on- and off-Nation) Percentage of Indigenous population that is homeless over time, being housed by BC Housing, and/or receiving BC Housing services Number of Indigenous housing projects built within project timeline Vacancy number within new Indigenous housing projects Measurement of increase to healthy Indigenous housing (e.g., through improvements to quality of housing constructed) Total dollar value of Indigenous projects Nation specific data on population that access BC Housing services

“If you aren’t going to use the evidence-based data and have a target to evaluate at the end of the year, then there is no reconciliation. – Indigenous Organization

A few respondents suggested measuring success by noticeable shifts within BC Housing’s business culture. This could take the form of including an Indigenous lens on the Indigenous Housing Fund application process and ensuring regular, meaningful inclusion within the Reconciliation Strategy. Respondents indicated they want to collaborate on the framework as opposed to providing feedback once a draft is written.

We also heard success could be measured through evidence of an increase in Indigenous-led decisions, policies, and planning, such as allowing AHMA to lead the Indigenous Housing Fund with resources provided by BC Housing.

Respondents recommended that BC Housing develop success measures by setting specific goals and targets, collaborating with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in creating measures, and reviewing best practices for successful methods (e.g., BC Hydro’s Report on Performance that guide and evaluate their performance and progress and Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business’ Progressive Aboriginal Relations (PAR) certification program that includes annual recognition for corporate performance).

Why This Is Important

Measures to track progress can be either quantitative or qualitative. The perspectives shared point to the need to look at changes along the continuum of Indigenous decision-making, planning and policy development.

8.3.1.2 Challenges

A few respondents noted the following challenges that may impact BC Housing's ability to implement the Reconciliation Strategy:

- Complex requirements within federal and provincial housing programs and processes, such as specific land designations and the need for communities to create housing societies, can impose barriers for Indigenous Nations and communities to participate in housing development;
- Imbalanced power dynamics between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that exist (due to BC Housing's funding role in the relationship) may impede reconciliation moving forward in a collaborative way;
- A lack of internal experience with reconciliation and staffing capacity within BC Housing could present difficulties in creating a robust Reconciliation Strategy; and
- The unique cultural, social, and economic housing needs of each Indigenous Nation, community, and organization within British Columbia may not be addressed in a provincial Reconciliation Strategy.

It may be challenging for BC Housing to pursue and implement reconciliation through an Indigenous framework and approach. Reconciliation needs to be embraced through a deeper way of knowing; learning through an academic perspective is not enough.

A lack of internal capacity within Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations could present difficulties participating in the creation of a Reconciliation Strategy.

8.3.2 BC HOUSING STAFF

8.3.2.1 Measuring Success

Most staff indicated that the success of the Reconciliation Strategy be measured through feedback received from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, assessing the impacts of BC Housing's efforts on Indigenous peoples in BC, achievement of reconciliation goals, and quantitative metrics in BC Housing's plans and policies and number of agreements with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

Over half of BC Housing staff recommended that the success of the Strategy be measured through seeking feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Many staff expressed discomfort with the idea of BC Housing measuring its own progress toward reconciliation. They suggested that the organization listen to its Indigenous community partners to learn about how it is doing and where it can improve.

Why This Is Important

Article 38 of UNDRIP emphasizes the importance of governments working in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples to take appropriate measures to honour the rights of Indigenous peoples. The key to measuring the impact and importance of Indigenous housing is through direct engagement with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.



Table 17 provides potential options for seeking feedback, including who BC Housing might talk to, ways to collect input, and topics on which to consider gathering input.

Table 17: Options for Receiving Feedback

Who to Request Feedback From	How to Get Feedback	What to Seek Feedback On
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners Nations Communities Housing providers Leaders Tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews Surveys Storytelling sessions Talking circles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BC Housing's progress toward reconciliation Ways BC Housing can improve its efforts within reconciliation How Indigenous partners experience their relationship with BC Housing or the projects in which they are involved How tenants experience the programs that BC Housing develops Ways Indigenous groups want to be involved

With respect to measuring BC Housing's impact on Indigenous communities, several staff recommended that BC Housing examine socio-economic indicators such as the number of housing units or employment opportunities BC Housing creates with the Indigenous population. A couple of staff mentioned the idea of tracking the number of job applications BC Housing receives from Indigenous applicants.

Other common suggestions for measuring success noted by BC Housing staff included achievement of the Strategy's goals (once developed) and implementation of UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action. A couple of staff recommended that reconciliation goals be incorporated into the organization's corporate planning, including its annual service plans.

BC Housing could potentially play a significant role in encouraging Indigenous students to apply for educational programs in housing science. As such, one success measure might be the number of Indigenous students applying for housing science programs.

BC Housing's progress toward reconciliation might be demonstrated through clear cultural and behavioural shifts. This is an important concept and further discussion would be helpful to understand what kind of shifts – for example, changes toward decolonized culture, policies and practices.

8.3.2.2 Challenges

A few staff noted the following challenges that may impact BC Housing's ability to implement the Reconciliation Strategy:

- The organization is limited by its role as a Crown corporation and does not have the authority to set provincial best practices.
- Complicated or strict processes within BC Housing projects might serve as a barrier to participation for some Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
- A lack of internal capacity within BC Housing to deliver the Reconciliation Strategy could present difficulties in the implementation stages of the process.



- Tight timelines could potentially impact the quality of the process and relationships with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. Time is needed for critical thinking and building trust.

8.3.3 BC HOUSING BOARD

8.3.3.1 Measuring Success

The most common suggestion provided by the Board for measuring the success of BC Housing's Reconciliation Strategy was seeking feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This could take the form of listening sessions, check-ins, polls, surveys, or interviews to ask Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations how BC Housing is doing and where they can improve.

"The success of the Reconciliation Strategy should be based on what Indigenous people and the communities feel in terms of our success. Do they think we are successful and happy with what we are doing? And are we improving?" – BC Housing Board Member

The Board also brought up the possibility of going into communities to hold listening sessions and hear from communities directly with respect to any issues that communities are facing. This would also provide an opportunity for BC Housing to learn about the specific needs of each community and where they might be able to offer more support.

Other success measures include:

- Setting specific goals and measuring success by whether or not they are achieved;
- Establishing key performance indicators for reconciliation in BC Housing staff's performance reviews and measuring their progress and improvement;
- Reflecting on how BC Housing is doing in honouring the ability of Indigenous Nations and communities to become self-determining;
- Tracking socio-economic indicators (e.g., number of jobs created, units built, Indigenous peoples housed); and,
- Examining the impacts of BC Housing's work on Indigenous peoples in BC.

Why This Is Important

The comments offered suggest that there are multiple methods for gathering feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. There is merit in looking at more than one approach given situations such as COVID-19 and to allow more access by Indigenous people to provide their input.

As mentioned previously, Article 38 of UNDRIP emphasizes the importance of governments working in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples to take appropriate measures to honour the rights of Indigenous peoples. Developing success measures should be completed in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.



8.3.3.2 Challenges

Board members noted the following challenges BC Housing might experience as they continue this work:

- Inadequate resources (e.g., human, financial) to embark on a learning journey that is equitable, inclusive, and impactful;
- Complexities or complications that may emerge through federal frameworks and processes;
- Limitations that Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations face (such as lacking internal capacity to fully undertake housing projects both on- and off-reserve);
- Vague definitions of reconciliation impacting how people relate to the concept and hold themselves accountable to it; and,

BC Housing's role as a funder creates an imbalance within the power dynamics between BC Housing and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

9 CONCLUSION

This *Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together Report* was developed based on the comments and insights provided by Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, BC Housing staff, and Board members. TWC would like to thank and express gratitude to the individuals who contributed by sharing their experiences and offering their perspectives on colonization and its impacts, as well as the process of reconciling past harms with future actions. The gathering of diverse perspectives that created this Report represents an important step in BC Housing's work to develop a Reconciliation Strategy in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

The Report identifies historical context, the progress BC Housing has achieved in renewing relationships, and the extensive work that is still required to advance decolonization and reconciliation within the organization. Given the complexity and intensity associated with understanding and reconciling where we have come from with where we need to go, it will be important to create and enhance dialogue and communication based on the mutual interests of Indigenous communities and BC Housing.

BC Housing has taken steps to support cultural awareness within BC Housing and improved housing solutions for and with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations; however, to achieve recognition from Indigenous communities that BC Housing is moving from colonization to reconciliation, it will be important to develop a Strategy that creates a roadmap with measurable actions over the short and medium term.

Reconciliation is a process and not a destination or a singular goal to be achieved. It means instilling a way of thinking and being within the organization that aligns with a decolonized system led by people who are prepared to challenge themselves to reflect on their own beliefs and practices and grow. BC Housing recognizes that this work and process of meaningful relationship-building and collaborative action is part of a journey with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to achieve decolonization and advance reconciliation over time.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides all recommendations captured in this Report, including next steps for developing the Reconciliation Strategy and recommendations that were drawn from key findings and suggestions.

