Calgary

What we heard: Community engagement and research report

Understanding the affordable housing needs of Indigenous Calgarians: By Indigeous people for Indigenous people

Calgary Housing, Affordable Housing
May 2022

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A note to our readers

How to read this report

This report has been written to preference the voices of community. Community is a term commonly used by Indigenous people in both writing and work on the ground. For us, community encapsulates Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers, community members and those with lived experience. It also serves as an invisible circle, welcoming all people, institutions, organizations and activities that serve to make life better for all Indigenous people. By way of definitions, this report uses the term "the city," meaning Calgary as a geographical area. We also talk about recommendations for "The City," referring distinctly to the municipal government and The City of Calgary's Affordable Housing division. For additional clarity, please see Appendix E: Indigenous/cultural glossary of terms.

The contents of this report have been smudged, validating the words as real. Guided by Elders from across Calgary, we have built this work from foundational teachings of oral process and traditional concepts, stories, ways of knowing and communicating. When possible, original dialogue and direct quotes from Elders are captured, including additional Elders' teachings which can be accessed via video links throughout this report. Please take the time to read and listen to these important teachings; searching for the lessons between and within the lines of the stories.

Finally, awareness regarding Indigenous ways of knowing is key to understanding the parallel structure of our work and this report. Some of the terms referenced throughout this report – such as Natural Laws – may be new to readers. That's okay. As Indigenous communities grow and change, many old concepts are beginning to re-emerge, and we are learning together how to apply these new (yet old) ideas.

If such terms and concepts are new to you, we recommend starting with the teachings found on page three of this report. If you are new to the basics of Canada's history as told through an Indigenous lens, please start with *Appendix A: Historical context* of this report. Canada's history with Indigenous communities is complex and Indigenous knowledge systems and learning are built on slow knowledge (i.e. taking the time to think); thus, we encourage readers to take the time to read this work in its entirety.

Thank you for listening to the community in this important work.

All my relations

Authors of this report

The process of declaring self-location in writing has become important as Indigenous communities seek to understand how documents (such as this one) are created. Perspective, worldview and ways of knowing are critical when attempting to reflect the voice of community in policy making.

As previously mentioned, the contents of this report have been smudged, validating the words as real. Having said that, there are limitations as theming and condensing was a part of the process in order to create an actionable report. We hope that the embedded videos and quotes offset these limits.

Key author: Sharon Goulet

Sharon is Red River Métis and member of the Métis Nation of Alberta. Born in the Treaty 1 territory, she is related to the Millers, Spences and Irwins who lived in the area during the time of Louis Riel. Many of Sharon's family fled during the Red River Rebellion, which eventually led to the establishment of the provisional government by the Métis leader Louis Riel and his followers at the Red River Colony in 1869.

At a young age Sharon moved to the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka – or Montreal – with her family. The island called Montreal is known as Tiotia:ke in the language of the Kanien'kehá:ka, and it has historically been a meeting place for other Indigenous nations, including the omàmiwininì or Algonquin people. While in the area, Sharon completed a bachelor's degree in Cultural Anthropology at McGill University.

During this time Sharon witnessed the Oka crisis that took place, which was a catalyst towards the eventual Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, Truth and Reconciliation Commission and today's TRC Calls to Action.

Sharon later moved to Treaty 7 territory to complete her bachelor's and master's degrees in social work, focusing on Indigenous leadership, policy, and community development. Sharon has worked at The City of Calgary for the past 27 years in a variety of positions starting as the assistant to the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee, working in Indigenous community development, and working as the Indigenous Social Planner with Family and Community Support Services for 15 years. Her work has involved social planning, community development, research, and advocacy on issues that concern the Indigenous urban community.

Contributors

The following entities were core in the co-creation of this work:

*   Elders' Knowledge Circle

*   Technical Advisory Group

*   The City of Calgary
    –   Calgary Housing, Affordable Housing division
    –   People, Innovation and Collaboration, Indigenous Relations Office

Executive summary

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, The City of Calgary honours and acknowledges Moh'kinsstis and the traditional Treaty 7 territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina Nations. We acknowledge that this territory is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 within the historical northwest Métis homeland. Finally, we acknowledge all Indigenous people who live, work and play on this land.

This report has been created specifically for The City of Calgary's Affordable Housing division to use as a starting point; to build long and enduring relationships with Indigenous communities. From the community's perspective, this report also identifies what The City of Calgary's role could be in better supporting the delivery of affordable housing for urban Indigenous Calgarians now and into the future. This report may also be useful to local non-profit affordable housing providers and Indigenous and non-Indigenous social service providers to understand Indigenous housing needs. Finally, this report may inform provincial and federal work, as well as assist surrounding First Nations and Métis Nation to plan their housing work into the future.

As The City of Calgary's journey begins, this traditional gathering place provided us with an opportunity to listen to the original caretakers of this land. To initiate this work, from June 2020 to June 2021, The City engaged with Elders and knowledge keepers, Indigenous-serving housing providers and service organizations, Nation administrative leadership, as well as Indigenous Calgarians with lived experience.

> ## We acknowledge all Indigenous people who live, work and play on this land.

This report is driven by these conversations, as well as key legislation and Council directives that mandate The City of Calgary to create and sustain safe and viable communities[1] for all Calgarians through a variety of policies and initiatives such as the *Municipal Government Act (MGA); Foundations for Home: Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy; Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee's 10-Year Strategic Plan; The City's Commitment to Anti-Racism; Social Wellbeing Policy; Welcoming Communities Policy; Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy; Multicultural Communications and Engagement Strategy; Resilient Calgary Strategy;* and the *White Goose Flying Report*.

This *What We Heard: Community Engagement and Research Report* captures both urban and Nation-specific engagement conversations that speak to significant gaps in delivering safe and viable housing communities for Indigenous people in Calgary. The urban section represents the voices of stakeholders involved in affordable housing and service provision within Calgary. The Nation section recognizes the distinct emerging housing needs of each Nation, as well as understanding how The City can support the development of affordable housing for Nation members living or wanting to live in Calgary. Finally, appendices are available for the reader to understand the complex and changing relationship that Indigenous Canadians have had with the land, settlers and governments of the day, and how these have and continue to impact communities.

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[1] *Municipal Government Act*: WHEREAS Alberta's municipalities, governed by democratically elected officials, are established by the Province, and are empowered to provide responsible and accountable local governance in order to create and sustain safe and viable communities

Part 1: Methodology (How we came to know)
Indigenous affordable housing work across Canada

Overall, Canada's Indigenous population is growing faster than the general population. In Calgary, approximately 30,000 people (i.e. four per cent) of the population are Indigenous. Of that percentage, nearly half are under the age of 25. More than 53 per cent of Indigenous people reside in urban areas – this suggests a strong migration pattern, either from reserves to cities or notable mobility back and forth due to family, employment and housing requirements. Similar to the myriad social ills facing Indigenous communities, housing challenges can be traced to the impacts of Canada's campaign of colonization and genocide against Indigenous communities. Today we see the results of these colonial policies, such as systemic racism in housing complexes and the impacts of intergenerational trauma in community.[2]

In addition to stakeholder engagement, a high-level scan was undertaken to understand how other municipalities across Canada are beginning to understand their role in addressing these social challenges and demographic shifts through Indigenous affordable housing work. Most municipalities have resourced an Indigenous Relations Office to action Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) declarations, created relationships with Métis and First Nations, supported mandates of their local Indigenous advisory committees, and built corporate responses to the TRC Calls to Action. Others are primarily involved in community collaboratives, with a focus on addressing Indigenous homelessness through community partnerships and programming.

Although most municipalities have affordable housing strategies and plans, there are few notable Indigenous considerations – most are operating from an equality versus equity lens for affordable housing development. Western funding programs – like The City of Calgary's Housing Incentive Program and Non-Market Housing Land Sale – are common across municipalities. However, there are exceptions that demonstrate movement in this work:

- In February 2021, Edmonton City Council approved a motion to develop an Indigenous Affordable Housing Strategy. This is an example of innovative thinking, premising an equity lens for The City of Calgary to replicate.

- In 2021, it was declared that the First Nations Housing & Infrastructure Council will assume authority and control over First Nations housing and infrastructure program delivery in British Columbia. This First Nation controlled organization was formally established in 2017 and is the first of its kind in the country to create a First Nations housing and infrastructure authority.

At the community level, innovative Indigenous-specific affordable housing models are emerging across the country.[3] Municipalities can look to these promising practice models and find ways to enable and support delivery of housing programs that are safe and culturally-appropriate for Indigenous individuals and families.

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[2] To learn more, please see Appendix A: Historical context
[3] To learn more, please see Appendix B: Promising models for Indigenous affordable housing
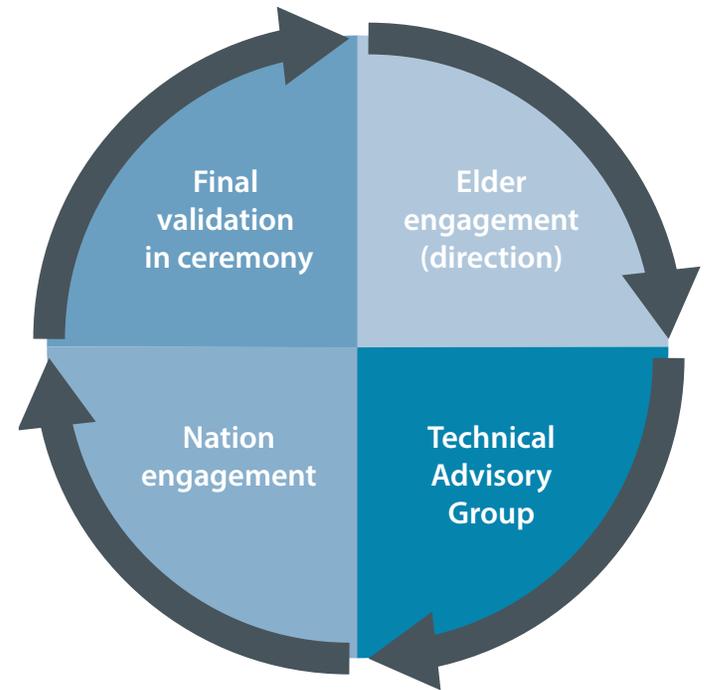
Stakeholder engagement
How we heard

The stories and direction from this report are critical to understanding lived experiences of our Indigenous communities. Guided by a parallel oral governance model which includes a diverse Elders' Knowledge Circle, we premised Indigenous experience and advice moving forward on this work. Figure 1 demonstrates how our engagement process underscored the importance of iterative interactions as a cornerstone of our work – now and in the future.

Historically, research or (engagement) has been done on Indigenous people with results that are either meaningless or harmful to community. For engagement to be useful, it was critical to have housing understood and translated into Indigenous concepts that have meaning for community. Underscored by conceptual frameworks such as OCAP™ (ownership, control, access and possession) and FIBI (For Indigenous, By Indigenous), we worked in ethical spaces that enabled the co-creation and validation of community direction described in this report.

For stakeholders to own, protect and control how their information is to be used, Elder Dr. Reg Crowshoe's governance model was used with permission to parallel and translate the concerns and recommendations in ways that all parties could understand and support. To support the

iterative process, multiple engagement sessions took place from June 2020 to February 2021. Given the timing of this project during the global COVID-19 pandemic, all sessions were conducted virtually. In all, more than 14 unique sessions with more than 60 individuals were held. Notes from each session were shared and validated by participants throughout the process.

Figure 1: How we heard

Figure 1: How we heard — a circular diagram with four quadrants: Final validation in ceremony, Elder engagement (direction), Nation engagement, Technical Advisory Group.

We began the engagement by offering tobacco to a group of Elders representing the Elders' Knowledge Circle. After accepting our request to meet, we coordinated a day-long circle with the Elders' Knowledge Circle. Following an opening smudge, the Elders were split into smaller groups. All sessions were recorded and transcribed. A smaller group of City staff listened to the recordings and identified the following key themes:

1. **Reconciliation:** Formally declare The City of Calgary and Affordable Housing priorities for advancing urban Indigenous housing.

2. **Natural Laws:** Honour and respect Indigenous worldviews that are built upon Natural Laws/way of life; create parallels in research, planning and designs to better reflect Indigenous concepts of what home meant prior to colonization.

3. **Recognize the land:** Build and create safe spaces for home with access to land that is culturally relevant/appropriate.

4. **Safe spaces:** Design for a sense of community and places for seniors, youth and community to come together and be free of trauma.

5. **Colonization and external racism:** Recognize external influences unique to Indigenous people; acknowledge racism and stereotyping.

6. **Supports:** Provide Indigenous programming and support for people living in Calgary, as well as people moving from reserve.

These six themes were advanced to a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) of urban Indigenous and non-Indigenous housing providers and service organizations. Four meetings were held to dive further into each theme and operationalize guidance from the Elders. Validation meetings were held with the TAG to ensure that their recommendations were articulated properly.