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
PHASE 1		
Reconciliation Strategy	Continue dialogue with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of an effective Reconciliation Strategy.	Conduct a gap analysis to identify what policies BC Housing might be missing (e.g., anti-discrimination and anti-racism). The gaps in BC Housing’s policies and practices will be more clearly identified through further engagement with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of a Reconciliation Strategy and through the suggested assessment of BC Housing policies and practices based on a lens of reconciliation and decolonization.
		Collaborate with the appropriate departmental leads in BC Housing to explore action items that BC Housing could implement immediately, including educating staff and Board and taking critical steps to advance Indigenous self-determination and self-government with respect to housing.
		Invite members of Indigenous Nations,

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		<p>communities, and organizations to participate in the Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee and work collaboratively together on the next stages of the process.</p>
		<p>Seek input from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on how they would like to be engaged in the next stages (e.g. surveys, interviews, focus groups, sharing circles, conferences, etc.) and implement their suggestions.</p>
		<p>Continue to engage with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of a Reconciliation Strategy, especially through face-to-face dialogue (including in-person and virtual meetings).</p>
		<p>Continue to share information and communicate on the process to develop and implement a Reconciliation Strategy.</p>
<p>Understanding Reconciliation</p>	<p>Define the core elements and principles of reconciliation within BC Housing based on knowledge and understanding learned through ongoing discussions with</p>	<p>Synthesize information on principles and key elements of reconciliation from this initial engagement.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	<p>Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>	<p>Complete a comparison of this information with a review of principles and key elements identified in legislation and reconciliation documentation.</p>
	<p>Provide additional training to staff and Board members on the topics of cultural humility, cultural sensitivity, and cultural safety and provide additional stages of training for staff on how to apply cultural awareness and knowledge to their work (e.g., learning about how increased understanding of Indigenous histories and colonial practices helps build positive relationships with Indigenous people and supports their goals to reclaim self-determination).</p>	<p>Make cultural awareness training mandatory for all staff and available to Board members and expand BC Housing’s course offerings to include other useful courses on the topics of reconciliation, decolonization, and cultural sensitivity. Appendix B: Recommended Training Courses includes several additional options for BC Housing’s consideration.</p>
		<p>Undertake research on these core topics as they relate to Indigenous engagement.</p>
		<p>Engage with staff on their interests and learning goals in these areas.</p>
		<p>Research existing training programs on topics of cultural humility, cultural sensitivity, and cultural safety to support employee learning.</p>
		<p>Identify specific training options for staff to include in their performance plans.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		Commission a review of BC Housing’s current course offerings to assess their efficacy.
		Following completion of the <i>Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples</i> training, engage with staff on their skill requirements to support Indigenous engagement.
		Create a competency framework that identifies these skills sets.
		Build understanding of these skills and competencies in staff performance evaluations.
	Continue to engage in discussions at BC Housing semi-annual meetings on reconciliation and how understanding cultural safety, humility, and sensitivity translates into decolonized policies and practices.	Identify Indigenous resources and speakers for staff meetings (virtual as needed) to share knowledge and engage in discussions on how shifting culture leads to decolonized practices and approaches.
	At the board level, develop a deeper understanding of reconciliation and adapt Board decision-making and governance processes based on the principles of reconciliation.	Identify key Indigenous speakers and guests to engage in open and participatory discussions on reconciliation.
		Complete a review of Board governance in light of reconciliation.
		Implement changes to governance practices within the Board.

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
<p>Transforming Organization Culture</p>	<p>Implement a standardized framework for conducting land and territorial acknowledgements with input from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>	<p>Review the different land acknowledgements used by BC Housing.</p>
		<p>Create a protocol for acknowledging Indigenous lands and territories in meaningful ways, allowing flexibility to adapt acknowledgements to local Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
	<p>Review staff and board identity factors for recruitment and retention (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, age, economic standing) to achieve diversity.</p>	<p>Complete a review of recruitment practices and policies with a diversity lens.</p>
		<p>Eliminate bias in recruitment practices and policies.</p>
		<p>Hire an external expert as needed to complete a neutral perspective to the review.</p>
	<p>Review BC Housing policies to establish a zero tolerance for discriminatory behaviours.</p>	<p>Identify all policies that should be part of a review.</p>
		<p>Mandate Human Resources to review these policies.</p>
		<p>Recruit external expert identified above, as needed, to provide guidance on this policy review.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	Review BC Housing’s Diversity and Inclusion Policy.	Ensure that it includes statements on anti-racism and equity and a process for addressing issues.
		Develop practices for addressing situations and appropriate remedies.
		Develop new policies focusing on anti-racism, anti-discrimination and equity. Include a mandate for the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB) as part of this process. ⁶⁵
	Identify a department with an appointed champion within BC Housing to lead implementation and monitoring of the Diversity Committee.	Review the mandates of departments to determine the roles and scope of work.
		Determine a few key criteria important to the successful leadership for the Committee such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a broad impact; • Has a strong focus on people and communities; • Has access to resources; and, • Can work effectively with other government agencies and Ministries.

⁶⁵ Since the development of this Report, BC Housing has implemented the Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEDIB), who will serve as a lead for recommended actions relating to diversity, equity and inclusion.

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		<p>Ensure that the BC Housing Executive and other departments support the decision.</p>
		<p>Seek a champion from within the department through a request for interest from within the department.</p>
	<p>Following the review of staff and board identity factors for recruitment and retention, adopt a standard of collecting information on diversity, equity, and inclusion factors, while at the same time ensuring that participants are given an option to 'opt-out' for privacy concerns.</p>	<p>Recruit an expert in diversity data collection, privacy, and data base management through a competitive process.</p>
		<p>Complete a review of existing data and information policies, processes, and standards within BC Housing (where and how is data collected, what does the information tell us).</p>
		<p>Identify gaps in data and create a Diversity Data Framework with principles, collection and use guidelines and data standards.</p>
		<p>Communicate this Framework within BC Housing and to partners for dialogue and input.</p>
		<p>Create accountability within BC Housing planning, budgeting and decision-making that aligns with this Framework.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
<p>Building Relationships</p>	<p>Develop and share with the Board, Indigenous organizations, and all BCH staff an infographic sheet that illustrates BC Housing’s organizational structure and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Clarify through discussions with Indigenous organizations the information they require on BC Housing.</p>
		<p>Assign a lead staff member to compile the information for the infographic.</p>
		<p>Either produce the infographic in-house or have the infographic produced externally.</p>
	<p>Develop and distribute a quarterly bulletin to AHMA, Indigenous Nations, communities, and other Indigenous organizations to provide updates on what is happening both in housing and within BC Housing and provide opportunities for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to share their stories or experiences on a voluntary basis (e.g., what is happening with on-nation housing projects).</p>	<p>Develop an outline for a bulletin and seek the input of Indigenous organizations on the purpose and their interest in supporting the bulletin.</p>
		<p>Determine if Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations have stories to share.</p>
		<p>Create a process for developing and producing the bulletin.</p>
<p>Supporting Reconciliation</p>	<p>Continue to offer the Indigenous Housing Fund, and collaborate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the program’s requirements to ensure that it is flexible enough to meet their community’s needs.*</p>	<p>Utilize the preliminary findings from the initial engagement on reconciliation to identify the main issues regarding the Indigenous Housing Fund.</p>
		<p>Follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to offer discussions on specific issues.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		Summarize this additional feedback and report out to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on actions taken or planned.
	Create increased flexibility in project timelines and housing program requirements and designs to accommodate the unique cultural and community needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations (such as single and multi-person housing; gathering spaces; larger kitchens; housing to accommodate multi-generational families).	Adopt flexible timelines in projects with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to allow for a 'pause' when local issues or priorities arise (e.g., global pandemic, state of emergency, natural disaster); create a plan to maintain communication on the status of this pause and to ensure that work is "restarted" in a respectful way.
		Assess the specific comments regarding program flexibility received to date through this initial engagement.
		Collate the flexibility considerations into categories and frame as a set of defining questions.
		Communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to seek more specific input.
		Review any changes to the program to increase flexibility with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	<p>Communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations early in the program design stage and be upfront about the process and mandatory requirements.</p>	<p>Review current communication messaging and timing under the Indigenous Housing Program.</p>
		<p>Develop a communication strategy for the Indigenous Housing Fund which includes more frequent communication.</p>
		<p>Seek feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the revised communication plans.</p>
<p>PHASE 2</p>		
<p>Understanding Reconciliation</p>	<p>Undertake further internal research on BC Housing’s own colonial history based on the evolution of the role of housing within the province, including past failures.</p>	<p>Commission a comprehensive review of BC Housing’s business practices and policies for adopting or implementing reconciliation and identify knowledge and resource gaps.</p> <p>This review may be led or developed in collaboration and partnership with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
		<p>Document these research findings and analysis in the Reconciliation Strategy.</p>
		<p>Identify facilitators to engage staff in a discussion on what this</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		colonial history means with respect to current culture, practices and policies.
		Through these discussions, identify what changes in practice and culture would support decolonization within the organization - part of a Reconciliation Action Plan.
Transforming Organization Culture	Include the topic of reconciliation as a standing agenda item for Board meetings and provide time for members to discuss and identify ways to incorporate reconciliation, decolonization, and equity practices into their board culture.	Identify and engage Indigenous speakers and guests to discuss reconciliation with Board members.
		Recruit a facilitator from time to time to manage discussions at meetings on ways that the Board can implement reconciliation based on BC Housing’s work toward a Reconciliation Strategy.
	Build upon the review of recruitment practices and policies (see Phase 1 recommendations) to update strategies and hiring practices to align with an equitable and racism-free workplace.	Compile information on all hiring practices, policies and strategies.
		Review any identified recruitment and hiring goals.
	Identify training to help BC Housing achieve their hiring and recruitment goals and objectives.	
Support staff and board members with a resource list of current resources related to Indigenous	Identify a lead staff member in BC Housing to be responsible for	

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	<p>peoples and housing such as reports (e.g., <i>UNDRIP, Truth and Reconciliation’s Calls to Action, Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls</i>), podcasts, documentaries, and film and provide space to enable discussions on how this information is essential to making progress on decolonizing organizational practices including BC Housing’s operations, programs and approaches to building and sustaining positive relationships.</p>	<p>creating and updating this resource list.</p>
		<p>Create accountability for utilizing this list for staff learning and education within staff performance plans (including a section on planned resource learning and how staff used this learning).</p>
		<p>Ensure there is a process for gathering emerging and new resources in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>
<p>Building Relationships</p>	<p>Ask Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations for input on how they want to build or improve their relationship with BC Housing and embrace a range of diverse approaches based on this input.</p>	<p>Based on this initial engagement, follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on ongoing engagement.</p>
		<p>Offer opportunities to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to discuss what relationship-building means to them.</p>
<p>Supporting Reconciliation</p>	<p>Devolve decision-making power to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on all matters impacting them by establishing a standard practice of collaborating and sharing power with Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Develop a decision flow diagram for the Indigenous Housing Fund and determine what decisions are made at each stage and who is involved.</p>
		<p>Review this flow diagram based on the comments</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		received to date from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
		Create a decision-making lens document to share and discuss with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to jointly determine what sharing power and devolved decision-making looks like.
		In collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations, create a staged implementation plan for the decision-making (sharing power) process.
	Establish an Indigenous partners table to review and co-develop BC Housing’s Indigenous housing policies, plans and programs through a cultural safety lens and based on a jointly development Terms of Reference. Invite all Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to be involved.	Develop a preliminary purpose statement and concept for an Indigenous partners table.
	Share this broad statement and concept with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and seek their interest.	
	Given the COVID situation, this can be a virtual partners group where issues of interest to all groups participating are brought forward. This partners table offers an opportunity to discuss the	

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		decision-making/sharing power lens document.
Measuring Success	Establish clear reconciliation goals and objectives and integrate them into the organization’s corporate planning (including annual service/strategic plans).	<p>Collaborate with Indigenous groups and apply the S.M.A.R.T method, which requires that each objective consider the following guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S – Specific: the objective describes a specific desired result • M – Measurable: the objective can be measured • A – Achievable: the objective is possible and realistic to achieve given the available resources • R – Relevant: the objective is related to the overall vision and goals • T – Time-based: the objective takes into consideration the specific time frame for achieving it <p>Review BC Housing’s Corporate Business Plans as a starting point for the organization to work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the development of reconciliation goals and objectives. See Section</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		<p>3.1.1.3: Policies and Planning for sample objectives to build from.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Business Plans are linked to BC Housing’s Branch and Personal Performance Plans. Commitment to reconciliation requires goal setting, reflection, and measuring progress at all levels within an organization, including the individual, branch and corporate levels.
	<p>Develop success measures in collaboration with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.</p>	<p>Develop overall success measures for the Reconciliation Strategy and review at the board level.</p>
		<p>Once these measures have been finalized then specific KPIs for Executive members and other staff should be developed. Possible topics for KPIs could include: Did that employee increase their personal knowledge? Did they advance their project work with Indigenous people effectively? Were there issues that involved that employee? – etc. The KPIs would be developed during the</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		process of drafting the Reconciliation Strategy.
PHASE 3		
Understanding Reconciliation	Dedicate resources for BC Housing staff to action the recommended changes arising out of the analysis described in Phase 2.	Determine through staff discussions what resources are required for specific changes including policy, recruitment, training and program implementation.
		Complete an analysis of critical budget requirements over three years.
	Review current BC Housing communication practices and guidelines to support reconciliation and decolonized messaging.	Based on this review, identify gaps in communication practices based on the review of BC Housing’s history and identified cultural shifts.
		Engage with Indigenous organizations on ways that BC Housing can improve its communications messaging and processes.
Building Relationships	Build a regional Indigenous relationship model within BC Housing to achieve more representation and delegated	Engage with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the scope and purpose of a

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	responsibility in each geographical region. This will ensure that there is enough capacity internally to accommodate Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations who have identified in Phase 2 that they wish to work directly with BC Housing.	regional housing development model.
		Explore how a regional housing engagement and development model would support Indigenous capacity-building for housing development and management.
		Review Indigenous recruitment practices to align with a regional Indigenous model.
	Discuss relationship-building roles with the Board and confirm their commitment to identify ways for members to participate in relationship-building activities with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.	Engage Indigenous staff in discussions with the Board on relationship-building.
		Focus on recruiting additional Indigenous Board members.
		Seek the guidance of the current Indigenous Board member on ways to facilitate discussions on Indigenous relationship-building.
	Offer to engage in virtual discussions and “visits” with and to Indigenous communities, and organizations based on the interests of Indigenous communities and organizations.	Communicate with Indigenous communities and organizations about ways to learn more about their interests and their practices.
		Determine from Indigenous communities and organizations what kind of discussions they prefer to have – in-person or virtual.

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		<p>Schedule appropriate dialogue sessions and prepare joint agenda.</p> <p>Note: Depending on COVID-19 gradually look at in-person meetings but not at a risk to communities and organizations.</p>
	<p>Sponsoring cultural events or volunteering at cultural events are two building blocks to relationship building on the ground. Note: Participating in any events or gatherings within communities will depend on the COVID-19 situation; methods will be adapted accordingly.</p>	<p>Discuss internally and with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations how they would like to see BC Housing staff involved with cultural events in their communities.</p>
	<p>Being present in the community is the easiest and best way to draw connections. Take time to be out in community and get to know community members or tenants through local activities such as sharing a meal or helping with a community garden through collaboration with Indigenous communities and organizations.</p>	<p>Based on this input and feedback, build an online toolkit of best practices on approaches to “being present” in communities in good ways and in ways that align with the protocols and interests of Indigenous Nations and communities.</p>
	<p>The same consideration regarding COVID-19 applies to this recommendation. These informal in-person visits will depend on COVID and the safety of communities.</p> <p>Utilize virtual tools, if necessary, to have informal conversations.</p>	<p>Ensure that discussions with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on these approaches are ongoing and respect Indigenous timelines, priorities and interests.</p>
	<p>Explore with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations the interest in practicing more approaches to relationship-building</p>	<p>In the current situation with COVID, engage in exploratory discussions within pandemic</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	<p>such as inviting Indigenous partners out to share a meal or meet for coffee.</p>	<p>guidelines with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations about what is desired and possible.</p>
	<p>The same consideration regarding COVID-19 applies to this recommendation. These informal in-person conversations will depend on COVID and the safety of communities.</p>	<p>Create an “engagement preference” information tracker for ensuring that the interests of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations are respected.</p>
		<p>Ensure there is regular dialogue to update BC Housing’s understanding and information regarding visits to communities and organizations.</p>
	<p>Gather information on various Indigenous events, conferences and gatherings held annually and give consideration to BC Housing involvement to share information and build positive connections.</p>	<p>Compile information regarding upcoming events in Indigenous communities – virtual or in-person.</p>
		<p>Discuss opportunities to connect virtually or in person with communities and Nations.</p>
		<p>Look at ways to be involved on a virtual and online basis.</p>
<p>Supporting Reconciliation</p>	<p>Support training for Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in housing maintenance and construction, but seek ways to enhance or expand course offerings to larger audiences.</p>	<p>Review the results of this engagement with respect to interests in learning more about training in maintenance and construction.</p>
		<p>Gather information from Indigenous Nations,</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		communities, and organizations to seek information and clarification regarding their preferred interests and approaches.
	Share resources and expand training opportunities with Indigenous housing providers and organizations on topics such as housing policies, development, management, and how to set up a housing society.	Collate information from this initial engagement to define a list of needed resources and training.
		Seek feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on what further information and resources may be needed, and how these resources can be shared.
		Work collaboratively with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on maintaining current resources and information.
	Building on BC Housing's <i>Interim Guide to Indigenous Housing Development and Design</i> , collaborate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on updating the guide or developing a new resource that includes tips and lessons learned – a roadmap - on how to develop or operate housing developments.	In connection with the above recommendation regarding sharing resources, communicate with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to confirm they are aware of the guide and seek feedback on what should be added or changed.
Explore ways that the guide can be updated and made as accessible as possible to all Indigenous		

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		Nations, communities, and organizations.
	Work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in the development of housing projects that enable access to critical support services close to or within housing developments.	<p>Collate information from this initial engagement on the range and type of services of interest to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations connected to housing developments.</p> <p>Reach out to other ministries (e.g., Ministry of Health and Ministry of Children and Family Development), provincial and local health authorities (e.g., First Nations Health Authority, Vancouver Coastal Health), and other provincial agencies and institutions to collaborate on finding ways to link critical health and other support services to housing development focusing on the needs of Indigenous families, women, youth, and Elders. To help address challenges Indigenous communities face, housing and support services need to be simultaneously offered.</p>
		Undertake research on different housing models and approaches with integrated services including gathering examples and best practices from Indigenous

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		Nations, communities, and organizations.
		Consider how these approaches impact the development of housing and inform the Indigenous Housing Fund program guidelines.
	Work with Indigenous, federal, and provincial departments and agencies to put in place a clear policy and approach that enables Indigenous renters on- and off-reserve to transition into becoming homeowners, including funding to support housing maintenance.*	Research different examples of policies from housing organizations and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations with respect to home ownership.
		Determine what information or data are required on renting and home ownership in Indigenous communities.
		Prepare a short set of questions to collect information that addresses data gaps from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations. This would not be a separate request but would be linked to continued engagement by BC Housing and the creation of an Indigenous partners table.
	Consider increased opportunities to transfer ownership of housing developments to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and support necessary capacity-building within	Collate information from this engagement regarding the capacity needs of Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS	
	Indigenous communities and organizations.*	<p>develop and manage housing.</p> <p>Determine how current BC Housing work supports capacity development and identify gaps.</p> <p>Work with Indigenous housing providers to validate capacity needs and engage with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on their interests in advancing home ownership.</p>	
	Increase collaboration with the federal government and local governments on tri-partite arrangements to support Indigenous development and management of housing.*	<p>Collect information to summarize the range and scope of engagement with the federal government.</p> <p>Engage a third-party facilitator to provide guidance on intergovernmental approaches, gaps and alignment opportunities.</p> <p>Involve Indigenous housing providers on a collaborative basis in this work; at a minimum, seek input and feedback from Indigenous housing providers, as they are willing to provide.</p>	
	Measuring Success	Gather feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations to determine their	Find out from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations whether, or how, they want to provide feedback