Initial conversations were also held with administrative and governance leadership of the Treaty 7-Blackfoot Confederacy, Treaty 7-G4 Nations and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3/Local 87; all are interested in working long-term with The City of Calgary and other levels of government to build affordable housing for their community members living in Calgary. As Nations are designated as distinction-based by other levels of governments, we felt it best to co-create unique pathways for each community that reflect the desires of leadership and membership needs.
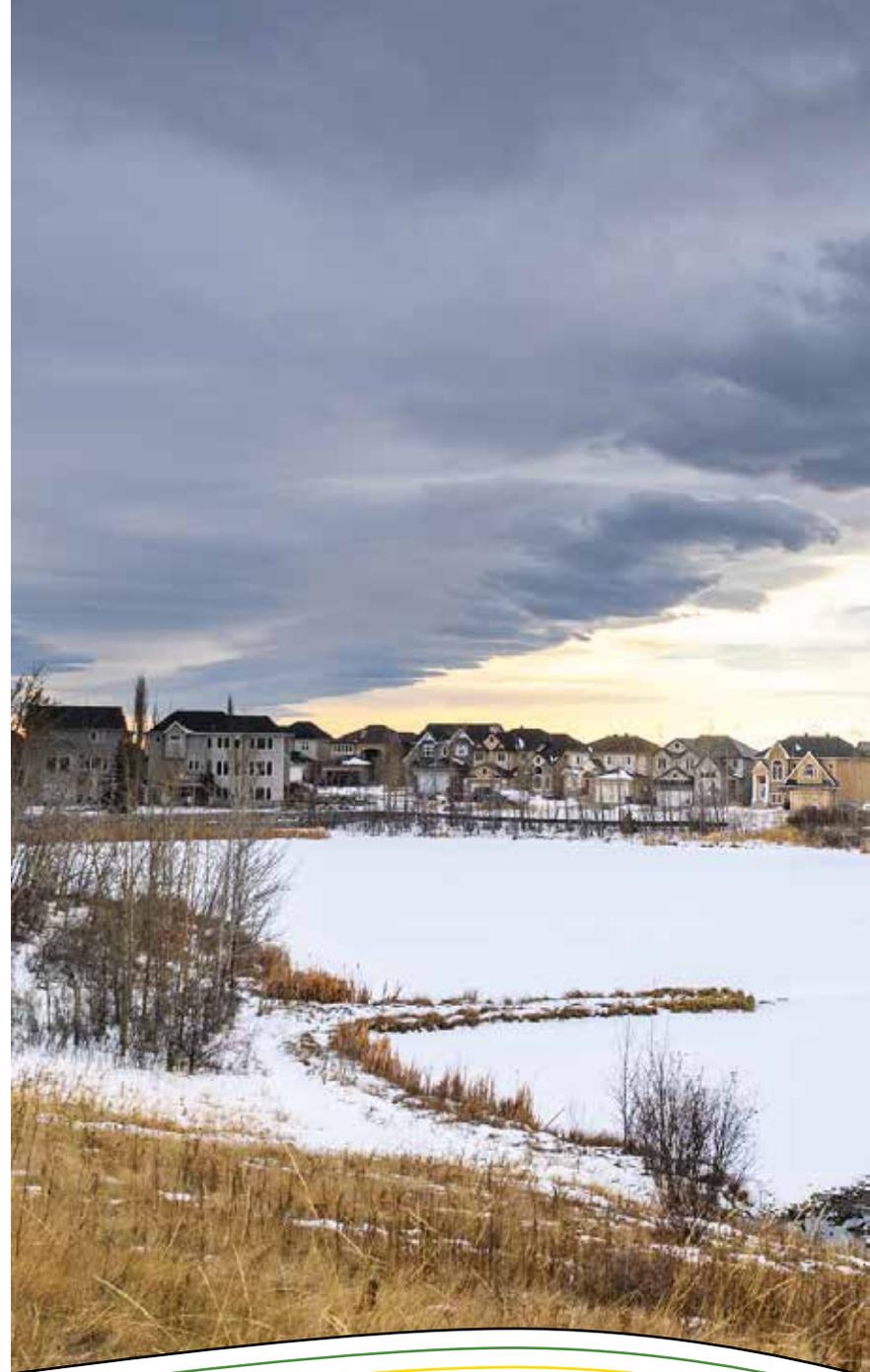
How we interpreted key themes
Cultural principles of a parallel approach

It is in ethical spaces that we can co-create meaningful solutions. Coined by Dr. Willie Ermine, ethical space is a complex and detailed process that provides cultural safety and protection to people using Western and Indigenous systems so that they can work together. Learning to create and use ethical space requires time, practice, as well as mutual respect and understanding. Some of the key elements of ethical space include:

- Identifying and using parallel processes from Indigenous and Western systems. A common example is a contract and a song – these are two different ways to signify a formal agreement; one used in the Western system and the other in the Indigenous system. Both ways must be respected and used as appropriate so that people from both systems feel the agreement is official, they are protected, and their ways are respected.

- Both Indigenous (oral) and Western (written) systems must respect one another and not impose their ways on the other system. One is not better than the other.

- Using parallel processes is not the same as combining systems. Oral and written both retain value and complement each other.

Accessing Elders and Indigenous cultural knowledge is essential for any journey together to have an effective and successful result. It is how we access lessons from our shared past and is required in order to engage in the other principles. There are many types of Elders, including sacred Elders and technicians, as well as other Indigenous knowledge keepers, helpers, and advisors – all of whom hold important traditional and contemporary wisdom to guide our work. Different types of people will be needed at different times, and for different types of work.

The cultural principles of a parallel approach include discipline, responsibility, respect, accountability and sanctified kindness – these principles are critical when working in this way. Parallel work preferences oral practice instead of the default written systems used by Western organizations. Communication, decision making and implementation of actions are all facilitated through ceremony or talking circles as required. As traditional knowledge and worldviews are embedded within oral practice, the use of venue, action language and song (VALS) are key components of any oral process.

The cultural principles of a parallel approach include discipline, responsibility, respect, accountability and sanctified kindness.

Contextually, the complementary parallels between the oral practice and the written practice can been seen in the following example of a community engagement meeting:

| Oral (Indigenous)		Written (Western)
Smudge (venue)	⟷	Call to order/agenda
Formation of the Circle (venue)	⟷	Venue (meeting space)
Pipe ceremony (action)	⟷	Oath of confidentiality and ethics
Advisors/Elders (language)	⟷	Executive Director/Board
Ceremonial leaders (language)	⟷	Administration
Assessors/Helpers (action)	⟷	Workers
Song (rights and privileges)	⟷	Certificate of completion

Key frames

The following key frames were core to understanding the conversations; respecting oral process and traditional concepts such as stories, ways of knowing, and communicating. A reconciliation lens was also applied to honour the history of Indigenous people in Canada and the present-day environment as it relates to affordable housing.

Historical impacts

Historically, Indigenous communities operated from common cultural understandings. Sometimes understood as Natural Laws, communities had intricate governance structures including legal, educational, housing and family systems. This relational understanding – or *all my relations* – included the land and the homes that stood upon it. Most Indigenous communities today still understand themselves in relation to the land; hence the destruction wrought from colonial expansion has had devastating effects on entire communities.

New structures and policies such as residential schools, the *Indian Act*, and Métis land scrip brought Western governance and land systems into communities. These institutions further alienated Indigenous people from their knowledge systems and created the jagged worldviews that exist today, most often seen as intergenerational trauma. Intergenerational trauma is widespread and can be seen in the high rates of child welfare, homelessness and housing insecurity. Intergenerational trauma impacts entire communities and as such must be considered when approaching community housing work.

Figure 2: Key frames

Historical impacts

Reconciliation lens
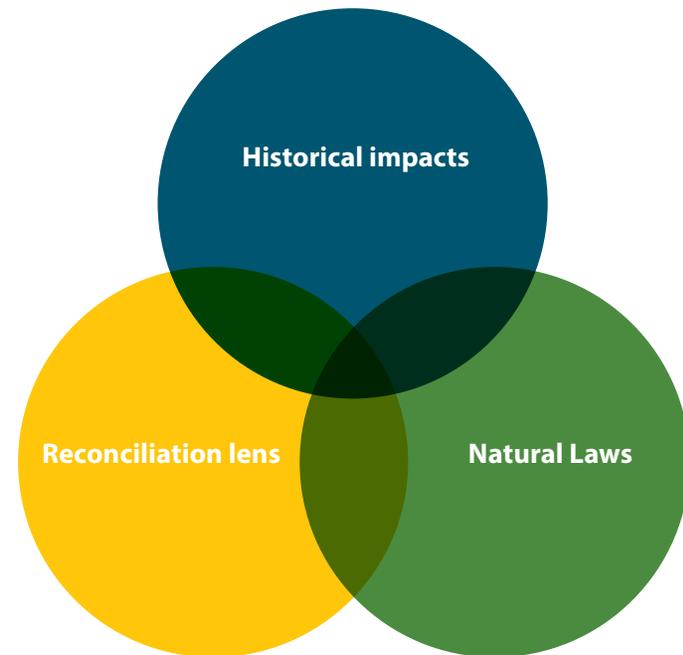
Natural Laws

Natural Laws

The words Siim'ohksin (Nitstitapi/ Blackfoot): Wahkotiwin (Nehiyew/Cree) – or Natural Laws – are words that we were given by our Elders to start creating our own stories around housing. With Natural Laws or relationships at the core, we have an opportunity to broaden our understanding – to work in the center of the iceberg instead of at its tip. Through Natural Laws, we can start to understand a path forward supported by anti-colonial and anti-oppressive theory. Most importantly, we preference approaches based on kindness, compassion and balance. This lens allows us to create our own story and shows us how to walk in this work – it challenges us to understand the interconnectedness of housing, instead of defaulting to an Indigenized approach which typically maintains a Western understanding at the core of the work.

Reconciliation lens

To some people, reconciliation is the re-establishment of a conciliatory state. However, many Indigenous people assert this initial state never existed between Canada's original inhabitants and newcomers. To others, reconciliation is about coming to terms with events of the past in a manner that establishes respectful and healthy relationships between distinct peoples going forward.

Reconciliation can also be about making and keeping relatives, understanding how different values can and should co-exist as equals in thinking about planning, design, and project development. A reconciliation lens strives to keep the work alive not by blending or premising one way above the other, but by establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous communities and Western systems. For that to happen, we must start with the truth. There must be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, and a focus on actions to change Western behaviors. This includes challenging norms, systems bias and complicity, and charting new ways of doing business.

The City of Calgary has several policies and principles that align with a reconciliation lens. Most notably, the *Social Wellbeing Policy* outlines clear guidelines when making decisions; developing plans, policies and strategies; and delivering City services. The Social Wellbeing Principles are as follows:

- The City will strive to provide equitable services. This includes removing barriers to access and inclusion.
- The City will advance the active and shared process of truth and reconciliation in collaboration with the community.
- The City will seek opportunities to support and grow culture in Calgary.
- The City will aim to stop problems before they start, using a prevention approach.

The following international and federal movements also lend themselves to a reconciliation lens within the housing context:

The United Nations (UN)

In 1948 the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* affirmed housing rights in seven core human rights treaties. In 1996, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* echoed the UN's broadest recognition of the right to housing: "the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate … housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions."

The *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)* report was adopted by the General Assembly in September 2007 with most (144) member states in favour, and four votes against. Canada later signed the declaration in 2010. While the document is not legally binding, it should be used in concert with the 1948 Declaration to inform the unique housing needs of Indigenous people.

Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC)

In May 2015, the TRC report was released. The report presented a comprehensive historical record of the policies and operations of Canada's residential schools, as well as a smaller report with 94 recommendations (i.e. "Calls to Action") for the Government of Canada and other levels of government or institutions to consider.

While the TRC Calls to Action do not specifically identify housing, due to the cross-sectoral concerns Indigenous people face across all social determinants of health, the following three TRC Calls to Action provide a foundation on how The City of Calgary could better support the delivery of affordable housing for urban Indigenous Calgarians:

- **TRC Call 1** – We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by: Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.

- **TRC Call 43** – We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

- **TRC Call 57** – We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

Indigenous Housing Caucus, The Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA)

The Indigenous Housing Caucus was established in 2013. The mandate of the Caucus members is to work together towards better housing for northern, rural and urban First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. The Caucus fills a gap in representation and planning for urban areas where many non-registered or non-affiliated Indigenous people live. They also aim to protect current housing stock and ensure affordability for Indigenous people in urban areas by aggressively building new units to close the gap in core housing need between Indigenous and non-Indigenous households.

In response to this gap, the Fourth Strategy was created by the Indigenous Housing Caucus Working Group in 2018. The Strategy[4] recognizes the rights of the Indigenous people in urban, rural and northern communities (together with the housing and service providers that serve them) to have official political standing, and to have the recognized right to negotiate as an independent delivery entity.

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[4] To learn more about the Fourth Strategy please visit **https://chra-achru.ca/news/for-indigenous-by-indigenous-national-housing-strategy-released-by-chra-and-its-indigenous-housing-caucus-working-group/**

Part 2: What we heard

This section of the report summarizes key themes from external engagement, capturing both urban and Nation-specific conversations. As we begin to understand the opportunities before us, we acknowledge that the landscape of Indigenous relations is constantly shifting and evolving – as such, some of this work may take longer than others. As future-state work, incremental steps co-created by and for community will ensure authenticity in the work that lies ahead. Co-creation does not mean further research. As expressed by the Elders at the validation Tea Dance ceremony, "Its time for action!"

Many of the barriers identified by the Elders and Technical Advisory Group may seem insurmountable. We must remember that it took hundreds of years to get us to this place – thus, we must respect the time and effort it will take to rebuild **with** community. Change will come if we stay the course with ongoing relationship building, engagement, and respectful resourcing of co-created solutions.

The urban engagement section represents the voices of community members involved in affordable housing and service provision within Calgary. The Nation engagement section recognizes the distinct emerging housing needs of each Nation, as well as understanding how The City can support in the development of affordable housing for Nation members living or wanting to live in Calgary. These themes have been validated by each stakeholder group through an Indigenous process and approved by City of Calgary leadership.