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	satisfaction with BC Housing’s advancement of reconciliation.	<p>to BC Housing on the results of the Strategy.</p> <p>Develop potential tools for seeking feedback from Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on the success of BC Housing’s Reconciliation Strategy. This might include engaging people through polls, surveys, roundtables, focus groups, sharing circles, interviews, and other methods of collecting input.</p>
		<p>Follow-up with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations on how any feedback received is being implemented or utilized.</p>
	Measure BC Housing’s progress toward reconciliation by using quantitative metrics, such as targets, benchmarks, and criteria in policies, plans, and agreements.	<p>Review scope and types of data currently collected on housing development projects.</p>
		<p>Identify gaps in information and methods for collecting this information.</p>
		<p>Work with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations of principles for the collection and use of community data (OCAP).</p>
		<p>Create simple tools to collect targeted</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
		information to help assess BC Housing’s progress in addressing reconciliation goals.
	<p>Housing developments should have an assessment tool or process, which could include a collaborative and honest dialogue about what worked and what did not between the partners and possibly stakeholders. Results of the assessment would result in long term relationship improvements.</p>	<p>Seek feedback and input from Indigenous housing providers regarding how they would prefer to have discussions regarding what worked and what did not with respect to housing development projects.</p> <p>Create a lessons learned template for Indigenous Housing Providers to collect joint information as agreed.</p> <p>On a collaborative basis, translate these lessons learned into program and policy changes.</p>
	<p>Research and track socio-economic indicators to determine the impact of BC Housing’s actions toward progress on reconciliation (e.g., number of housing units, number of Indigenous people employed by BC Housing, number of Indigenous students enrolled in housing programs, percentage of Indigenous population that is homeless over time, being housed by BC Housing, and/or receiving BC Housing services).</p>	<p>Establish a baseline of existing socio-economic indicators and measures currently used or contemplated.</p>
		<p>Research examples of additional indicators used for housing development.</p>
		<p>Share these findings with Indigenous housing providers and engage in an open discussion regarding to what extent these indicators measure impacts and what other indicators should be identified.</p>

THEME	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	KEY STEPS
	Revisit BC Housing’s PAR Submission Reports and Corporate Business Plans and update/implement actions relating to enhancing Indigenous relationships.	Review BC Housing’s use of PAR. Is PAR an appropriate and useful tool in reconciliation?
		Review and create a synopsis of current BC Housing commitments and actions for enhancing Indigenous relationships.
		Review these commitments as part of the process to develop a Reconciliation Strategy and action plan with Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.
		Review the alignment of PAR with development of a future Reconciliation Strategy.

Note:

* Any recommendations that are outside of BC Housing’s direct jurisdiction or authority, and will require that BC Housing coordinate their efforts with provincial and federal governing bodies, or other ministries, agencies, and organizations.

Appendix A References



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Appendix B Recommended Training Courses

Table B.1: Recommended Courses

Course	Description
First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) Fundamentals of OCAP	This course provides a comprehensive overview of OCAP, including its use within First Nations communities, potential harms that can result from misuse of First Nations information, and ways to implement it at the community level.
Indigenous Corporate Training Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples	This course examines the history of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, respectful relationship-building, and effective communication with Indigenous communities. It also goes into more depth about UNDRIP and TRC's Calls to Action.
San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Program	This training enhances one's self-awareness and understanding of culturally safe practices. It also explores the topics of culture, stereotyping, and the consequences and legacies of colonization.
Indigenous Perspectives Society Cultural Perspectives Training	Indigenous Perspectives Society (IPS) offers Cultural Perspectives Training (CPT) to help governments, organizations, businesses and individuals deepen their understanding, increase cultural competence, and develop actionable ideas to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.
Indigenous Perspectives Society Recruitment and Retention of Indigenous Peoples	This training series provides an overview of best practices for recruiting and retaining Indigenous employees.



Appendix C Indigenous Approaches to Data Collection

C.1 Indigenous Approach

Historically, Western approaches to data collection within Indigenous Nations has been undertaken from the perspective of collecting information on Indigenous people rather than with Indigenous people. These historical methods of collecting data have utilized standard tools which have not always recognized Indigenous ways and practices, nor cultural diversity.

TWC employed decolonized/Indigenous research methodologies that emphasized the involvement of the community in producing research rather than contributing as research subjects. These methodologies are grounded in a series of culturally competent principles and guidelines highly used among researchers conducting both qualitative and quantitative studies concerning Indigenous groups.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples' (UNDRIP) standard of free and informed prior consent and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action for businesses and government are critical aspects of undertaking research within and with Indigenous Nations.

TWC worked collaboratively with Indigenous Nations and organizations based on building respectful relationships, collaboration and engagement. The intent was to understand and build relationships as the foundation. Our methods were based on Indigenous community knowledge and protocols blended with Western facilitation techniques—using culturally appropriate methods reflecting Indigenous awareness and understanding. These methods included:

- Respectful communication with Nations, communities, and organizations; and,
- Providing opportunities for Nations, communities, and organizations to learn more about and get involved in the project.

With respect to validating findings, summary notes were written during each interview and provided to participants afterwards for validation.

C.2 Data Ownership

TWC's instruments and process will be directed by the following guidelines within Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP®).

To mobilize Indigenous self-determination and self-governance, OCAP®, as sanctioned by the First Nations Information Governance Committee (2007), was established as a guiding principle for the ethical and culturally competent collection of data between researcher and Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations.

In order to mobilize these protective factors, the principles of OCAP® are as follows:

- Ownership – the concept that Indigenous Nations collectively possess cultural knowledge, data and information;
- Control – the rights of Indigenous peoples to control their empirical environments that are infused with their everyday life, which includes research, information, and data;
- Access – the concept of Indigenous groups having control, ownership and accessibility of the data collected; and,
- Possession – in this framework, this refers to the trusted relationship between the possessor of data and those who own said data (FNIGC, 2007).

The OCAP® principles were developed to instill trust and self-governance back into the research process for Indigenous populations and the researcher. As such, they are of absolute importance for TWC's work with Indigenous populations.

C.3 Indigenous Strategies and Protocols

TWC takes the approach that data is information, and this means that the ways and methods of gathering any stories or information through data collection needs to be pursued using understanding, transparency and appreciation for those who are sharing their knowledge and understanding. With respect to integrating Indigenous methods and approaches, TWC held phone discussions and interviews using respectful communication and language. Furthermore, interview guides were highly accessible to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations and interviews were facilitated and organized based on Indigenous protocols.

Indigenous strategies and protocols included:

- Discussing anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality prior to the collection of data; and,
- Meaningful engagement of the Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations in the engagement process, which included providing an opportunity to review data collection methods and tools prior to participating in the discussions or interviews and providing high-level summary notes, stripped of any identifiers, to participants for review.

Appendix D Invitation Letters



D.1 Invitation Letter from Shayne

(Date)

Dear XXXXX,

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know that BC Housing is developing a Reconciliation Strategy to guide our work with Indigenous organizations and communities across the province. We have engaged Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) to lead a collaborative process for completing this work. The Reconciliation Strategy will provide a framework for how we support the development and operations of affordable and social housing in British Columbia, including a stronger level of commitment related to our implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action.

At BC Housing we recognize that reconciliation is about repairing, building and renewing relationships with Indigenous Peoples, and TWC is ensuring that this work centres Indigenous research and engagement practices in the development of the Reconciliation Strategy.

The objectives of the Reconciliation Strategy include:

- Acknowledging the historic and ongoing marginalization of Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia on these, their ancestral and traditional territories;
- Supporting BC Housing in advancing an equity analysis in all areas of the organization as it pertains to Indigenous peoples;
- Developing strong relationships between BC Housing and Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia;
- Enhancing and supporting Indigenous self-determination;
- Working towards closing the socio-economic gap between Indigenous Peoples and other British Columbians; and,
- Embedding reconciliation within BC Housing's mandate to facilitate the delivery of safe, secure and affordable housing.

To ensure this work is achieved in a meaningful way, we would like the Reconciliation Strategy to be developed in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples across the province with whom we are currently working. Engaging with Indigenous organizations and communities we are currently working with will ensure that we centre the voices and needs of Indigenous Peoples.-Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

BC Housing's Reconciliation Strategy Steering Committee will be following up shortly with an invitation for your community/organization to speak with us.

Sincerely,

Shayne Ramsay



D.2 Invitation Letter from Stephanie

Dear XXXXX,

We are following up on the email sent out earlier by Shayne Ramsay, CEO of BC Housing to invite your participation in developing BC Housing's Reconciliation Strategy. As mentioned in Shayne's letter, BC Housing has hired Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) to lead a collaborative process for completing this work. The Reconciliation Strategy will provide a framework for how we build and strengthen our partnerships with Indigenous organizations and communities in delivering our mandate, including a stronger level of commitment related to our implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action.

In developing this Reconciliation Strategy, BC Housing is inviting you to participate in a discussion regarding this important work. These initial discussions represent first steps in undertaking open and collaborative engagement with Indigenous organizations and communities. To this end, we invite you to engage with BC Housing in the following ways:

1. **Interviews:** Interviews will be scheduled between February and April 2020 and conducted with TWC. You may participate in one-on-one discussions by phone, or video conference. During this approximately one-hour conversation, you will be invited to discuss topics that are important to your organization or community related to BC Housing's mandate.
2. **Written submissions:** You may send an email or letter with your organization's or community's feedback on what you would like to see reflected in the Reconciliation Strategy.

Your input and involvement in the creation of BC Housing's work on a Reconciliation Strategy is important. We are hoping that you will engage in discussions with us and share perspectives. Based on this initial discussion, TWC will develop a plan for continuing to work with Indigenous communities to build the Reconciliation Strategy into the future. BC Housing recognizes that this is a learning process for us, and your guidance and support is appreciated in the development of the Reconciliation Strategy.

Please note, the information you provide will be used to support the development of the Reconciliation Strategy only and will be kept strictly confidential. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from the interviews. Personal information is collected under section 26(c) of the British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

To confirm your interest in participating and if you have any questions, please contact the Steering Committee at 778-452-5535 or engage@bchousing.org. On behalf of BC Housing, I look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Allen
Associate Vice President, Strategic Business Operations & Performance



Appendix E Engagement Materials



E.1 Interview Guide for Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

INTRODUCTION

Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) acknowledges that BC Housing plays a role within colonial history as a Crown agency (e.g. funder, housing partner, landlord and employer) operating on unceded, ancestral and traditional Indigenous territories. BC Housing has undertaken considerable work to meaningfully approach reconciliation and is implementing their goal to “enhance Indigenous partnerships and relations.” This Reconciliation Strategy will establish a broader and more meaningful framework for how they conduct their business, including a stronger level of commitment related to their adoption of UNDRIP standards and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

The interview will take 60 minutes of your time. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. The information you provide will be used to support the development of the Reconciliation Strategy only and will be kept strictly confidential. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from the interviews. Personal information is collected under section 26(c) of the *British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). We will be keeping verbatim written notes during the interview – the interview will not be recorded. We will share an interview summary with you following the interview for your review and validation. If you have any questions, please, contact Emma Wilson at Two Worlds Consulting, p. (778) 400-3508, email: ewilson@twoworldsconsulting.com.

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Date:

Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Background and Warm Up

- What is your role within your organization and how long have you been involved?
- What is the mandate of your organization?
- Can you describe the relationship between your organization and BC Housing?



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Defining and Understanding Reconciliation

We would like to explore and share knowledge regarding reconciliation – what it means and through your experience with BC Housing how you think reconciliation is reflected in its business practices and culture.

Indigenous Relations

We know that positive and respectful relationships are a core element of reconciliation – these relationships are important to BC Housing – let's talk about your perspectives on BCH's relationships with Indigenous organizations – the extent to which they are principle-based and collaborative – how relationships can be strengthened.

Meeting Indigenous Housing Needs

The key themes we are hoping to discuss are current and future housing needs - now and with an enhanced focus on reconciliation – examples of what could be done to improve housing.

What are some actions that BC Housing might take to meet the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in BC?

Promoting Reconciliation

There are many ways that reconciliation can be supported – we would like to discuss the decision-making practices of BC Housing and how Indigenous organizations are involved or could be involved – best practices, promising practices and/or success stories.

Measures of Success

We know it is important to understand how we are doing to reach our objectives. Let's talk about how we will know whether we are making progress in advancing reconciliation – outcomes to be measured – dealing with challenges along the way.

Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations?

End of interview – thank you for your participation. TWC will provide summary notes to you for validation.

E.2 Written Submission Guide for Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations

INTRODUCTION

Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) acknowledges that BC Housing plays a role within colonial history as a Crown agency (e.g., funder, housing partner, landlord and employer) operating on unceded, ancestral and traditional Indigenous territories. BC Housing has undertaken considerable work to meaningfully approach reconciliation and is implementing their goal to “enhance Indigenous partnerships and relations.” This Reconciliation Strategy will establish a broader and more meaningful framework for how they conduct their business, including a stronger level of commitment related to their adoption of UNDRIP standards and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

The information you provide will be used to support the development of the Reconciliation Strategy only and will be kept strictly confidential. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from the written submissions. Personal information is collected under section 26(c) of the British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA).

Name:

Title:

Organization:

Date:

Please respond to the questions provided below. We are interested in hearing your perspectives, views and comments in each section. Please identify acronyms in full wherever possible.

Background and Warm Up

1. What is your role within your organization and how long have you been involved?

2. What is the mandate of your organization?



3. Can you describe the relationship between your organization and BC Housing?

Defining and Understanding Reconciliation

4. How does your organization define reconciliation?

5. Could you describe how BC Housing currently promotes reconciliation within the work that they do (e.g. their values and ways of conducting business)?

Indigenous Relations

6. What does BC Housing do to build or enhance their relationships with Indigenous organizations and communities?

7. To what extent is your relationship (or partnership) with BC Housing built on principles of reconciliation and collaboration?

8. Do you have any suggestions for improving these efforts?

Meeting Indigenous Housing Needs

9. From your perspective, what are the current and future housing issues and needs among Indigenous peoples in BC?

10. How does or doesn't BC Housing address the existing housing issues and needs of BC's Indigenous population?

11. Can you think of any other actions that BC Housing might take to meet the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in BC?



Promoting Reconciliation

12. In what ways does BC Housing currently involve Indigenous communities in the decision-making or planning processes of development projects on their traditional lands?

13. Can you think of anything else that the organization could be doing to involve Indigenous communities as decision-makers?

14. Are there any best practices in reconciliation that you think BC Housing should consider adopting?

Measures of Success

15. How do you suggest measuring the success of this Strategy?

16. What might indicate that BC Housing is making progress toward reconciliation?

Other Comments

Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations? Please feel free to share additional comments and any recommendations regarding the development of a Reconciliation Strategy for BC Housing.



E.3 Interview Guide for BC Housing Staff

INTRODUCTION

“For over a century, Canada's Aboriginal policy sought to eliminate the rights, governments, culture, resources, lands, languages and institutions of Indigenous people. The goal of the policy was to assimilate them into ‘mainstream’ European culture against their will. Residential schooling became a central element in this policy. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established because former students and survivors of the residential schools came forth and placed the issue on the public agenda. The TRC report highlights how Canadian law and lawyers played an active role in forcing Indigenous children into residential schools. The intergenerational impacts of residential schools continue for Indigenous people today. Canada’s laws and policies were created based on notions of Indigenous inferiority and European superiority and have facilitated discrimination against Indigenous peoples. These laws resulted in disparities and inequalities between Indigenous peoples and broader Canadian society. Reconciliation is about addressing these inequalities. We must work to establish and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples” (Law Society of British Columbia 2020). Reconciliation is about ensuring systemic and cultural change to eliminate racist and discriminatory practices, policies and approaches within organizations and in the business that they pursue as well as building respectful and trust-based relationships.

Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) understands that BC Housing has undertaken considerable work to implement their goal to “enhance Indigenous partnerships and relations” and that this Reconciliation Strategy will establish a broader and more meaningful framework for how they conduct their business, including a stronger level of commitment related to their adoption of UNDRIP standards and the TRC’s Calls to Action.

The interview will take 60 minutes of your time. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. The information you provide will be used to support the development of the Reconciliation Strategy only and will be kept strictly confidential. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from the interviews. Personal information is collected under section 26(c) of the *British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). We will be keeping verbatim written notes during the interview – the interview will not be recorded. We will share an interview summary with you following the interview for your review and validation. If you have any questions, please, contact Emma Wilson at Two Worlds Consulting, p. (778) 400-3508, email: ewilson@twoworldsconsulting.com.

Name:

Title:

Length of Employment with BC Housing:

Date:

Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Background and Warm Up

1. How would you describe BC Housing's mandate and role with respect to housing in Indigenous communities?
2. How familiar are you with UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

Defining and Understanding Reconciliation

3. How does BC Housing define reconciliation?
4. Could you describe how BC Housing currently promotes reconciliation (respectful Indigenous relationships, anti-racism and anti-discrimination) within the work that they do (e.g. their values and ways of conducting business)?
5. What is your understanding of reconciliation and what do you do in your work to embrace and implement reconciliation?
6. What actions have been taken by BC Housing that you would describe as directly supporting reconciliation?

BC Housing's Internal Culture

7. What practices or approaches does BC Housing implement internally to ensure an equitable, anti-racist and discrimination-free work environment?
8. Have you experienced or observed inequitable or discriminatory activities or practices internally within BC Housing's workplace?
9. What are some of the things that BC Housing can do to make sure to have a racism free workplace?

Indigenous Relations

10. How would you describe BC Housing's relationships with Indigenous organizations?
11. What does BC Housing do to build or enhance their relationships with Indigenous organizations and/or communities?
12. Could you describe how BC Housing's Indigenous relationships (or partnerships) are built on principles of respect, reconciliation and collaboration?
13. Do you have any suggestions for improving these efforts?



Meeting Indigenous Housing Needs

14. From your perspective, what are the current and future housing issues and needs among Indigenous peoples in BC?
15. How does or doesn't BC Housing address the existing housing issues and needs of BC's Indigenous population?
16. Can you think of any other actions that BC Housing might take to meet the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in BC?

Promoting Reconciliation

17. In what ways does BC Housing currently involve Indigenous communities in the decision-making or planning processes of development projects on their traditional lands?
18. Can you think of anything else that the BC Housing could be doing to involve Indigenous communities as decision-makers?
19. Are there any best practices in reconciliation that you think BC Housing should consider adopting?

Measures of Success

20. How do you suggest measuring the success of this Strategy? What might indicate that BC Housing is making progress toward reconciliation?
21. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations?

End of interview – thank you for your participation. TWC will provide a summary to you for validation.



E.4 Interview Guide for BC Housing Board Members

INTRODUCTION

“For over a century, Canada's Aboriginal policy sought to eliminate the rights, governments, culture, resources, lands, languages and institutions of Indigenous people. The goal of the policy was to assimilate them into ‘mainstream’ European culture against their will. Residential schooling became a central element in this policy. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established because former students and survivors of the residential schools came forth and placed the issue on the public agenda. The TRC report highlights how Canadian law and lawyers played an active role in forcing Indigenous children into residential schools. The intergenerational impacts of residential schools continue for Indigenous people today. Canada’s laws and policies were created based on notions of Indigenous inferiority and European superiority and have facilitated discrimination against Indigenous peoples. These laws resulted in disparities and inequalities between Indigenous peoples and broader Canadian society. Reconciliation is about addressing these inequalities. We must work to establish and maintain a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples” (Law Society of British Columbia 2020). Reconciliation is about ensuring systemic and cultural change to eliminate racist and discriminatory practices, policies and approaches within organizations and in the business that they pursue as well as building respectful and trust-based relationships.