Urban engagement

To honor the voices of those who shared their time with The City of Calgary, the six themes that follow represent the closest, paralleled version that can be tied to one or more of the strategic objectives outlined in *Foundations for Home: Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy.*[5] In many instances, the fit was awkward, particularly when the community began to speak from their side of the parallel; however, it was important to set boundaries for the conversation.

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[5] To learn more about The City of Calgary's affordable housing strategy, visit **https://www.calgary.ca/cs/olsh/affordable-housing/affordable-housing.html**

The following six themes were paralleled:

Oral (Indigenous)		Written (Western)
Theme 1: The City of Calgary (Affordable Housing) reconciliation	⟷	Strategic direction 1: Get the Calgary community building
Theme 2: Natural Laws	⟷	Strategic direction 6: Improve the housing system
Theme 3: Recognize the land	⟷	Strategic direction 2: Leverage City land Strategic direction 6: Improve the housing system
Theme 4: Safe spaces	⟷	Strategic direction 3: Design and build new City units Strategic direction 4: Regenerate City-owned properties
Theme 5: Colonization and external racism	⟷	Strategic direction 5: Strengthen inter-governmental partnerships
Theme 6: Supports	⟷	Strategic direction 6: Improve the housing system

Many concepts discussed expanded outside of the box, and for that we are grateful. Each theme is organized as follows:

1. Elders' observations of "What is today" (i.e. what gaps they see).

2. The Elders' vision of "What can be" (i.e. what they most hope for).

3. Gaps and barriers from a day-to-day service perspective (i.e. lived experience) as described by our Technical Advisory Group (built on Elders' guidance).

Theme 1:
The City of Calgary (Affordable Housing) and reconciliation

Elders' observations: What is today

Awareness is not enough – we need action.

When the Elders spoke of reconciliation, they talked about rebuilding ethical and mutually beneficial relationships based on truth **and** action. The reconciliation process is not a linear one. Reconciliation is a long-term and often difficult process that involves individuals and systems taking time to acknowledge the truth including: unpacking bias, understanding differences in worldviews, acknowledging wealth and power and creating spaces of allyship that gives those who have been oppressed voices in discussions and future development. Reconciliation requires that together we replace fear, build confidence and trust, and work together on common concerns.

The Elders talked about how The City of Calgary and Affordable Housing can start this journey by questioning what normal practice is, developing allyship with community, and supporting various International calls to action and directions under the *Truth and Reconciliation Report (TRC)* and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*. While these documents are not legally binding, these International declarations can act as a guidepost to move in directions that support positive change in Indigenous communities. This guidance from Elders parallels best with the following objective in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: get the Calgary community building.

Elders' vision: What can be

Creating opportunities for genuine and long-term engagement with Indigenous stakeholders.

These statements from Elders, highlight the important concepts and understanding upon which reconciliation in housing **must** be built:

> "Who is working with our people?"

> "Can we offer education and training so that the racism ends?"

> "Can we be involved in these tables?"

The First Nations principles of OCAP (owner, access and possession) and FIBI (For Indigenous, By Indigenous) both underpin the premise of "Nothing about us, without us" which ensures that decision making at all levels is returned to the rightful communities. Elders envisioned being involved in the recommendations of this work – as well as other work – at The City of Calgary. They spoke to the importance of worldview in design and conceptualization of housing, screening of land, and the inclusion of important aspects of the culture once housing is built, such as smudging, singing and drumming, as well as ceremony and practice that protects and respects the spirit of a person in their home.

Home is two ways of thinking – Indigenous and Western

"Home is two ways of thinking – Indigenous and Western. For Indigenous people, everything is social so then we feel comfortable with other Native people. We are not alone. We can survive together."

"Home is a place to live where I feel safe and can be myself, where I have pride. In the old days, families would purchase a design and a tipi for their kids when they got married. They taught their kids within the culture, about the design and this built a sense of pride in them. They knew what they would have to do to receive that tipi and learned how to care for it. The design and tipi was transferred to them in ceremony. They knew how to look after their place. They felt safe. These housing structures today – they are just boxes. All the ceremony, teachings and spirit was lost. We don't know how to connect back to the design, the teachings anymore. The pride and connection to Creator is not in that box."

THEME 1: RECONCILIATION
Technical Advisory Group – Lived Experience

Barrier	Advancing the conversation
1. Indigenous Elders and community experts are not at the table.	Reconciliation means constantly engaging and listening to different perspectives. Elders and community experts want to sit in decision making spaces throughout the entire process – not just in tokenistic ways. Incorporating validation is essential to ensure we truly hear people – this may take longer than Western practice but is critical to reconciliation.

Theme 2: Natural Laws

Elders' observations: What is today
Understanding what home meant prior to colonization through the construct of Natural Laws.

Before colonization, home was closely associated with relational attachments to both ancestral lands and family – immediate and extended. This connection to the spirit of home is still alive in many communities today but cannot be actualized due to the tremendous destruction of not only the land, but as well the loss of cultural affiliation and understanding of Natural Laws that guided Indigenous communities. When Elders spoke of Natural Laws, they were talking about a return to a way of life. A way of understanding ourselves and our worldviews that is beyond programming and challenges us to awaken to who we once were. The teachings of Natural Laws are organic and

embedded in everyday life. For example, Natural Laws teach us how to be ethical and kind people, how to parent, how to be in a relationship in a good way – even how to respect the structure and spirit of a home. This guidance parallels best with the following objectives in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: improve the housing system.

While for many Western people home is a location, Indigenous people have retained collective memories of their Nations and where they lived on the land prior to colonization. These are often found in creation stories and oral practice:

"Creation stories tell us how to treat each other. How we treat our responsibilities and to our home. These original stories tell people how to live, provide guidance and direction about what is right and what is our role as caretakers of the land as our home. Home is identity and it helps people understand who they are as Indigenous people. It's a sacred account about how the world was formed. It's about fragility and respect and thanks. About the sacred plants and burial practices. It teaches us that we come from somewhere."

Elders' vision: What can be
Understanding worldview and creating parallels through Natural Laws.

Elders envisioned a time where our homes have their spirit back. Where we have the space to teach our people about smudging and we conduct ceremonies on our own terms. They saw our homes as safe places where children could learn from each other, the Elders, the land and all our relations. Elders envisioned Natural Laws/teachings being offered as part of daily life through important concepts such as traditional home transfer ceremonies, respecting the home, and understanding what home means in our ways. One way to do this is to bring back the process of tipi transfers as a metaphor for transferring modern day homes and to helping people understand their rights and responsibilities. This would include homeownership; respect and caring for the home; values and payment for the privilege of having a home; the roles of women, men and children; and the role of Elders. Elders ultimately envisioned embedding the principles and practices of Natural Laws into housing systems, fostering a growth in identity, belonging and inclusion, as well as connection to the land.

Respecting Natural Laws

"Respect the home like you would a child. Respect the home's spirit, conduct ceremony in the home for protection; when you leave take your spirit with you, otherwise it will be trapped in the old home you lived in. Home is the same as Home Fire. The Home Fire ceremony welcomes people into their new home. Ceremony is conducted so that you enter in a good way and then can look after the home properly."

"Homeownership meant that in the past we respected all that nature gave us for us to have a home. The buffalo gave its life for us to have a home, so we respected it and our home. Our spiritual connection is lost. Our Natural Laws/teachings have been lost."

"Home teachings ensured we practiced our moral values/Natural Laws. Teachings were visible in the designs and songs that were passed down in community to younger people. They were held responsible by oral practice in community/Natural Laws."

Relationship to other teachers

"Everything on this earth is connected to the earth, land and the energies. The energies we send out from our mind, body and spirit is connected. We have a big responsibility on the energy we send out to the world. We need to send out positive energy to the world. Negative energy will affect our families and all our relations. Negative energy can affect our families."

"Pets and their teachings – pets are the first teachers for children to understand care, compassion, love and responsibilities."

"Natural Law means trying to be a good neighbour, keeping up your place and understand what expected of you as a house owner/renter. It's a two-way street."

Traditional parenting

"Our values have been lost. Kids never ran in the house, we respected and fed people when they came to visit, we would help everyone. We have lost our way of life. We have lost our humility and have forgotten how to pray for everything – including our homes."

"Oral stories teach me about the Natural Laws and involve humans and animals and don't tell us what is right and what is wrong. They only show and demonstrate. The rest is up to us."

"Get and keep a job, look after your kids, learn the process to look after your space, cut the lawn and have pride in your place."

Relationship to the land and ceremony

"The transfer rules and ceremonies tie us to our Natural Laws. We interact with the land and all my relations. It is our responsibility to practice our ceremonies and allow our world to connect. The Sundance is about renewal. The ceremony allows people to ask for help and to heal. The Sundance, we believe it's a new year. We renew our ceremonies and the relationships. It's a renewal of the earth, the energy and relationship between the land the people.

"We need to bring our people the knowledge they need through ceremony and culture, so they start to regain that pride back. To bridge their identity as Indigenous people back to a place of pride in themselves and in their homes. Now we don't have pride or look after our places as we should."

"Western practices separate us from our natural relationship/laws with the land and our home. I am at odds with my spirit and the spirit of my home.

We are connected to all things on the land and all things have a spirit. We must treat everything with respect. Our words and thoughts are very powerful, and we create outcomes based on 'what we feed it.' For example, don't say things as you might make it happen. Ceremonies can help people through prayers – our lives are intertwined with prayers. Relationships to the land. Us humans are connected to the energy. We have a big responsibility to the energy we send out to the world."

Traditional economics of home

"In the past, a payment was made for the tipi, design and teachings. How do we re-build these Natural Laws? We were given a tipi from my dad and we take pride in this home. In 1932, my grandmother got the tipi and they paid with horses, cows, two wagon loads, and all we needed was given to us. That was the purchase amount and its comparable today in the amount of a home, and all you need. This hasn't changed; it's our perspective on responsibility for this space. What's missing today is the transfer of values and responsibility be a homeowner, whether it's a box or a tipi it doesn't matter. We are caught between a tipi and a structured home.

You can't just borrow a tipi – the transfer was given to one person. You can rent it through a "mini-transfer" but that comes with all the rights and responsibilities to care for it. If we do not protect our tipi/home, we will suffer the natural consequences. People need to understand this. We will lose our housing. Last year I heard of a family that didn't respect or look after their tipi. The tipi went up in flames. This is Natural Law."

"In the Indian Village there is still pride because of how the culture and teachings were passed down. That is being lost though in our younger people. Our homes now they are not taken care of in the same way as the teachings and transfers never happened. Where are all the values? How do we rebuild back the same sort of pride and knowledge into these landlord agreements?"

"We need to help our people understand the difference between natural and man-made laws and to respect them both. If you do, you will have success in housing wherever you go. You can apply all these teachings where you are staying. It gives them responsibility as well as rights. They understand their rights and can fight back against slum lords and other injustices like rent hikes."

THEME 2: NATURAL LAWS Technical Advisory Group – Lived experience	
Barrier	**Advancing the conversation**
1. Cultural spaces for ceremony and teachings are non-existent in Calgary.	Currently there are no spaces to accommodate large-scale ceremonies and practices that are not subject to Western rules and man-made laws. This is true of both housing spaces and overall, in community. It is difficult to offer cultural, Natural Laws teachings and ceremonies without leaving the city.
2. Funding is short-term and based on Western best practices.	Current funding systems/funders do not acknowledge or support (i.e. through budget) the necessary immersive teachings for clients such as Natural Laws. Funding is short-term, project-based, and based on Western best practices.
3. Indigenous resident voices are non-existent.	Currently Indigenous residents living in affordable housing are not in a position to inform or advocate how they envision important cultural aspects of their home.
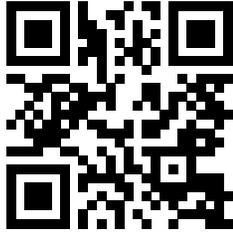
Theme 3: Recognize the land

Elders' observations: What is today

Helping to regain our "homes" by regaining our relative – the land.

When the Elders spoke of land, they acknowledged the land as a relative and ancestor. While it has become popular to start with land acknowledgments, Indigenous people see the land from a deeper paradigm and wish for all Canadians to recognize our relative as we do. Elders want The City and the housing sector to understand that land was and still is our home, and that we have ties to the land through oral history and ceremony. As a key strategy, Elders talked about reframing housing by looking at the land as an integral focus part of the solution. They asked for land to be given back – free of charge – as an act of reconciliation.

As the original inhabitants of this land, the Elders spoke to the need for equity in service and assisting Indigenous people first through the provision of housing as a human right. They also spoke about delivering ongoing training to landlords and neighbours, so they understand and respect our relative as we do. Their guidance parallels best with the following objectives in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: leverage City land and improve the housing system.

Elders' vision: What can be

Recognizing and reclaiming the land for safe, affordable housing and cultural supports for people choosing to live in urban spaces.

As a key strategy, we need to work with all levels of government including The City of Calgary to reclaim our land for housing. Migration patterns show that for many reasons, Indigenous people are moving into urban spaces. Oftentimes, the initial move from rural communities or reserves can create steep learning curves as people struggle to understand divergent Western values, lifestyle norms, and housing experiences. Sadly, Western expectations rob Indigenous people of safe, long-term housing – even though available housing rests on ancestral land. The spirit of it surrounds us and we are connected to it. We are relatives to the land and its spirit and need to re-create that connection so that people coming into the city feel supported and at ease on the land. We do this through ceremony, smudge and having our people around us and by being welcomed. We do this by having services available on-site that can help people be responsible renters and homeowners in the city, ensuring successful migration. Additionally, supports such as Indigenous housing navigators, employment, education and childcare/schooling programming and cultural guidance can create a "soft place to land". Finally, many Elders and housing residents articulated the importance of understanding home and land-based cultural supports as an integral part of housing – a construct that is often left out of mainstream models.

Kinship and culture

"There is culture shock coming from reserves. When we come into the city, a piece of us gets left behind because policy does not provide space for our cultural practices. On reserve we have kinship and culture. No one is homeless as they all have a place to go. In the city, the Western values around space size and nuclear family, as well as policy, makes it impossible for us to help our relatives – so they become homeless. Homes are scarce on reserves – so people need to make the transition easy to succeed."

"Home is how I sew my tipi. If the tipi rips, I repair it. I welcome anyone into it. When we are camping, if the door is open you are welcome to come in."

"Home is where we take care of each other. Its who we are as a people. We have no first or second cousins. We are all related, and we open our homes to our relatives."

THEME 3: RECOGNIZE THE LAND
Technical Advisory Group – Lived experience

Barriers	Advancing the conversation
1. Access to capital and operating funding is limited.	Indigenous organizations are interested in acquiring land and existing buildings to offer affordable housing; however, capital and operating funding is difficult to obtain.
2. Indigenous community (both urban and reserve) must compete for land and resources within Western systems and norms.	Indigenous organizations are required to compete against local and national developers with greater assets and experience. Housing systems, processes and structures should be paralleled or re-normed to preference Indigenous land acquisition, development, and capital spending. Land should be returned at nominal or no cost for Indigenous affordable housing and communal cultural spaces.
3. Indigenous people are excluded from real estate development in prime locations across the city.	Victoria Park, Fort Calgary and other areas of the city hold cultural significance for Indigenous people. Over time, new housing has been built in these areas without engagement and inclusion of Indigenous perspectives. Future efforts need to be made to include Indigenous people in the zoning, inclusion and identification of significant areas and be considered for Indigenous affordable housing.
4. Available land is not culturally relevant.	Land designated through The City of Calgary's Non-Market Housing Land Sale is not culturally relevant nor appropriate to accommodate the preferences of Indigenous built forms, such as large communal housing or housing close to significant land or cultural sites.

Theme 4: Safe spaces

Elders' observations: What is today

Creating safe spaces free of trauma.

When the Elders spoke of safe spaces, they talked about their vision of new or renovated buildings for Indigenous Calgarians that are free of new trauma, as well as designed as healing spaces with a sense of community, ethical space and culture. Elders talked about their experiences of trauma – many of them were survivors of residential schools, racism and colonization. Indigenous populations have historically been dispossessed of their traditional lands and their spiritual and cultural ways were banned by Canadian assimilation policies. These policies have devasted Indigenous lifeways; evident in the higher levels of poverty, poor health, low employment and education attainment – to name but a few.

Elders spoke of their poverty both in the monetary sense as well as their poverty of culture, and how built forms exacerbate these conditions. Many spoke of their income dictating their housing choices – for example, having to choose between location and daily necessities such as food. They spoke of downtown or other housing options across the city as unsafe for Indigenous seniors, single moms with kids and our youth. Elders spoke of daily trauma they faced – like their memories of residential schools where their culture felt squashed. They spoke of a lack of personal autonomy or control – where they were living in "square boxes" with no trust, fear for personal safety due to smoking, drugs, and violence, racism and discrimination, as well as lack of space to host extended family. Most importantly, they could not practice ceremony or culture for fear of reprisal or eviction. Their guidance parallels best with the following objectives
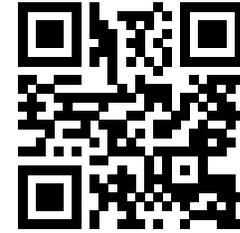
in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: design and build new City units, regenerate City-owned properties and improve the housing system.

Elders' vision: What can be

Designing for a sense of community and spaces for seniors, youth and community to come together.

Elders envisioned the creation of homes or buildings/spaces where they can feel safe and part of a community. Prior to colonization, we lived together as one – with common ideals, cultures and practices that were free of racism and discrimination. In our homes we supported each other and acknowledged the role of extended family. Community provided us strength; networking created a sense of community. Through our culture, we honoured and recognized our Elders at the centre of our community and looked to them for guidance to transfer Natural Law teachings around home, parenting, and other important life skills.

Elders envisioned housing providers creating welcoming spaces with food, humour and culture; with open arms and respect. They wished for building designs that accommodated large common spaces to welcome and greet family, to practice culture and ceremony, and to have autonomy and control of our space so that we can start "being ourselves" again. From a practical perspective, these spaces should be in safe locations across the city such as in the suburbs, with yards and outdoor spaces close to sacred land sites, with access to education, shopping, transportation, as well as Indigenous and Western services.

Home is safety

"I put up my tipi in the backyard for my grandson's birthday. All the guests came for the party. The neighbors must not have liked us because they started to turn on their ghetto blasters when we were singing. Someone phoned the police and when they came, they told us to be quiet. They didn't ask the neighbors to lower their ghetto blasters…"

"Home is safety and having opportunities in the city. A place to stay. Home is access to an Indigenous food bank in the building or close to where I live, house lending program regarding mowers, rakes, etc., and other supports."

THEME 3: SAFE SPACES
Technical Advisory Group – Lived experience

Barriers	Advancing the conversation
1. Lack of funding and long-term support within the social services system/environment.	• Community agencies and non-profits are unsure of long-term funding support. If there are cuts to permanent supportive housing and no operational dollars, Indigenous people will be forced into homelessness and re-traumatized. • What is available is not culturally appropriate/supportive. Indigenous families requiring supportive housing may have complex and long-term needs. Siloed approaches do not work, nor does short-term funding and programming. Collaborative care management approaches/wrap-around Indigenous service models – with no gaps in timelines – are the best approach, but short in supply.
2. Current building designs do not consider the cultural or support needs of Indigenous people living in the city.	Ideally the following design aspects would be considered in building design: • Larger green spaces and housing areas with land necessary to building ceremonial sites. • Accessibility to Indigenous resources/agencies. • Space to accommodate community housing designs for people who require close knit community spaces and support. • Space to accommodate larger housing for larger families with age appropriate amenities close by.
3. Location of affordable housing options do not meet the needs of Indigenous Calgarians.	Many locations are unsafe and/or are not designed to create community: • Scattered-sites housing models are not suitable for many Indigenous seniors who prefer to live in a community. Also, scattered-site models can create difficulty in supporting Indigenous people culturally (i.e. providing ceremony spaces) when they first enter the housing system. • Many communities are not accustomed to Indigenous residents. This can generate personal and systemic racism and discrimination. Nimbyism forces Indigenous residents to leave and go back to living in unsafe housing. • There is a gap in supply and types of spaces that would make sense for Indigenous seniors.
4. Housing operational policies do not consider or support the needs of Indigenous people.	• Older Indigenous people are not considered in affordable housing policies. For example, many seniors have mobility concerns but are not able to access units that have accommodations such as wheelchairs ramps or adjustments to washroom (i.e. bathtubs and high seats). • Indigenous people struggle to live in spaces where guest management policies are too strict, or too Western – rules can be systemically racist and discriminatory. Extreme rules are systemic and promote racism and discrimination – for example, not understanding the significance of smudging and ceremony inside units, as well as guest policies that do not accommodate extended family visits create difficulties for Indigenous tenants. • Policies around second-stage housing (i.e. one-bedroom per child policy) create barriers and are not culturally supportive.
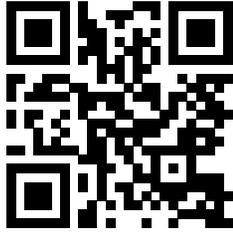
Theme 5: Colonization and external racism

Elders' observations: What is today
Challenging racism in housing as an affront against human rights for Indigenous peoples.

When the Elders spoke of colonization and racism, they talked about the ongoing impact of a colonial policies on their lives, and the lives of their families and communities. Whether outright racism or micro-aggression, each of them spoke about the challenges they face from other Calgarians, and from the systems that operate from racist paradigms. They hope for a future where housing is a human right and that Indigenous Calgarians can make a life free from trauma. Their guidance best parallels best with the following objective in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: strengthen intergovernmental partnerships.

Elders' vision: What can be
Challenging and eradicating colonial practices in affordable housing complexes and act as an ally against externalized racism.

Elders talked about the unique experiences that have, and continue to flame Indigenous people's trauma, including Canada's history of colonialism and violence, residential schools, the Sixties Scoop, Métis scrip system, and the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit movement and the recent discoveries of Indigenous children buried in unmarked residential school graves across Canada. Although other cultural groups have experienced colonial practices, the Elders felt strongly that as original people, we have been subjected to acts of genocide and a persistent movement to remove us from our ancestral lands. This history is important to understand as it is through an understanding of these cultural losses that authentic healing practices can be supported in Indigenous communities.

Elders envisioned a future free of landlord and neighbour racism. They hoped for better relationships with their landlord and neighbours, born of a greater understanding of Canadian history and an acceptance of our cultures. They hoped for spaces that were clean and safe, free of negative stereotyping and racism that keeps us from feeling part of a housing community. They hope for homes with dignity, instead of the dirty and broken-down drug houses many of them live in. Finally, they spoke about achieving the respect often denied as the First Peoples of this land.

Being relatives with your landlord

"Home is making your space comfortable. Being relatives with your landlord. Teaching them about who you/we are, working together and having good dialogue, asking to smudge and explaining why, being proud of who we are and our home."

"Home is helping extended family who are struggling find housing. The landlords don't support or understand how we help our families as our way of life. We support our families because that's who we are, then we all get evicted. They need training and compassion. We live our values of courage, survival and perseverance; especially in tough times. "

"Home is a place with other Indigenous people – feeling safe with houses blessed by an Elder; looking after each other; decent housing with good managers who are not racist."

THEME 5: COLONIZATION AND EXTERNAL RACISM
Technical Advisory Group – Lived experience

Barriers	Advancing the conversation
1. Existing paradigms don't work.	Indigenous concerns are understood from a deficit and Western lens/paradigm. Voices are silent and reliant upon colonial systems that do not empower the Indigenous housing movement.
2. The landlord "system" doesn't understand the history and current realities of Indigenous people.	Some landlords operate from a perspective of systemic racism. Racism and stereotyping maintain fear and helplessness for Indigenous tenants, opening additional avenues for the escalation of abuse.

Theme 6: Supports

## Elders' observations: What is today

Western programming must step aside so that Indigenous programming is privileged.

When Elders spoke of supports, they were talking about Indigenous programming and supports that go beyond housing, but act to heal the person and ensure long-term success. Often, that meant healing from trauma and re-learning who they are as Indigenous people through Elders, cultural immersion, and urban life skills. It meant helping the single mom and her children avoid a return to homelessness and domestic violence. It meant supporting our people moving from the justice system into housing where they could regain the balance that eluded them. It meant assuring education supports so that people could move out of poverty and into long-term success. This guidance from Elders best parallels with the following objective in The City's Affordable Housing Strategy: improve the housing system.

Elders' vision: What can be

Indigenous programming and support prioritized and supported long-term.

As a key strategy, there needs to be a significant addition of funding available for long-term Indigenous programming across the city. Indigenous people do best when they are supported by well-known, validated Elders with cultural and ceremonial knowledge, and land-based teachings. Western paradigms are often thought of as the norm; however, they are based in colonial constructs that serve to further create cultural and identity confusion for Indigenous people. Prior to colonization, Indigenous communities had thoughtful and effective systems that regulated individuals, families and communities through natural and man-made laws which alleviated conflicts and ensured a healthy transfer of responsibility. This was also true for housing. Our Elders imagined a return to Natural Law immersion through active teaching and role modelling of Indigenous ways of knowing.
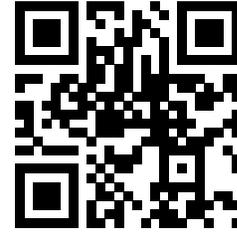
Create a sense of community

"Home is choice. If we could have housing in certain sections of the city only for Indigenous, that will create a sense of community. Being around Indigenous and other services. Good parts of town, not just always in crappy locations."

"Home is community. When we move in, we are always looking for that Indigenous person to feel at home. We don't put one another out."

| THEME 6: SUPPORTS |
| Technical Advisory Group – Lived experience |

Barriers	Advancing the conversation
1. Programming in affordable housing buildings is either non-existent, short-term or based in Western paradigms that don't allow for whole person healing.	Indigenous people require an enduring presence/availability of cultural practices and supports that considers the role of intergenerational trauma and other colonial practices on individual, families and communities. This includes ongoing access to Elders' teachings, ceremony and cultural immersion.
2. There is a deficit of Indigenous specific agencies in Calgary that can be approached to support the culturally specific service needs of facilities and tenants.	There is a shortage of Indigenous agencies as well as a shortage of funding to expand existing long-term Indigenous services. Indigenous agencies are a critical part of the equation to support Indigenous people in accessing cultural teachings and ceremony. Non-Indigenous agencies are not appropriate providers when considering cultural programming needs. For example, smudge and ceremony are unknown to many landlords and non-Indigenous services. Elders and Indigenous service providers must be resourced to provide these cultural teachings.

Nation engagement

Treaty 7 - Blackfoot Confederacy: Distinction-based housing

The City of Calgary, Affordable Housing engaged with the Blackfoot Confederacy administrative leadership to co-create recommendations which can guide future work in affordable housing. Affordable Housing recognizes the Blackfoot Confederacy as the regional managing organization for the Blackfoot Confederacy Nations of Kainai, Siksika and Piikani within Canada.