Two Worlds Consulting (TWC) understands that BC Housing has undertaken considerable work to implement their goal to “enhance Indigenous partnerships and relations” and that this Reconciliation Strategy will establish a broader and more meaningful framework for how they conduct their business, including a stronger level of commitment related to their adoption of UNDRIP standards and the TRC’s Calls to Action.

The interview will take 60 minutes of your time. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. The information you provide will be used to support the development of the Reconciliation Strategy only and will be kept strictly confidential. No comments will be attributed to any individual in any reports resulting from the interviews. Personal information is collected under section 26(c) of the *British Columbia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). We will be keeping verbatim written notes during the interview – the interview will not be recorded. We will share an interview summary with you following the interview for your review and validation. If you have any questions, please, contact Emma Wilson at Two Worlds Consulting, p. (778) 400-3508, email: ewilson@twoworldsconsulting.com.

Name:

Title:

Date:

Do you have any questions for me before we start?

Background and Warm Up

1. How long have you been a member of the BC Housing Board and what is your specific role?
2. How would you describe BC Housing's mandate and role with respect to housing in Indigenous communities?
3. How would you describe the Board's level of understanding with respect to reconciliation and also your own?
4. How can the Board work to advance reconciliation through its governance role? Does the Board have a recognition of reconciliation in its mandate?

Board Culture

5. What practices or approaches does the Board implement to ensure equitable and culturally respectful decision-making?
6. What could the Board do to enhance equity and culturally respectful practices in its governance and decision-making?
7. In what ways does the Board practice anti-racism and decolonization in their work? What opportunities exist for improving these practices?

Defining and Understanding Reconciliation

8. What is your understanding of BC Housing's definition of reconciliation?
9. Could you describe how BC Housing currently promotes Reconciliation within the work that they do (e.g. their values and ways of conducting business)? How is this aligned with the perspectives and work of the Board? Please explain.
10. What actions have been taken by BC Housing that you would describe as directly supporting reconciliation?

Indigenous Relations

11. How would you describe BC Housing's and the Board's relationships with Indigenous organizations, tenants and communities?
12. What does BC Housing do to build or enhance their relationships with Indigenous organizations and/or communities?
13. Could you describe how BC Housing's Indigenous relationships (or partnerships) are built on principles of Reconciliation and collaboration?
14. Do you have any suggestions for improving these efforts?



Promoting Reconciliation

15. In what ways does BC Housing currently involve Indigenous communities in the decision-making or planning processes of development projects on their traditional lands?
16. Can you think of anything else that the organization could be doing to involve Indigenous communities as decision-makers?
17. Are there any best practices in Reconciliation that you think BC Housing should consider adopting?

Measures of Success

18. How do you suggest measuring the success of a Reconciliation Strategy? What might indicate that BC Housing is making progress toward reconciliation?
19. Do you have any final thoughts or recommendations?

End of interview – thank you for your participation. TWC will provide a summary to you for validation.



Appendix F Feedback Provided on Draft Report by Indigenous Nations, Communities, and Organizations



Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations that participated in an interview were invited to provide feedback on the draft *Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together* Report. TWC provided the Report to participants on September 16th, 2020, along with options to submit feedback anonymously through a survey link or by filling out a response form. Feedback was specifically requested for the sections of the Report where the participants’ perspectives were captured, including:

- Section 4.3.1 in Understanding Reconciliation
- Section 6.3.1 in Building Relationships
- Section 7.3.1 in Supporting Reconciliation
- Section 8.3.1 in Measuring Success
- Section 10: Recommendations

TWC followed up with each participant through phone calls and e-mails and was responsive to Indigenous Nations, communities, and organizations who requested more time to provide feedback. The timeline was extended from October 9th to October 16th. TWC received feedback from 15 participants. Comments received are provided verbatim in the tables below. They have not been edited to preserve the integrity of the participant’s perspective and the voice of the individual. Each row is reflective of one participant’s comments. The feedback will inform the next phase of work for BC Housing and the Steering Committee in the development of a Reconciliation Strategy.

Table F-1: Feedback on Section 4 Understanding Reconciliation

1. Do you have any changes or additions to the Understanding Reconciliation Recommendations?
As the history of Métis people is in many ways very different from other First nations groups in BC, it is important to highlight the Métis as a unique cultural group. It seems that Métis and Inuit are often lumped into one category even though they are culturally unique. This will affect how people understand this unique group. Self-identified Métis makeup as much as 30% of BC's Indigenous Populations and should be recognized as such.
No. I thought it built carefully upon what already so and emphasized what I understand of reconciliation as a non-Indigenous person.
Reconciliation as it relates specifically to housing, must recognize the significant impact intergenerational trauma has had on for Indigenous peoples in regards to homelessness and housing. Many people currently cannot access BC Housing funded shelter and housing, even when available, because of addictions, mental health and multiple barriers due to direct and indirect trauma from residential school system and the ongoing colonial structures imposed on Indigenous peoples. Housing solutions must include mental health and addictions supports that are culturally appropriate and are trauma informed. There is a continuum of where people are in their healing journey. IN some cases, moving directly from the street and into housing is not practical, intensive support is needed.

Culturally appropriate and creative responses, that do not feel colonial or institutional need to be considered to recognize that there is no quick fix for trauma, cultural connection and approaches to housing and homelessness supports can begin this journey, save and transform lives.

Perhaps there should be a mandatory cultural sensitivity course on the Indigenous History, for all employees that work for BC Housing. The reconciliation has to be within the organization. In order to do your best, with Indigenous people, you would have to understand the history.

As stated above there are multiple barriers that the Indigenous people have to maintain stable housing. The well-being, Mental Health, Addictions, and the trauma; this is a ripple affect from Residential school, the 60 scoop. A culture sensitive course will be beneficial to the BC Housing staff. As the employees would have a better understanding to why the Indigenous people face these barriers, and understand that there are such diversity and multiple cultures within the Indigenous peoples of BC.

As stated in the Drafting report page 41 "A few people commented that reconciliation is about building healthy communities. This includes creating a sense of belonging, as well as addressing issues within communities to support the well-being of the collective membership." In order to work with the Indigenous population, the inclusion of the Indigenous people should be heard. Having an Indigenous person to be a represent on the board, or people that are well educated with the Indigenous culture. There should be a representative person(s). This would be such a great pivotal move within the BC Housing organization. On Page 51; follow through with the suggestions made to have a representation of Indigenous peoples within the organization, and the board. Showing the Indigenous people that they are heard.

Reconciliation of the two worlds. The Indigenous world, and the Western ways. Incorporating both worlds would be a great foundation towards working with the Indigenous people. The Indigenous Culture, the Identity of the Indigenous people, creating opportunity for both worlds to collide within the organization. In the draft it says that BC housing supports reconciliation. It does not give the details of what BC housing does in these supports. The collaboration with Indigenous communities and organization is a step in the right direction to Reconciliation. With that being said, the barriers that are faced with the indigenous people are the mental health and addictions. There are multiple barriers that are faced with Indigenous people that prevents them from staying housed. Lack of resources, lack of cultural identity. The housing complexes, apartments, are they close to resources? Do some of the complexes take the housing first approach, with all the resources under one roof (Resources in the same building of these homes/complexes/apartments). What collaborations does BC Housing have with the reserves? When it comes to the BC Housing staff showing commitment by being readily available, and attentive to their needs; are they culturally sensitive? Page 42.



2. Do you have any changes or additions to the What We Heard section regarding Understanding Reconciliation?
<p>There is discussion about 'On Reserve' housing through the IHF. This does not align with Métis needs as we are a non-land based Nation in that we do not have Reserves. It seems like you need to make this point more clearly as it looks as though BC Housing is only looking to develop housing On Reserve. If this is the case it actively works against the Métis.</p>
<p>No. I like the approach to include all voices and utilize an approach that valued all voices.</p>
<p>The work of reconciliation, at the local community level, cannot fall on the indigenous communities alone. The BC Housing reconciliation document and recommendations focusses largely on engagement with Indigenous communities. It is important that Non-Indigenous Organizations, who are already providing housing via provincial BC Housing funding, are educated on the importance of reconciliation, are well versed in BC Housing's Reconciliation strategy and are required/mandated by BC Housing to do better - to dramatically change and become accountable to key principles of Reconciliation.</p> <p>Having the BC Housing employees, especially the front-line staff have a better understanding of what Reconciliation is, and why there is reconciliation in place for the Indigenous people. Does this include the organizations that are accepted with the grants that BC Housing gives; as they represent BC Housing. Many organizations that are granted with funds, do they an understanding of reconciliation?</p>

Table F-2: Feedback on Section 5 Transforming Organization Culture

1. Do you have any changes or additions to the Transforming Organization Culture Recommendations?
<p>Ensure that the specific needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are differentiated so as not to lump all three cultural groups into one 'Indigenous' category.</p>
<p>One area that appears to be missing from the report and the recommendations, is the current reality of housing provision for Indigenous peoples off reserve. In many, many communities, non-indigenous organizations, with not even one Indigenous board member, are managing housing where the vast majority of tenants are Indigenous people living off reserve. Meanwhile, Indigenous organization are working hard to build capacity to develop and run housing for Indigenous peoples with very little support or funding.</p> <p>Knowingly or unknowingly, many non-Indigenous organizations, are continuing to perpetuate colonial structures, inequity and systemic racism in their management approaches, at every level, including board, management and frontline staff.</p> <p>In the short-term, there needs to be an entire section of your strategy dedicated to off reserve housing challenges for Indigenous Peoples. This section must be focused on ensuring organizations who are funded by BC housing throughout the province, particularly those who</p>