Governance and membership

The Blackfoot Confederacy has been established to bring the four Nations (three in Canada) together to deal with common issues with external entities such as the Government of Alberta (GOA), Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Assembly of First Nations (AFN). Formalizing the unification of the Blackfoot Nations facilitated an integrated and effective approach to implementing initiatives designed for the betterment of the lives of the Blackfoot people. The Declaration of Siksikaitsiitapiwa (or Blackfoot Confederacy) was signed in Lethbridge on May 25, 2000. As such, we will strive to work with the Confederacy, taking guidance from the Confederacy leadership for their membership living in Calgary.

About Piikani Nation

Piikani Nation consists of roughly 3,600 registered members. Of this population, roughly 40 per cent live off-reserve in urban centers that surround the Nation. Many people move off the reserve to fulfill their needs that cannot be met within the community, such as education, housing and employment. The Piikani Nation has a landmass of 466,778 square kilometres and two reserves – 147A where the town site is located, and 147B which is the timber reserve.

About Siksika Nation

Siksika Nation is located one hour's drive east of Calgary, and three kilometres south of the Trans-Canada highway with administrative and business districts strategically located adjacent to Gleichen to accommodate visitor traffic. Siksika has a total population of approximately 7,500+ members. The Siksika Nation is in the process of developing a framework for self-government which will define and control the Nation's own destiny, removing it from jurisdiction of *The Indian Act* which was legislated into force by the Canadian Government in 1876.

Kainai Nation

Kainai Nation is also known as the Blood or Kainaiwa Nation. The Kainai have a land base of 1,342.9 kilometres^2, bordered on all sides by the Old Man, St. Mary and Belly rivers in Alberta. According to the 2016 census, 1,000 people identify as having Kainai ancestry.

Examples of local distinction-based First Nations housing

Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority[6]

Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority is an Indigenous-operated, non-profit organization which provides subsidized rental units for low-to-moderate income families from Treaty 7 seeking accommodations in the urban areas. The program began in 1983 following a study indicating

people from the Treaty 7 area were having difficulty in acquiring suitable housing in urban centres. After further research, the Treaty 7 Urban Indian Housing Authority was incorporated under the *Alberta Societies Act* in March 1985. In December of the same year, the first 15 homes were purchased in Lethbridge.

Today, the organization has grown to 165 units. Developments consist of self-contained units ranging in two- to four-bedroom units. Accommodations are available in Lethbridge, Cardston and Calgary and in various built forms, such as townhouses, duplexes, and single-family dwellings. Applicants are approved for a specific size of unit based on the family composition of the household.

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[6] For more information, please visit **https://t7housing.com/**

BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY Housing administration feedback	
Barriers	**Advancing the conversation**
Approximately 1,000 Blackfoot Confederacy members are currently without housing in Calgary.	The Blackfoot Confederacy has identified approximately 1,000 members that are living in Calgary who require supports. They are looking for immediate partnership options with The City of Calgary to help their members living in the city with affordable housing.
The Blackfoot Confederacy is building its housing infrastructure.	The Blackfoot Confederacy is building the necessary housing organizational structure and internal capacity to participate in The City of Calgary's Non-Market Housing Land sale. First steps include the identification of long-term project(s) that meet the needs of the Blackfoot Confederacy members.

Stoney Nakoda Tsuut'ina Tribal Council Ltd (G4 Nations): Distinction-based housing

The City of Calgary, Affordable Housing has engaged with the G4 Nation administrative leadership to co-create the following recommendations which will guide future work in affordable housing. Affordable Housing recognizes G4 as the regional managing organization for Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley First Nations, and the Tsuut'ina Nation.

Governance and membership

G4 has been established to bring the four Nations together to deal with common issues, with external entities such as the Government of Alberta (GoA), Government of Canada, and Assembly of First Nations (AFN). As such, we will strive to work with G4 and take direction on common issues related to affordable housing for their members living within Calgary.

About Bearspaw, Chiniki and Wesley Nations

The original people of the mountains known in the Nakoda language as Îethka Nakoda Wîcastabi, which means speakers of the pure language. The people have been called by many different names historically and in current literature: Stoney Nakoda (incorrectly as Stony); Mountain Stoneys (or Sioux); Rocky Mountain Stoney (or Sioux); Warriors of the Rocks; or wapamathe. Historically, neighbouring tribes designated the Stoney Nakoda as

Assiniboine, a name that literally means "Stone people" or "people who cook with stones". There are three Nations within the territory. They are Bearspaw First Nation, Chiniki First Nation and Wesley First Nation.

About Tsuut'ina Nation

The Tsuut'ina are a Dene (or Athabaskan) Nation whose reserve borders the southwestern city limits of Calgary, Alberta. The name "Sarcee" is believed to have originated from a Siksikáí'powahsin (Blackfoot language) word meaning boldness and hardiness. The Sarcee people call themselves Tsuut'ina (also Tsuu T'ina and Tsúùt'ínà), translated literally as many people or everyone (in the Nation). According to oral tradition, the Tsuut'ina split from a northern Nation, probably the Dane-zaa, and moved to the plains, where they have maintained close contact with the Blackfoots, Cree and Nakoda Sioux. Their acculturation to the plains culture distinguishes them from other northern Dene people, but they have retained their language, often known as Sarcee. In 1877, well-known leader Chief Bull Head reluctantly signed Treaty 7, which created the 280 kilometre reserve on which the Tsuut'ina now live. Today, Tsuut'ina territory is in southern Alberta, bordering the southwestern city limits of Calgary.

Examples of local distinction-based First Nations housing
Taza Development[7]

Spanning 1,200 acres, Taza is one of the largest First Nation development projects in North America. With three distinct villages, its legacy encourages economic prosperity, entrepreneurial spirit and a shared vision for the future. Taza is founded on a set of standards that define an innovative framework to champion Tsuut'ina and all Indigenous communities to further transform and thrive.

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[7] For more information, please visit **https://togetherattaza.com/**

G4 NATIONS Housing administration feedback	
Barriers	**Advancing the conversation**
Approximately 200-300 G4 people are living in absolute homelessness and approximately 2,400 G4 members are living with other families, couch surfing or otherwise in need of independent family housing.	G4 supports the affordable housing needs of its members in the southwest and northwest of the city. While they operate 212 housing units within Calgary, the need is much higher. G4 has identified 700 homes requiring basic need supports and are looking for immediate partnership options with The City of Calgary to help their people. Evictions have also become an issue for members as they are facing challenges with increased housing costs in Calgary due to Covid-19.
The G4 would like support to build out their housing infrastructure. This would include engagement with G4 membership (both north and south) to understand immediate and long-term need.	G4 would like to build out the necessary housing infrastructure to participate in The City's Non-Market Housing Land sale. This includes the identification of long-term project(s) that meet the needs of the G4 members as well as The City of Calgary's Affordable Housing division.

Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3/Local 87: Distinction-based housing

The City of Calgary, Affordable Housing engaged with the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 (MNAR3) and Local 87 leadership to co-create recommendations which can guide future work in affordable housing. Affordable Housing recognizes the Métis Nation of Alberta as the provincial governance body for registered Métis citizens, and one of the three federally designated, distinction-based groups. As such, The City will strive to work with the MNAR3 leadership on affordable housing issues.

Membership and legal definition

As per the Métis National Council:

- Métis means a person who self-identifies as a Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry and is accepted by the Métis Nation.

- Historic Métis Nation means the Aboriginal people then known as Métis or half-breeds who resided in the Historic Métis Nation Homeland.

- Métis Nation means the Aboriginal people descended from the Historic Métis Nation, which is now comprised of all Métis Nation peoples and is one of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada as defined in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act 1982.*

The Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 works on behalf of registered local (Calgary) members first and foremost. As of January 2020, there were 42,868 Métis Albertans registered provincially.

Governance

Since its inception in 1928, the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA) has been the Métis government and representative voice for Métis Albertans. Its geographical and legal boundaries comprise the entirety of the province of Alberta. The MNA is governed by a Provincial Council, comprised of a provincial president and vice-president, and six regional presidents and vice-presidents, all democratically elected. Together, this Council works toward the mandate of the MNA, which supports practices of transparency, accountability and inclusiveness for Métis Albertans in government policy and decision-making processes, and overall, promotes and facilitates the advancement of Métis people through self-reliance, self-determination and self-management.

Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 is the regional governance structure for the following areas: Calgary, Airdrie, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge and Red Deer. Operating within each region are Métis locals. Métis Nation Local 87 is mandated to work in the Calgary area and offers social and cultural programming. Local 87 has a locally elected president and vice president who may bring local issues (e.g. housing need) forward to the regional presidents and vice presidents to carry forward to the provincial council table. This structure facilitates the promotion of local and regional interest for Métis people to the provincial table.

Demographics

In the past decade, the Métis population has nearly doubled. According to the 2016 Census, the Métis population (587,545) had the largest increase of any of the groups over the 10-year span, rising 51.2 per cent from 2006 to 2016. They represented 35.1 per cent of the total Indigenous population and 1.5 per cent of the total Canadian population. 96,865 Métis live in Alberta, representing more than 21.4 per cent of all Métis in Canada. The majority of Métis (70 per cent) reside in urban areas, an important consideration when discussing the potentialities of affordable housing within The City of Calgary boundaries. In 2006, Statistics Canada's Aboriginal People's Survey (APS) reported other notable information relevant to affordable housing; this information is as relevant today as it was then:

- The Métis population has a greater proportion of children less than 15 years of age compared to the Canadian population (25 per cent versus 17 per cent).

- Twice as many Métis (41 per cent versus 20 per cent) resided in smaller urban centers (population less than 100,000) than non-Indigenous people.

- While Métis live and work in virtually every community in Alberta, the highest populace is seen in Edmonton and Calgary, making up approximately 55 per cent of the total Indigenous population combined.

Examples of local distinction-based Métis housing

Métis Housing[8] (MCHC and MUHC)

Métis Housing consists of two entities: Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) and the Métis Urban Housing Corporation of Alberta Inc. (MUHC). Both non-profit organizations are owned by the Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA). Established in 2007 by the MNA, MCHC is the institution responsible for the ownership and management of residential properties, with its head office based in Edmonton. To date, MCHC has acquired 341 units in five urban centres throughout the province. In addition to this residential program, MCHC also operates the Family Reunification Centre and a Senior's Lodge in Edmonton in cooperation and agreement with Government of Alberta.

The Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC) provides affordable, adequate and appropriate rental housing for low-to-moderate income Indigenous families within the urban centres of Alberta. Their head office is in Edmonton. The primary focus is assisting Indigenous families in need to obtain affordable, adequate and suitable housing. The program is offered in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, under Section 95 of the *National Housing Act*.

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8   For more information, please visit **https://www.métishousing.ca/**

MÉTIS NATION OF ALBERTA REGION 3/LOCAL 87
Housing administration feedback

| Barriers	Advancing the conversation
Refocus the work – existing paradigms and relationships have not worked with The City.	As most Métis citizens live in urban centers, it is logical to work with local government on citizen concerns such as affordable housing. Currently there are challenges with the existing working paradigm between the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 and The City of Calgary. There are opportunities for Affordable Housing and housing providers such as Calgary Housing Company to mitigate past problems with respect, recognition, inclusion, communication and planning opportunities with the MNAR3.
Available land is not culturally or geographically relevant.	There are 8,000 carded Métis Nation members in the Region 3/Calgary area. While housing options are available within Métis Urban Housing Corporation and other housing providers, there are long waitlists. Additionally, the existing options for land purchase may not be suitable from a cultural or form perspective. Preferred housing forms are: • Cooperative housing models (shared equity model) would be relevant for Métis people, as it would create a sense of ownership and a sense of community. • Métis seniors' housing (i.e. 1-2 bedroom units). • Mixed-income housing which could connect families/youth to seniors – increasing social inclusion for seniors. • Extended family housing (i.e. 3-4 bedroom units). • Family reunification and wrap-around programming. • Teaching spaces and green spaces where Elders can teach, roof top gardens for teaching about medicines, artists-in-residence programs, and options for ceremonies such as sweat lodge. • Retail spaces for entrepreneurship and places for social enterprise.

Part 3: Considerations for The City of Calgary's role

Understanding the jurisdictional and legal complexities facing Indigenous communities and carving out the role of the municipal government in the urban Indigenous affordable housing landscape is new for most cities. There are many layers to understand when discussing affordable housing for Indigenous people.

Governed by democratically elected local officials, municipalities in Alberta are established by the province and empowered through the *Municipal Government Act (MGA)* to provide responsible and accountable local governance **to create and sustain safe and viable communities**. The MGA is a suite of operational strategies that guide service provision to all Calgarians living within Calgary's boundaries. The most relevant City strategies and commitments to affordable housing work include (but are not limited to):

- Foundations for Home: Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy and Implementation Plan (2016 – 2025)
- Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee's 10 Year Strategic Plan (2014 – 2023)
- The City's Commitment to Anti-Racism (2020)
- Municipal Indigenous Policy and the Ways Forward (2019)
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (2019)
- Social Wellbeing Policy (2019)
- Gender Equity (2019)
- White Goose Flying Report (2017)
- Indigenous Policy (2017)
- Welcoming Communities Policy (2011)
- Calgary Municipal Development Plan (2009)
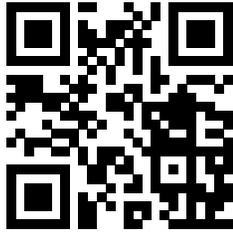
By way of these Western mandates, it is The City's responsibility to translate these strategies – with community – to support **Indigenous people as Calgarians**. Particularly considering The City's Social Wellbeing Policy and Commitment to Anti-Racism, it has become increasingly important for The City to further examine its role in ensuring Indigenous Calgarians have access to safe and affordable homes.

While the provincial and federal governments[9] have mandates to support the delivery of affordable housing for Indigenous Calgarians, ongoing shifts in priorities and responses at those levels of government demonstrate the need for The City to take on further responsibility to support Indigenous Calgarians who have been disadvantaged by Western housing systems.

Notwithstanding the myriad of jurisdictional nuances, municipalities have a clear role to support citizens living within their borders. Historically the jurisdictional divide has been used to create barriers to innovation. Demographics over time tell us that Calgary's urban Indigenous population will continue to rise as people make choices for themselves and their families. The youth population will continue to come into cities for education and employment; to raise their families. The lack of urban Indigenous affordable housing strategies will not stop these trends – it will simply mean that urban Indigenous peoples will continue to face inequality and lack of access to affordable housing.

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[9] For more information, see Appendix C: Provincial and federal governments - Roles and resources

Appendices

Appendix A:
Historical context

Introduction

The City of Calgary is committed to understanding its role in better supporting the affordable housing needs of urban Indigenous Calgarians. Thank you for taking the time to read this contextual appendix that offers a snapshot of how life used to be before colonization, throughout and today. Not a full history, this appendix unpacks some key colonial experiences of Indigenous communities across Canada, with an eye to understanding affordable housing need, social trends, and paths forward of what could be.

This material may be new to some and may be well-known for others. A note to readers: many of the traumas that continue to face Indigenous people come from a dark time in Canada's history and could be triggering with many traumas persisting today in the form of settler colonialism. Please take care when reading and open yourself to hearing the story within an ethical and safe space.

Colonial impacts on housing for Indigenous people

Pre-contact: Constructs of home

There are many factors that have contributed to the current housing situation of Indigenous people in Canada. Prior to European contact, the concept of home in Indigenous communities had a significantly different meaning. Indigenous concepts of home extended far beyond bricks and mortar and were closely associated with relational attachments to both ancestral lands and family. Relationships and responsibilities were key, including connections to human kinship networks; relationships with animals, plants, spirits and elements; relationships with the Earth, lands, waters and territories; and connection to traditional stories, songs, teachings, names and ancestors. This difference in interpretation

becomes important when looking to address the cultural housing needs of Indigenous communities.

From a Western perspective, home is a location, a building. For Indigenous people, the concept of home originates from Creation stories, from collective memories of their Nations, and where they lived on the land prior to colonization. For example, Lindstrom[10] talks about the Western concept of home as a commodity or an asset which is alien and inconsistent with many Indigenous perspectives. As articulated by Weasel Head,[11] Indigenous worldviews of home contain a strong relationship to the land. This relational aspect is also articulated by Indigenous people suffering homelessness, many wondering how they can be homeless on their traditional lands today:

[T]o be homeless means to be in a state of existence where there are no family or community support networks. Being homeless does not necessarily mean having a roof over one's head or having a home in the physical sense. Common and generally accepted societal definitions of the term "homelessness" do not reflect the participants' conceptualizations. They are utterly and hopelessly homeless when they feel abandoned by their family and the traditional Blackfoot community... Essentially, they were still homeless because support systems such as family were not present in their lives although they are housed.

This connection to home as a living entity is still alive in many communities but cannot be actualized due to the destruction of the land, as well as loss of cultural affiliation and understanding of Natural Laws that once guided Indigenous communities.

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[10] Lindstrom, 2019: 12
[11] Weasel Head, 2011: 122
[12] Ibid: 2

Western expansion and the colonial agenda

Colonization brought with it the destruction of a way of life that permeates the Indigenous housing landscape today. Affordable housing can play an important role in helping to rebuild spaces of cultural safety, relationship and identity by helping to address the effects of Canada's colonial policies that negatively impact housing outcomes for Indigenous people.

Residential schools

Residential schools within Canada operated for nearly 150 years, from the early 1840s into the 1990s. For multiple generations of Indigenous children, residential schools acted as physical homes – for as many as 15 years in some cases. While residential schools taught some basic academic content, the purpose of these schools was to transform Indigenous communities through assimilation, segregation and integration into mainstream Canadian society. Separation from family for months or years at a time resulted in children losing their language, culture and spiritual beliefs, as well as sense of belonging to a family or kinship networks.[12] Due to living for years in such harsh conditions, many parts of the child were lost, most notably cultural morals and values as they relate to a way of life. Returning to their communities, these children soon became parents, but found they were missing many – if not all – important cultural teachings, such as understanding and taking care of the most basic aspects of home.

After the residential schools slowly began to close, Indigenous communities began to see the devastating effects of the school's mandate at a community level. As Fast and Collin-Vézinab describe,[13] "having no positive parental role models to draw from a whole generation of survivors were being created"; this opened the door to what is termed the Sixties Scoop.

The Sixties Scoop

The Sixties Scoop was a period in the 1960s after most residential schools were closed, and thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children were removed from their parents and placed in non-Indigenous homes. Believed to be a conservative figure, a total of 11,132 Status Indian children were adopted out largely to Western, middle-class families between 1960 and 1990.[14] This number does not account for Métis or non-status children who were also adopted during this period. Resulting from cultural disconnect, social problems started to increase such as substance abuse, poverty, low educational attainment and housing insecurity.

Intergenerational trauma

Research[15] has documented the broad negative impacts of intergenerational trauma on Indigenous people and communities, and the relationship to housing and homelessness. The term intergenerational trauma is used interchangeably with terms such as historical trauma, transgenerational grief, and historic grief. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart[16] defines historical trauma as, "…cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma". According to Brave Heart et al:[17]

The historical trauma response (HTR) has been conceptualized as a constellation of features associated with a reaction to massive group trauma. Historical unresolved grief, a component of this response, is the profound unsettled bereavement resulting from cumulative devastating losses.

In response to this work, researchers[18] are beginning to emphasize the importance of understanding the social, political and economic conditions faced by Indigenous people within the overall context of trauma and colonialism.

Intergenerational trauma helps to articulate in clinical terms the well-known and lived experiences felt daily by survivors of residential schools and their families. It can also open doors to policy makers, planners, developers and funders to provide the necessary resources to assist in healing. This would include access to affordable housing that is both physically safe and comfortable, as well as culturally supportive.

[13] Fast and Collin-Vézinab, 2010: 131
[14] Gough, Trocmé, Brown, Knoke and Blackstock 2005: 1
[15] Brave Heart-Jordan, 1995; Brave Heart, 1998; Brave Heart, Chase, Elkins and Altschul, 2011; Sotero, 2006; Evans-Campbell, 2008 Solanto, 2008; Fast and Collin-Vezina, 2010; Gone, 2009
[16] Brave Heart et al., 2011: 282
[17] Ibid: 283
[18] Brave Heart, 1998; Brave Heart et al., 1999; Evans-Campbell, 2008; Fast and Collin-Vezina, 2010; Gone, 2009

Indigenous urbanization and core housing need

Urbanization and housing challenges for Indigenous Calgarians

Research has shown that there will continue to be a flow of Indigenous people into cities. Nationally, we know that an overwhelming majority (87 per cent) of Indigenous families are not living on reserve lands – with 62 per cent located in urban areas, and another 25 per cent living in small towns, rural, remote and northern areas. There are many reasons why individuals and families leave their reserves – or in the case of Métis, their settlements/rural environments – and move to the city. For those[19] who choose to leave their home communities, many are searching for educational or employment opportunities, as well as safe and permanent housing. However, migration can result in a reduction of social supports, culture and family connection; all which work to maintain health and well-being.

Estimates of core housing need among Indigenous households

For the last two decades, Calgary's affordable housing need has been constant despite changing economic conditions. Affordable housing sits on a spectrum of need versus accommodation or supply. A household should be considered for affordable housing when it earns less than 65 per cent of the Calgary Area Median Income and spends more than 30 per cent of its gross income on shelter costs.

Additionally, a household in core housing need is one whose dwelling is considered unsuitable, inadequate, or unaffordable and whose income levels are such that they cannot afford alternative suitable and adequate housing in their community.

Federally, data demonstrates a disproportionate need for affordable housing by Indigenous Canadians. Considering that 4.9 per cent[20] of all Canadians identify as Indigenous, these numbers are disproportionately high.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation[21] estimates that 773,000 Indigenous households are living in urban, rural, or remote locations across Canada. Of these households, 118,500 (or 18.3 per cent) are in core housing need.[22] According to the 2016 Canadian Census,[23] Calgary's core housing need is higher among renters (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) than among homeowners as renters who (on average) earn much lower incomes (almost five times lower). According to census estimates, local Indigenous core housing need is as follows:

- 2,305 Indigenous renters in Calgary are in core housing need.

- 515 Indigenous owners in Calgary are in core housing need.

- An additional 3,000 Indigenous people are homeless and seeking an appropriate place to live in Calgary.

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[19] Individuals may be newly separated singles, youth or individuals struggling with substance abuse, or frustrated with lack of employment opportunities
[20] Canada, Statistic Canada, 2016
[21] Figures do not include First Nation communities
[22] Figures do not include on reserve First Nation communities which would elevate the number considerably
[23] Ibid: 8

Trends: Affordable housing and homelessness

Indigenous families are grossly overrepresented proportionally in the shelter system compared to the total homeless population.[24] In 2018, the Calgary Homeless Foundation point-in-time count identified 2,911 persons on one night, with almost half (41 per cent) having Indigenous ancestry. Unlike other populations, this number has not decreased but in fact, has risen over time. Patrick[25] suggests that in some cities (mainly in western Canada), Indigenous homelessness may represent one-quarter to one-half of the total homeless population, with Belanger[26] similarly reporting one in 15 (6.97 per cent) Indigenous people in urban centers being homeless compared to one in 128 (0.78 per cent) for the general population.

Employment and Skills Development Canada also found that in 2019, shelter users in Calgary were about 16 times more likely to be Indigenous than other members of the city's overall population. This rate is also higher than the national average, where shelter users are about 11 times more likely to be Indigenous than members of the general population. In a 2018-2019 report[27] commissioned by the Calgary Homeless Foundation, research also found that options for safe and affordable housing – and more particularly, culturally appropriate housing – was very limited, with only 273 permanent affordable or subsidized homes dedicated to Indigenous residents in Calgary. Most significant in the research was the higher incidence of unsuitability (crowding) and inadequacy (condition) of rental accommodations among all Indigenous renters. Finally, the incidence of core need tends to be much higher for certain Indigenous renter family types. Specifically, lone parent families comprise one in every two families in need, and multi-family households (including live-in seniors aged over 65) comprise one in every two in core need.

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[24] The Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2018. Point-in-Time Count
[25] Patrick, 2014: 4
[26] Belanger et al, 2013: 4
[27] The entire series can be found by contacting the Foundation for specific housing issues faced by each of the Nations in Treaty 7

Appendix B: Promising models for Indigenous affordable housing

Introduction

The City of Calgary is committed to understanding its role in better supporting the affordable housing needs of urban Indigenous Calgarians. This appendix highlights promising housing models that have been developed by Indigenous communities/Nations across Canada. These innovative, future-focused models can act as a template for adaptation to local cultural and family need.
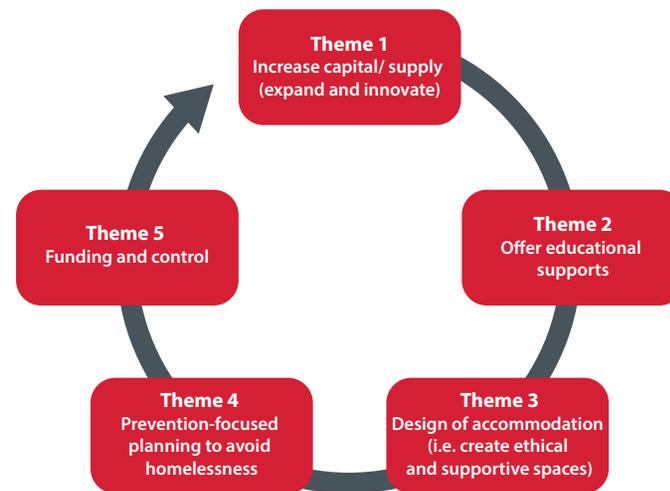
Core themes

"Understand there are two lifestyles, living on the reserve is one way. The other one is urban. The expectations are a little bit different; they don't know the responsibilities and liabilities they need to do. They have to pay utilities, they have to maintain buildings, understand what noise bylaws are, damages and so on. It's completely two different concepts of living on reserve and off reserve." – First Nations elected official

Affordable housing is about people. As a prevention approach, affordable housing supports people of all ages, family compositions, and demographics — individuals and families who otherwise could not afford safe and stable homes. People in affordable housing have greater chances to find and keep jobs, to learn and build skills, and to be active participants in their communities. For Indigenous people, affordable housing can help the healing process, while at the same time provide a steady foundation for the future.

National and regional studies have identified five core themes that continuously appear in housing models that appear to work for Indigenous housing. These successes are important to consider in part or full in the development of Indigenous affordable housing strategies, funding, development of planning.

Theme 1
Increase capital/ supply (expand and innovate)

Theme 2
Offer educational supports

Theme 3
Design of accommodation (i.e. create ethical and supportive spaces)

Theme 4
Prevention-focused planning to avoid homelessness

Theme 5
Funding and control

Additional considerations for each theme as well as direction for tenants, landlords and developers can be found in the expanded table below.