<p>are offering housing to first nations peoples off reserve, are being held accountable to BC Housing reconciliation Strategy.</p> <p>In the long term, support to off reserve Indigenous organizations must also be a priority to ensure that contracts for housing and housing supports can be successfully transferred to Indigenous organizations, to ensure we are serving Indigenous peoples.</p>
<p>2. Do you have any changes or additions to the What We Heard section regarding Transforming Organization Culture?</p>
<p>Find a way to recognize the Métis in the same way that traditional First Nations territories are identified. Re: 'Inequitable Funding Model': Please note that the Métis in BC receive inequitable funding in all areas as compared to other First Nations groups.</p>
<p>No – I thought this section was very well done.</p>
<p>At every level of BC Housing there needs to be a shift in organizational culture. Our suggestion is to ensure this is also occurring at the board, senior staff and frontline staff levels of ALL organizations that are funded by BC Housing.</p> <p>Utilizing the knowledge of the Indigenous employees of BC Housing, the Indigenous people that are employed. Do they have input in the reconciliation; do they see reconciliation within the organization? In phase 2: There was suggestions to Identify and engage Indigenous speakers and guests to discuss reconciliation with Board members. Having an Indigenous person(s) on the board would be beneficial and a great step towards reconciliation. The representation of an Indigenous person will cover all aspects, especially if they are aware of the history of the Indigenous peoples. (Page 55)</p>

Table F-3: Feedback on Section 6 Building Relationships

<p>1. Do you have any changes or additions to the Building Relationships Recommendations?</p>
<p>As above, Métis people are lumped into the term Indigenous, thereby causing potential confusion as to the unique nature of the Métis people as compared to First nations or Inuit in BC. Phase 3: Build Regional Indigenous Relationships: As the Métis are across BC and are not land based, please include an approach to address our group’s unique geographic needs.</p>
<p>In terms of building relationships, it is crucial that BC Housing staff are transparent and supportive. We need to know that BC Housing is there to support us and wants us to be successful with our goals to develop housing for our community members.</p> <p>Following through with phase 1, 2, and 3. Communication is the key, this is what the Indigenous people voice in the feedback. Build a positive rapport, understanding the history of the Indigenous people is a vital key. It will give the BC housing employees a better understanding and create an opportunity for building a positive relationship with the Indigenous Peoples.</p>

2. Do you have any changes or additions to the What We Heard section regarding Building Relationships?
<p>Ensure that relationships come first. We need regular communication and we need to feel that we can turn to someone with questions without judgement.</p> <p>Continued communication with the Indigenous organizations, Indigenous Communities, and off reserve Indigenous peoples. Building a positive relationship, having a solid foundation of communication would be beneficial on both spectrums. The Indigenous ways, and the western ways, to have a common ground. BC housing should also look into having an Aboriginal Liaison to commit to having a positive communication of all parties. Having an Aboriginal Liaison within BC Housing can be an advocate for the Indigenous peoples, and Mediate between all parties.</p>

Table F-4: Feedback on Section 7 Supporting Reconciliation

1. Do you have any changes or additions to the Supporting Reconciliation Recommendations?
<p>By not identifying the unique needs and culture of Métis and Inuit in BC, the ability to support reconciliation with these groups is watered down. Adding information specific to Métis (and Inuit) in BC allows for an understanding of the unique contributing factors to the hurdles being faced by Indigenous groups who are not 'First Nations' by definition.</p>
<p>I struggle reading the recommendations here. I recognize it is not BCH's mandate but if what's plumbed in is not safe drinking water (or cannot be plumbed in) then the housing built is not viable. A recommendation for BCH to have a champion and key navigator to leverage for safe drinking water when needed would be helpful potentially.</p>
<p>Do the BC Housing staff, development consultants know about our area and the concerns we have in our communities? Each community is unique. There needs to be the time taken by BC Housing staff to do the research and come and talk to our board and senior staff and learn about these challenges.</p> <p>In many of the rural towns/cities, do the Indigenous organizations have priority to grants that BC Housing provides? This would be an opportunity for reconciliation, to have Indigenous organizations as first priority to grants with Housing, as these organizations will be a step in the right direction with Reconciliation.</p>
2. Do you have any changes or additions to the What We Heard section regarding Supporting Reconciliation?
<p>'Increase Housing Supply': Talks about on and off reserve housing needs. This does not identify Métis people's unique needs since there is not a Reserve system in place for Métis and as such no 'home' to move back to. However, Métis are often lumped into the 'Off Reserve' category, which is categorically incorrect.</p>

Reconciliation looks different for all nations and communities. It is also crucial that there is consideration for what reconciliation might mean for the diverse population of peoples who are living off reserve.

Where do off-reserve people fit within the reconciliation strategy? It seems that it is not being considered as a significant issue. Given that the vast majority of people accessing housing and supports via BC Housing funding are living off reserve, it should be a major section in this report.

Table F-5: Feedback on Section 8 Measuring Success

<p>1. Do you have any changes or additions to the Measuring Success Recommendations?</p>
<p>The document speaks earlier on to addressing Qualitative data as a measurable, however I do not see this approach listed in the Recommended Actions. Coding this data can be difficult, but if done well the picture painted is much more robust and accurate to people's real life experiences. The stories related to Housing for Métis, Inuit, and First Nations in BC are VERY important to create context for the qualitative data collected. Quantitative Data is presented in it's own table but the term Qualitative is barely mentioned and no methodology or benchmarks are suggested for its use.</p>
<p>It is a few days since I finished the report, so I may be wrong, but I don't remember coaching by Indigenous leaders to assist non-Indigenous leadership in bringing BC Housing, and community organizations in the reconciliation and decolonization change mandate, as being one of the measures for collaboration.</p>
<p>We can't emphasize enough how important it is going to be that we see real tangible changes. Change happens when intentions are good and we are moving together in the right direction to support Indigenous organizations (both on and off reserve) to provide housing for their people (both on and off reserve).</p>
<p>2. Do you have any changes or additions to the What We Heard section regarding Measuring Success?</p>
<p>Indigenous organizations need to see transparency in how success is measured. For example, if a fund is announced for Indigenous organizations, regular updates on how many projects have been built, how many units for Indigenous people and how the projects are going. Even if our project isn't funded, we need to be able to see success through BC Housing projects, this will help us to feel confident that all the capacity we are putting into this work with our proposals, can lead to success and achievement of our goals.</p>

Table F-6: Final Thoughts Provided

1. Any final thoughts you would like us to know?
As you can see from my responses, I see a major need to identify the Métis as a unique cultural group and not lumped in with other Indigenous groups. The Inuit fit this model as well.
The report is carefully written and thorough. It is broad in its approach and rightly brings the board and its governance into the process. I liked that learning was multifaceted (written, film, documentaries etc.) as a means of engaging the entire person in learning.
I have no further input or recommendations currently, the document and the recommendations are a great summary of the challenges and possible solutions. thank you for including me in this process. I realize that it may be a living document and some of the recommendations will/may take longer to come to fruition (True Reconciliation), this document is a solid starting point for what needs to happen next. I look forward on how we can all move forward with Reconciliation, both amongst Organizations and within ourselves.
I have no further feedback and appreciate everything you have done to do this work in a good way
I don't have anything to add.
Well done and a thorough insightful report and road map. It was an honour to participate and contribute.
It all seems to look good to me thank you.
I did a cursory of the draft Reconciliation: Moving Forward Together Report and thought it read very well. I do not have any recommendations for change.
Thank you for the opportunity to offer feedback. I've read the report and feel it has captured my thoughts so I won't be offering feedback.
<p>"Make cultural awareness training mandatory for all staff and available to Board members"</p> <p>This should be mandatory for all board members. If you do not have the board members trained, how can we have change within BC Housing?</p> <p>This maybe the wrong place to bring this up but I'm going to anyways. I really believe that if you want to try and come together, through reconciliation, then there should be an expectation that any housing built for indigenous people's, should have indigenous people's involved in the building of these buildings. This supports the coming together of indigenous and non-indigenous people's and gives indigenous a sense of ownership or pride in the housing within their communities.</p> <p>Other than those two points, this was really well done!</p>



In the executive summary you write "It will include clear goals, objectives, and actions that align with Indigenous perspectives and documents such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action." Later on page 7 you mention DRIPA, but I would think compliance with DRIP should be brought into the exec. summary... no?

Page 3 - I think BC Housing should acknowledge that indigenous lands are unceded - that in itself is reconciliACTION.

Page 4 - 1.1.1 - The TRC was also a recommendation (and one of the only implemented recommendations) of 1996 RCAP report. I think it's important to keep lifting up RCAP. Also - impacts from colonial systems have included inability to purchase and mortgage housing both on and off reserve, since we're talking about housing & reconciliation. I think it's a really important point that you could include in bulleted list at top of page 5. In the paragraph just after that, I think it's important to mention the 423 recommendations of the royal commission, not just the TRC calls to action. "To begin addressing these disparities, the TRC published a set of 94 Calls to Action" is factually inaccurate. It began in 1996 with the RCAP report. RCAP resulted in TRC.

LOVE the bottom of Page 5: "Reconciliation is a process and not a destination or a singular goal to be achieved. It means instilling a way of thinking and being within the organization that aligns with a decolonized system led by people who are prepared to challenge themselves in a way that asks:...." and that whole bulleted list. So great.

Page 30: First paragraph: Musqueam First Nation should be Musqueam Indian Band, no?

1. Indigenous Homelessness

It is important that the concept of Indigenous Homelessness (as outlined in the draft Reconciliation Strategy) flows through to practical aspects of the work BC Housing does in communities.