Theme 1: Increase capital/ supply (expand and innovate)	• Projects should work across all levels of governments and with community to increase the supply of stable, safe, affordable housing to eliminate the gap in core housing need for Indigenous households. • Projects require access to capital funds, other financial instruments, tools and programs to greatly increase the supply of new sustainable housing, as well as maintain and expand the numbers of Indigenous housing spaces in the city. • Protect existing expiry of operating agreements in Indigenous affordable housing to ensure no net loss in rent geared to income units, refurbish existing stock, allow greater flexibility in remaining operating agreements, and stabilize portfolios and operations.
Theme 2: Offer educational supports	**For tenants:** • Assist and educate Indigenous people and families to address personal challenges, improving readiness to relocate to the urban centers should they wish. • Assist Indigenous people and families moving into the city through ongoing educational rental readiness programs to better understand the rules and obligations of a mainstream rental tenancy. This could build on the Ky Naak Ku Kaan program delivered by the Piikani Nation.
	For landlords and developers: • Reduce landlord and developer discrimination and racism through enhanced understanding of the factors unique to Indigenous people as tenants and how they require different and creative solutions. Formal training could include transitioning from reserves, and cultural practices such as smudging and ceremony.

| Theme 3: Design of accommodation (i.e. create ethical and supportive spaces)	• Design housing with space to include social supports onsite such as permanent office space for wrap-around service delivery, Elders counselling rooms, rental support or other options to help move families out of dependency. • Ensure affordability through rent supplements and housing benefits. Include other affordable housing options to meet the needs of Indigenous families and individuals such as supportive housing, transitional housing, Elder housing and safe housing.
Theme 4: Prevention-focused planning to avoid homelessness	• There are currently only a small number of Indigenous transitional housing that enable migrating individuals moving to the city. Entry into the shelter and homeless system could be reduced if more Indigenous-specific transitional facilities could be funded and developed, potentially in partnership Indigenous service/housing providers. • Create preventative pathways from one location (i.e. Nation, settlement, other regions) to the other (i.e. cities) to give people the best chance of preventing descent into homelessness. • Over time, decrease Indigenous shelter beds and homelessness.
Theme 5: Funding and control	• There are few Indigenous affordable housing providers in Calgary. Expand these options by supporting the creation of additional Indigenous housing providers or expand the capacity and stock of the existing providers. • Obtain funding for partnerships between Indigenous service organizations and housing providers to deliver culturally based support services for a holistic range of services.

Local designs/models

The following promising local and Nation developed housing models are examples of innovative, future-focused solutions to Indigenous housing concerns. These models are from the Treaty 6, 7, 8 and Métis Nation territories and have been developed with community and Elder involvement. All have some, if not all five core themes in their design.

Nookoowayî House – Indigenous Family Housing

Nookoowayî House is an Indigenous family housing program model co-created by the Calgary Homeless Foundation Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (ASCHH) and community. The model is focused on reducing homelessness and housing instability of Indigenous families (prevention). While still in conception phase, Nookoowayî would provide permanent supportive housing to families to support stability, increase individual and collective health and wellbeing, and integrate community within a cultural framework respectful of the diversity of Indigenous cultures. The foundation of the program is guided by the Indigenous family harm reduction model which identifies and supports the core issues of the family.

Ky Naak Ku Kaan

Ky Naak Ku Kaan is delivered by the Piikani Nation. To ensure that new tenants understand their tenancy obligation, they are first allocated a mobile home in a transitional program that prepares families who plan to apply for one of the new homes. Applicants are assigned one of 37 temporary trailer homes and must complete six months in compliance with tenancy agreement, before "graduating" into one of newly built homes. Over 200 new homes have been developed over the last three years.
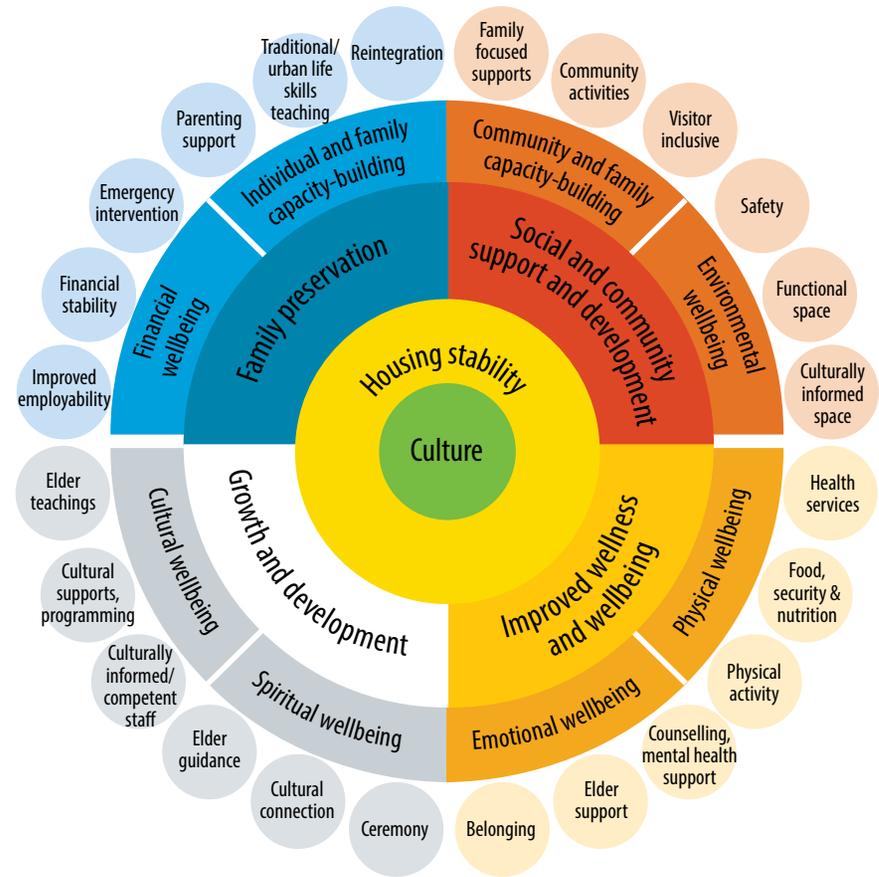
Used with permission from the Calgary Homelessness Foundation:
Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness (10/5/2021)

Ambrose Place, Niginan Housing Ventures

NiGiNan Housing Ventures is a registered non-profit charity formed to address housing needs and requirements of Indigenous people living in Edmonton. NiGiNan provides supportive affordable housing opportunities for individuals and families of Indigenous ancestry who have not been successfully served by any other organization in Edmonton.

Ambrose Place is NiGiNan's first development and is one of the most successful housing programs for Edmonton's hardest to house Indigenous persons. Ambrose Place provides housing and support services in a culturally sensitive environment to:

- Homeless Indigenous individuals and couples who have not been successfully housed in existing facilities.

- Indigenous individuals and couples who do not require supports but require safe and affordable housing.

Fourteen of the units on the fourth floor are available for those seeking safe, affordable housing, and the remaining 28 units on the second and third floors are supportive housing. Having both supportive housing and affordable housing units within the same building offers the opportunity for residents to move from supportive housing to independent living, while remaining within their existing community. The community facilities located on the first floor are available for use by all residents, and if they so choose, residents living in the 14 affordable housing units can purchase meals from the kitchen on-site on a regular basis.
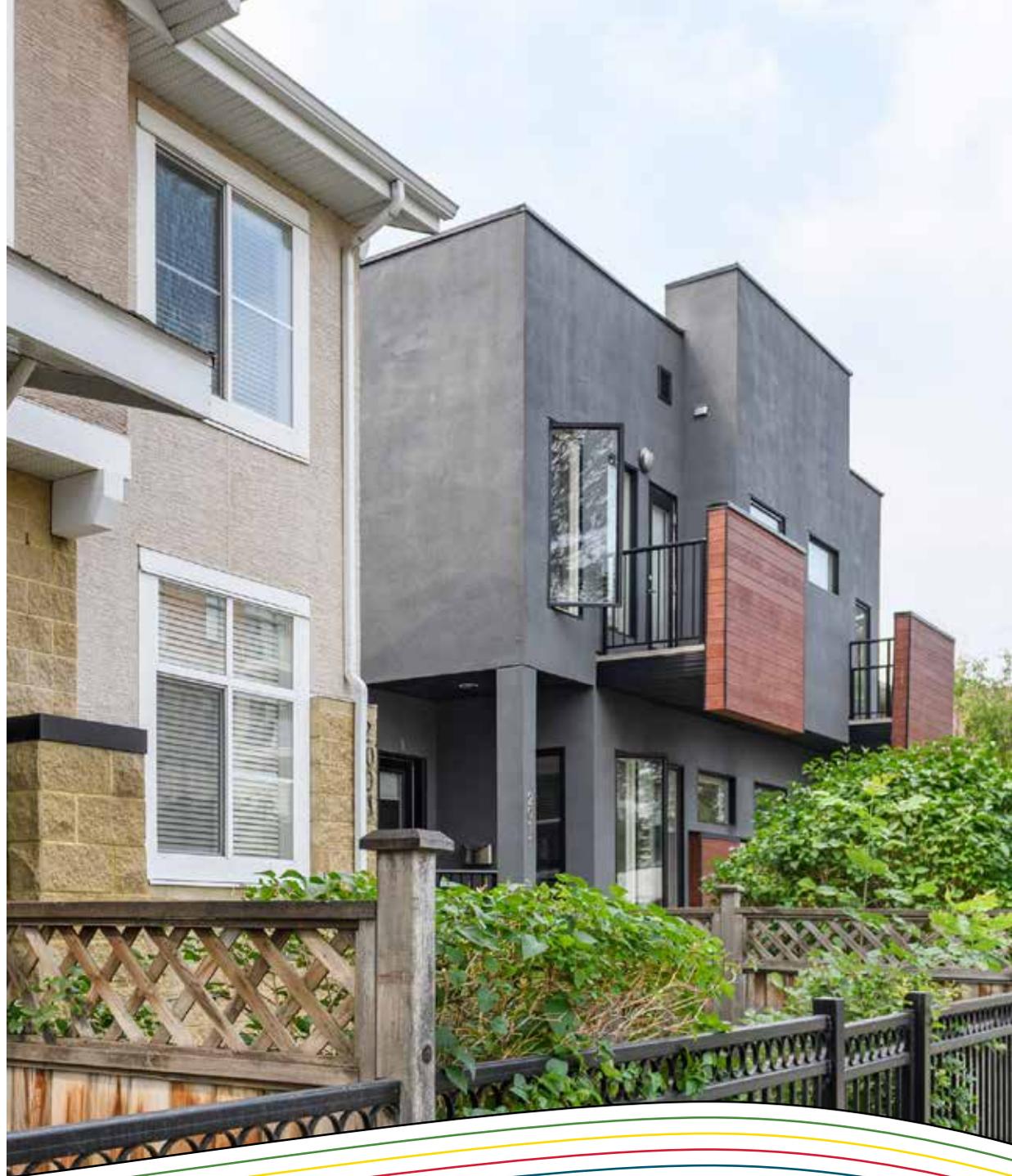
Appendix C: Provincial and federal governments – Roles and resources

Provincial government

Provincial governments have played significant roles in the Indigenous affordable housing landscape. In 1978, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation launched the Urban Native Housing Program which operated provincially. This program provided support through subsidies to urban-dwelling Indigenous people who could not otherwise afford market rents in cities. As a result, from 1978 to 1995 the number of Indigenous-led housing corporations increased from five to over 100, creating just over 10,000 homes nationally.

In 1996, the federal government moved away from its dominant role in affordable housing – discontinuing new funding for affordable housing and transferred responsibility to the provinces and territories.[28] Three years earlier, the federal government also discontinued the Urban Native Housing Program, transferring the oversight of pre-existing operating agreements to provinces. Within provincial ministries, short-term, sector-by-sector initiatives arose to fill gaps left by the federal government. This specifically impacted Indigenous people living in cities, as it was falsely believed that they were under the jurisdiction of the federal government when, in fact, they never were.[29] These jurisdictional falsehoods continue to impact the urban housing needs of most (if not all) people living off-reserve (non-status and Bill C-31 individuals) most who have never benefitted from federal distinction based funding.

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[28] Hulchanski, 2007: 4
[29] Dekruyf, 2017: 14

Below are some of the provincial departments, strategies and programs that form the landscape in Alberta:

Ministry of Seniors and Housing	Promotes the development of affordable housing to support access to housing options for Albertans with low income. In 2021, the Government of Alberta released *Stronger Foundations: Alberta's 10-year strategy to improve and expand affordable housing.* The strategy outlines actions that aim to increase access for Indigenous communities to the Indigenous Housing Capital Program, and enhance support services for Indigenous tenants.
The Indigenous Housing Capital Program Funding (IHCP)[30]	The Government of Alberta, through the Alberta Social Housing Corporation (ASHC), provides capital funding over multiple years to increase the supply of affordable off-reserve, off-settlement and on-settlement housing units for Indigenous peoples in need. This funding is being delivered through the Indigenous Housing Capital Program (IHCP).
	Projects for Indigenous persons living off-reserve can be supported through this capital program. Municipalities, housing management bodies and/or not-for-profit organizations can partner with Indigenous governments and/or organizations in the development and delivery of Indigenous affordable housing projects.
	Note: The 2019 budget reduced IHCP funding significantly from $120 million to $35 million over four years (ending in 2022). The program has been redesigned as an economic development program with a focus on public-private partnerships and mixed-income. The province announced the program redesign in 2020.

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[30] Indigenous Housing Capital Program Guide, **https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9781460140642**

Federal government

The federal landscape is more complex with jurisdictional mandates for governments working to support their members living both on and off reserve/rural communities. This is the case for both First Nations and Métis Nation governments. Specifically:

- Under the **treaties**, the federal government is obliged to fund housing for individual members to live on reserve. The federal role in First Nations policy is set out in the On-Reserve Housing Policy, which was released in 1996. This 1996 policy still provides the framework for on-reserve housing programming today. All programming is administered by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and CMHC. Programs are almost always delivered by each First Nation under devolved authority.

- In 2016, the **Daniels Decision** ruled that Métis and non-status Indians are Indians for the purpose of Section 91 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*. This shifted the designation of the Métis Nation to distinction-based, affording supports that were not available prior to 2016.

In an **urban context**, the federal government has designed and administered major social housing programs through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Program supports are available to both on reserve and off reserve builds. Beginning in the mid-1990s, there was an increase in federal funding for organizations serving Indigenous people in cities. The next substantial increase occurred in 2016, almost 20 years later.

In 2019, the Government of Canada 2019 *National Housing Strategy Act* was released. Clearly informed by a human rights-based approach to housing the strategy states that, "housing rights are human rights" and that the plan "will contribute to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and affirm the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*." While many strategies have sun-setted over the past 20 years, some of the more relevant federal strategies for on and off reserve Indigenous housing and homelessness are briefly described as follows:

Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP), 2017	For 20 years, the UAS marked the federal government's major source of funds for urban Indigenous programming. In 2017, the Liberal government launched a redesigned budget investing $118.5 million over five years in the UPIP.[31] This program is still operational in modified form.
National Homelessness Initiative, 1999 **Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, 2018**	The National Homelessness Initiative was introduced in 1999 with dedicated funding to address homelessness for Indigenous peoples. In 2007, the strategy was rebranded the Homeless Partnering Strategy emphasizing transitional housing and supports. In 2016, the government doubled funding to combat Indigenous homelessness. In 2018, a separate stream of funding was developed to address Indigenous homelessness, which is now part of the National Housing Strategy. In 2020, the Government of Canada provided an additional $236.7 million to help extend and expand the emergency response to the COVID-19 outbreak. This funding is in addition to the $157.5 million announced in April 2020 to help communities address the immediate impacts of the pandemic. This new investment will enable communities to extend the emergency measures that have been successful in reducing the risk of potential outbreaks among people experiencing homelessness, as well as provide them the flexibility to deliver affordable housing solutions.
National Housing Strategy: A Place to Call Home, 2017	In 2017, CMHC announced A Place to Call Home. The strategy includes a long-term vision and funding for social housing, with a focus on those in greatest housing need. There are Indigenous targets and commitments in most funding streams of the NHS for Indigenous urban housing and distinction-based planning and funding for Métis, Inuit and First Nations housing.

[31] See Government of Canada, "Programming for Indigenous Peoples," 29 May 2019, **https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1471368138533/1536932634432**

Distinction-based funding supports for on-reserve housing

As key partners in this work, distinction-based groups (including the Métis Nation) in this territory also have legislative rights not available to the non-affiliated urban Indigenous populations. A distinctions-based approach intends to remedy the previous pan-Aboriginal or one size fits all approach to Indigenous policy and decision making. This approach ensures that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of the First Nations, the Métis Nation and Inuit are acknowledged, affirmed and implemented. As members of surrounding Nations move into Calgary, the municipal government may be invited to affordable housing project tables alongside other orders of government to contribute expertise and resources for these Nation members.
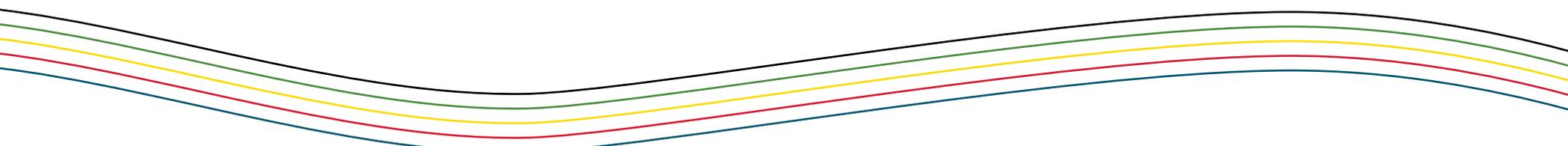
National housing strategies are being co-developed with First Nations, Métis and Inuit to guide longer term, community-based **on- and off-reserve social housing development**. Below are supports available for on-reserve development.

Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program	Administered by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), CFMP is the main program through which the federal government supports community housing, as well as basic infrastructure such as roads, schools, and water and wastewater systems. First Nations band councils develop an infrastructure plan on a 20-year timeline, aligning it with community priorities and incorporating any projected population changes. In addition to this major program, ISC supports on-reserve housing through one-time initiatives.
On-Reserve Non-Profit Housing (Section 95) Program	CMHC delivers various programs related to housing to First Nations on reserves. The fund supports First Nations to build, buy, repair and administer affordable rental housing on reserve. Some aspects of the program include: • The Direct Lending Program provides low-interest loans and mortgage renewals for eligible social housing projects on reserve. • The Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program provides funds to First Nations to repair or convert homes on reserve (e.g. create secondary suites or modify homes for persons with disabilities). • The Housing Internship Initiative for First Nations and Inuit Youth provides work experience and on-the-job training for youth living on- or off-reserve. • CMHC provides training and resources to help First Nations communities design, build and manage their housing.

Family Violence Prevention Program (FVPP)[32]	Administered by Indigenous Services Canada, FVPP is a homelessness prevention program offered on reserves. It provides funding to First Nations to support the day-to-day operations of 41 emergency shelters across the country, as well as for community-driven proposals to prevent family violence.
Shelter Enhancement Program On-Reserve[33]	CHMC offers additional funds to First Nations to build and repair shelters and housing for people who are fleeing domestic violence. This program covers the capital costs of shelters only. The budget in 2016 marked a recent boost in funding of: • Up to $33.6 million over five years. • Up to $8.3 million in ongoing funding to support shelter operations. • $10.4 million over three years to support the renovation and new construction of new shelters in communities.
Income Assistance Program (IAP)	Administered by Indigenous Services Canada, IAP provides funds to support the basic needs and transitional services for individuals and families who are ordinarily resident on reserves. The program provides clients (and their dependents, where applicable) with supports for basic needs and for transitioning into the workforce. Clients who demonstrate that they live on a reserve as defined by *The Indian Act*, are eligible for income assistance as defined by their province of residence, and have been confirmed by an assessment conducted by the program delivery agent. The federal program includes a shelter allowance to assist with rent and utilities to be disbursed if the First Nation in question charges its members rent and utilities.

[32] For further information on the Family Violence Prevention Program see: **https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100035253/1533304683142**
[33] For further information on the Shelter Enhancement On-Reserve program see: **https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/Developing-and-Renovating/Funding-Opportunities/on-reserve-renovation-programs/shelter-enhancement-program**

Appendix D: Stakeholders

Community participants (external)

Elders Group	• Elders' Knowledge Circle, Calgary
Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Indigenous serving housing providers and service organizations working in the following areas: • Operations • Programming • Research	• Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary and Area • Awo Taan Healing Lodge • Calgary Homeless Foundation Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing & Homelessness • Horizon Housing • Miskanawah Community Services • Oxford House • Siksika Off Reserve Affordable Housing (SORAH) • Trellis (formerly known as Boys & Girls Clubs of Calgary/Aspen Family & Community Network) • University of Calgary
Indigenous Calgarians with lived experience Residents living in affordable housing surveyed to gain their perception on their housing experiences in the city	• Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary and Area • Elizabeth Fry Society • Horizon Housing • Miskanawah Community Services • Oxford House • Siksika Off Reserve Affordable Housing (SORAH) • Trellis (formerly known as Boys & Girls Clubs of Calgary/Aspen Family & Community Network) • University of Calgary
Distinction-based Nations Administrative leadership within housing departments	• Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 and Local 87 • Blackfoot Confederacy • Treaty 7-G4
Senior levels of government	Government of Canada • Indigenous and Northern Housing Solutions, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Government of Alberta • Indigenous Housing Capital Program, Alberta Seniors and Housing

Appendix E:
Indigenous/cultural glossary of terms

Ceremony: Ceremony is the active demonstration of many of the aspects of cultures including rites of passage, healing, medicines and decision making.

Circle process: Circle process is a way of meeting or learning whereby the teacher (Elder or Knowledge Keeper) will share information. Listeners do not interrupt until the teaching is completed. The listeners can then – in a clockwise direction, ask a question about what they have heard. The teacher may respond. The next person then asks their question until the circle process returns to the first person. You may go around the circle in this fashion until everyone has asked their questions. Protocol dictates that no one interrupt or speak to the question or answer any other participant – only the Elder can.

Culture: Culture is the customs, arts, social institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.

Distinctions-based: Distinctions-based means the three federally recognized Indigenous groupings in Canada: First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Distinctions-based approach was intended to remedy the previous pan-Aboriginal or one size fits all approach to Indigenous policy and decision making.

Elders: Elder is an imperfect term used in English to refer to an Indigenous person who may not always be the oldest member of that group but who has been recognized as holding knowledge, language and practice that may assist community. Validated Elders are recognized by community and have been transferred orally and in ceremony the rights and privileges that they offer to assist individuals and community. This may include songs, bundles and other traditional certificates.

Equality: Equality means each individual or groups of people are given the same resources or opportunities.

Equity: Equity recognizes that each person or community has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

Ethical space: Ethical space is formed when two societies, with disparate worldviews, are poised to engage each other. This includes conversations that evolve opportunities to live, plan and manage ourselves, and our process from an Indigenous perspective and ultimately from the environment.

First Nation: First Nation refers to any of the groups of Indigenous peoples of Canada officially recognized by the federal government. The term is generally understood to exclude the Inuit and Métis. First Nation is the contemporary term for Indian.

Healing: Healing is the process of making or becoming sound or healthy again.

Healing practice: Healing practices were defined in part through the work of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. Healing is defined not so much as an end state but instead a process. Healing takes work, it is ongoing and requires dedication. First and foremost, it requires commitment from the individual. No one can heal you or make you heal. Personal agency is stressed above all else. Healing is a journey, sometimes articulated as following the Red Road, the Sweetgrass Trail, or the Way of the Pipe.

Intergenerational trauma: Intergenerational trauma has been conceptualized as a constellation of features associated with a reaction to massive group trauma. Historical unresolved grief, a component of this response is the profound unsettled bereavement resulting from cumulative devastating losses. In response to this work, researchers are now beginning to emphasize the importance of understanding the social, political and economic conditions faced by Indigenous people within the overall context of trauma and colonialism.

Inuit: The Inuit or the people, singular: Inuk dual: Inuuk are a group of culturally similar Indigenous peoples inhabiting the Arctic regions of Greenland, Canada and Alaska. The Inuit languages are part of the Eskimo–Aleut family.

Knowledge Keepers: Knowledge Keepers are individuals who may not yet act as Elders but who hold some practice knowledge with respect to culture and oral practice.

Métis: The Métis are people of mixed Indigenous and Euro-American ancestry. According to the Métis National Council website, "Métis" means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples, is of historic Métis Nation ancestry and who is accepted by the Métis Nation.

Métis Land Scrip: Scrip is any document used in place of legal tender, for example a certificate or voucher, where the bearer is entitled to certain rights. In 1870, the Canadian government devised a system of scrip — referred to as Métis (or half-breed) scrip — that issued documents redeemable for land or money. Scrip was given to Métis people living in the west in exchange for their land rights. The scrip process was legally complex and disorganized; this made it difficult for Métis people to acquire land, yet simultaneously created room for fraud. In March 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the federal government failed to provide the Métis with the land grant they were promised in the *Manitoba Act* of 1870. Negotiations between various levels of government and the Métis Nation concerning the reclamation of land rights continue.

Natural Laws: Natural Laws are found in the environment and hold the cultural principles, language, and perspectives embodied within Indigenous stories. Each region or culture has unique Natural Laws. At the same time many Natural Laws are universal and can be used regardless of culture. Natural Law tells us how to behave *as human beings and with each other.* Some examples are respect, honesty, truth and responsibility. Each culture has its own Natural Laws that guide every day life; however, colonization disrupted Indigenous Natural Laws and replaced them with western values that did not work within the cultural environment. One example is competition versus collective action. As collectivist communities, individual competition was not a value or natural law prior to colonization. Many of the imposed values or Natural Laws still do not resonate within Indigenous communities today and are the source of cultural confusion and ongoing trauma.

Oral knowledge: Oral knowledge is a system of education and communication contrasting written knowledge. Oral knowledge retains the history of Indigenous communities by passing cultural information from one generation to the next. For communities creation stories, connections to the land, historical accounts, traditional ecological knowledge, teachings, language, and culture stories have been kept alive through oral traditions for thousands of years. These stories and accounts have been passed from generation to generation without ever being transcribed.

Reconciliation: The TRC definition of reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Residential school: Residential schools were one part of a larger colonial policy of assimilation to remove the "Indian problem." According to the Indigenous Healing Foundation over the period of 1800 to 1990 over 130 residential schools existed in Canada. In the early 1900s on average about one sixth of Indigenous children aged 6-15 attended the schools against their will.

Resurgence: Indigenous resurgence centers on three contentions: (1) That colonialism is an active structure of domination premised, at base, on Indigenous elimination; (2) That the prevailing normative-discursive environment continues to reflect this imperative; and (3) That Indigenous peoples must therefore turn away from this hostile environment and pursue independent programs of social and cultural rejuvenation.

Traditional knowledge: Traditional knowledge refers to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities around the world. Developed from experience gained over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment, traditional knowledge is transmitted orally from generation to generation.

Treaty: Treaties are negotiated agreements that define the rights, responsibilities and relationships between First Nations groups and federal and provincial governments. The treaty system was a means by which the Crown gained sovereignty, without military intervention, over the west in order to open it up for settlers.

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