If we are going to truly tackle the challenges facing Indigenous people with housing, with an Indigenous lens, we need to recognize that providing homes for Indigenous peoples is so much more than simply providing housing. It means practical support; cultural support, social support, community connection, belonging and holistic health.

Indigenous housing projects must be provided with sufficient funding during the development phase to ensure community engagement with our elders and future tenants.

We need flexibility within BC Housing's guidelines to ensure the projects are truly culturally appropriate in their design, for example to ensure that we are building homes large enough for growing families and to ensure intergenerational living. We also need to have funding support to build indoor gathering spaces, spaces for family to stay short term when visiting

e.g. when a family member passes or a child is born. The projects must consider connection to the land, greenspace and outdoor gathering spaces.

We believe that sufficient funding for the operational support component of housing projects is crucial for successful housing projects for Indigenous peoples.

Due to so many challenges as a result of trauma, from health, mental health and addictions, violence, systemic racism and multiple barriers, we need to ensure that people not only are housed, but can successfully stay housed by providing high quality, culturally appropriate housing and tenancy support positions.

If Indigenous Organizations are to support the people that truly need housing, we cannot do this alone with minimal operational funding. The people who are often deemed 'hard to house' due to mental health and addictions, cannot be forgotten, and yet, we will not have the capacity to take in these tenants without the funding and support.

2. Challenges at a municipal level regarding availability of land

Our experience has been that at the provincial level there is support for Indigenous housing, within our organization there is the capacity, however, we have been delayed and challenged by lack of suitable land and delays at the municipal level. Our municipality has outwardly supported our project and yet on a practical level we still face these delays.

It is our view that this experience is not unique to our project and needs to be considered by the province as one of the reasons there is so little housing being developed despite the provincial funding.

How can we ensure that the reconciliation strategy and approach trickles down to the municipal level to ensure that we can truly move forward with positive outcomes for Indigenous people, many of whom, are being pushed further and further from their homes due to increasing unaffordability.

Land to develop is the biggest concern. Land (on and off reserve) is available, however accessing it for projects is never straight forward. Conversations need to happen with the province, the nations and the municipalities about freeing up more land for developments of new housing for Indigenous people. This focus should be not only on rental housing but home ownership initiatives and opportunities both on and off reserve.

3. Reducing overcrowding and culturally appropriate design to accommodate families

When talking about housing for Indigenous families, particularly those that live intergenerationally, we need to recognize that families are often large, with more than 3 children, particularly if a family is caring for the children of other family members. In many cases an aunt or grandparent is also living in the home. There needs to be houses with up to 4 bedrooms to provide for larger families. The rule and regulations around occupancy and its cultural appropriateness absolutely needs to be reviewed.

COVID-19 has emphasised the urgent need to provide more housing to reduce overcrowding, but also when thinking about housing design, Indigenous organizations need to have the flexibility to build larger units to allow larger families to live safely together without crowding..

4. Accountability to Non-Indigenous organizations regarding collaboration.

There are assumptions that non-Indigenous housing providers and local social service providers are collaborating with first nations and Indigenous Organizations. However, the reality on the ground is, with limited funding available, organizations often put in a position where they are competing for resources to provide services in the community.

It has become clear that local non-Indigenous organizations who are currently offering housing and housing supports via BC Housing, are feeling threatened by an Indigenous organization like ours that is trying to build capacity to serve off reserve Indigenous people.

How can Indigenous Organizations develop capacity to provide Indigenous services to Indigenous people if we are met with ongoing challenges, lack of cooperation, lack of communication and lack of collaboration or support from those that are supposed to be our local partners?

We believe that if BC Housing wants to see meaningful change and reconciliation for Indigenous people, we need to expect more from Non-Indigenous Organizations. This means requiring these organizations who are funded by BC housing, to show meaningful engagement, support and collaboration with Indigenous Organizations. These organizations should be required to collaborate and to share their knowledge and expertise that they have developed because of the funding that has been provided to them by the Province for many years.

Unfortunately, we believe that without using policy tools around collaboration and partnership building, such as funding and reporting requirements, BC Housing cannot expect that non-Indigenous Organizations will support local Indigenous organizations to be successful with housing programs and developments.

The result of requiring local organizations to get on board with the value of Indigenous organizations housing their own people is what will allow our agencies to face less challenges and reach our goals of become leaders in this area.

A few things that initially came up when reviewing the document:

- The report was well built and articulate.
- When I read the report, I didn't see representation from the ground. I think it could be seen as a report written on the bureaucratic level.
- When you hear about housing management it is quite concerning. There should be more urgency.

- There are two main issues: We don't have enough housing stock and we grossly underestimate homelessness and how challenging maintenance will be.
- During the interviews the initial discussion was around reconciliation and Indigenous self-determination. After reading the document twice, I realized reconciliation is a strong word to use and has drawn out a specific response. What is missing is the sense of urgency in the housing crisis. I would love to see the report screaming urgency and that there is an immediate housing need. Indigenous people are the most marginalized group and you can see that from working on the ground.
- BC Housing need more people on the ground to actually see what is going on – get a family to tour you around in their home and show you the mould they are living with. The best way to show respect to Indigenous communities is to create a manageable healthy housing stock that looks after Indigenous people who live in the units. Housing organizations are in survival mode, and that shows we are in a crisis. They don't have enough budget to work with high risk individuals.
- There are national best practices on homelessness that BC seems reluctant to get in to. e.g., 100,000 homes campaign.
- Reconciliation and best practices should be two separate conversations.

There are 200 diverse First Nations in BC. This report captures the perspectives of 16 of them. The others may not feel that their experience with BC Housing is reflected by what is captured in this report. In the next stages of developing the Strategy, therefore, it will be important to involve the other Nations, as well as the urban Indigenous and other housing organizations to be invited to be part of the process. Importantly, the process needs to do more to involve Indigenous partners in the actual development of the Strategy (as opposed to being pulled in at the very end to review or being included as an afterthought).

It is important to include the urban Indigenous and the dispossessed Indigenous populations. There is a tendency in government to fall back on UNDRIP definitions of Indigenous peoples that only recognizes First Nations, Inuit and Métis; as discussed in the interview. I thought you did a good job of capturing these thoughts from the interview, but just wanted to highlight that so that those groups are not left out of the process.

Empowering Indigenous peoples is critical - meaning that actions on BC Housing's part need to expand beyond simply hiring more Indigenous peoples in their internal teams. BC Housing need to empower organizations like AHMA and others to help genuinely lead the work.

Appendix G Feedback Provided on Draft Report by BC Housing Senior Leadership



BC Housing provided the draft report to its senior leadership for their perspective on the ability to operationalize the recommendations within their business areas. Eight of the 14 senior staff provided feedback and their comments are presented below in summary form (please note that this feedback is not part of the original staff interview process).

Table G-1: Overall Feedback on Draft Report

1. Dismantling Colonial Systems
Work from the perspective that First Nations partners are already empowered and see the decision making from an Indigenous perspective, not from existing colonial frameworks and processes (and legal structures).
Adopt a “decolonize first” approach, acknowledging and accepting our context in colonial and neo-colonial practices that require change as part of meaningful reconciliation.
2. Building Partnerships
Enroll Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Indigenous Services Canada, and other government partners in this work.
Engage with Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and ensure our approach continues to set a high standard for government and is replicable and transferable for adoption across other government Ministries and Crown Corporations.
3. Building an Indigenous Team
BC Housing could consider establishing an Indigenous Relations Division similar to the Health Authority model in BC.
An Indigenous division and VP at the Executive Committee could ensure strengthening Indigenous relations becomes embedded in the organization’s culture.
This might be a way to demonstrate to the Indigenous community that we recognize the importance of Reconciliation and the pre-eminence of the Indigenous community in the work of BC Housing.
4. Economic Reconciliation
Consideration of the importance of economic reconciliation and exploration of our program requirements to influence the community housing sector to advance on programs, services, staffing that reflects the people they serve and the communities in which they work.
Evolve our procurement processes to be supportive of Indigenous businesses in housing projects through an Indigenous Procurement program.
5. Address the Disproportionate Number of Indigenous People Accessing our Housing and Programs
Acknowledge the disproportionate numbers of Indigenous people in social housing, homeless shelters, and street homelessness.
The reasons for this are historical and a product of a colonial past, where all policies, starting with the <i>Indian Act</i> , for Indigenous people were designed by others to take our land and prevent self-determination and community well-being.
6. Embedding Indigenous Knowledge into BC Housing Business
We need to embed Indigenous methods, philosophies, reconciliation in the manner in which we do our business. We need to adopt the philosophical statement “nothing for us, without us”.

7. Research
Acknowledge the positive social impacts of our housing.
Add a social outcome lens to the work that we do to measure success. Measure housing by impact not by housing units created, acknowledging how it affects immediate, extended family and Indigenous community also.
Measure by health, social and economic outcomes.
8. Addressing Land Title
Recognition of the colonial system of land titles based on buying, selling or developing land on unceded territory.
Without a complete dismantling and decolonizing of the Torrens system, the economic benefits reaped from that system must be recognized and economic reconciliation pursued in lieu.
Address the challenges of the systems we are operating within, in addition to the other context already included (e.g. that PRHC owns land not been ceded through treaty, the reasons for the vastly disproportionate representation of Indigenous peoples amongst those experiencing homelessness, etc.). Some of these systemic challenges cannot be redressed by BC Housing directly and we need to ensure that the importance of this conversation is part of our longer-term strategy.
The land ownership system is still designed to create intergenerational wealth however many Indigenous peoples still live on reserves where they don't own the land and are not able to take advantage of the wealth building system.



TWO WORLDS
CONSULTING

info@twoworldsconsulting.com

 (778) 400-3499

www.twoworldsconsulting.com