



3rd ANNUAL HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS FORUM

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



September 16-17, 2025
Sheraton Vancouver Wall Center
Vancouver, BC

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MC and Entertainment

Harvey McLeod, Upper Nicola Band

Shona Sparrow, Moontide Reconciliation

Event Photography and Videography

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Report Design and Editing

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Tech Support

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INTRODUCTION

On September 16-17, 2025, the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) and the First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council (FNHIC) co-hosted a Housing and Homelessness Forum which brought together over 350 leaders, housing professionals, and government partners to collaborate and strengthen relationships for the future of First Nations housing across British Columbia. Conversations throughout the event centred on First Nations' access to homes that embody culture and community, while addressing pressing realities of affordability, capacity, and homelessness that affect Nations across BC.

This year's gathering centred on the practice of housing in action through partnership and empowerment examining the relationships between First Nations, municipalities, and all levels of government. There was a significant emphasis on partnership as a foundation to addressing the challenging systems of inequity in First Nations housing. Collaboration between First Nations, municipalities, and all levels of government is central to building sustainable, culturally grounded housing. Leaders shared success stories and lessons learned from innovative housing projects, governance frameworks, and funding approaches that moved beyond consultation to genuine partnership.

Forum dialogue focused on avenues for improving Nations' internal capacity for effective asset management and positive infrastructure development outcomes. Participants provided recommendations to federal staff on relevant programs and processes to improve First Nations access to funding and capacity to deliver culturally appropriate housing projects both on-and-off reserve.

For First Nations, reconciliation is not a new, trendy concept, but a practice. It requires action at all levels, beginning with the recognition that housing is more than infrastructure; it is an essential part of holistic wellness, belonging, identity, and our collective responsibility to care for one another.

Presentations emphasized the need to align housing delivery with the principles of First Nations self-determination and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act), ensuring that First Nations lead in design, development, and management of their housing futures. This includes understanding the barriers that continue to slow momentum, such as funding and bureaucratic process delays. Practical solutions were grounded in a shared understanding that reconciliation in housing is about relationships, process, and policy to create real change. Together, participants envision a future where housing reflects First Nations values, addresses immediate community needs, and supports long-term visions of sustainable, culturally informed housing delivery and management led by First Nations at every level.

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Keynote Address: Healing the Spirit, Building the Home: A Pathway to First Nations Holistic Wellness

■ Nola Jeffrey, Executive Director, Tsow Tun Le Lum Society

Nola delivered a powerful speech centred on the power of healing, sharing her personal journey of facing tremendous loss and the impacts of colonization on her life. A turning point for Nola was pursuing education, which led her to a role as a healer and advocate, walking alongside and uplifting Indigenous people in her work at the Tsow Tun Le Lum Society, a substance use healing and trauma treatment centre. She shared some metrics and overview of the organization's program and service delivery as well as how staff and guests collaborate at their facility. Through her work and lived experience, Nola's resounding message was the importance of maintaining and facilitating collective care practices and values rooted in community.

Nola recounted a story showing this teaching of collective care: "I remember a story in school where Tsimshian and Lak Kw'alaams people gathered and went to England to talk to the queen. They were shocked seeing people in poverty and starving. So different from our people where if one person starving, we all came together... Nowadays, when a relation passes, we come together and put money forward to take care of loved ones and family. We still have aspects of those teachings alive and well. My job is to grasp them, to breathe life into it. Through connection to creator, connection to land and ancestors, and each other."

Nola concluded by expressing gratitude to leadership who continue to advocate for healing, housing, and compassion, reminding everyone that "love has the highest vibration" and that it's never too late to heal.

Presenter Recommendations

1. Healing requires safety, cultural grounding and collective care.
2. Food and ceremony are essential parts of healing.
3. Teams working with community members must lead with good hearts, accountability and compassion.
4. Healing is lifelong and every person has a role in it.

Participant Recommendations

1. Homes built with First Nations for multigenerational households are necessary to continue cultural teachings and values.
2. Speakers reflected on the shared struggles of housing shortages, intergenerational trauma, and the importance of strong leadership grounded in compassion and accountability.

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

From Plan to Place: A Practical Update on FNHIC's Phased Approach to Housing Delivery for BC First Nations

- **Michael Sadler, Executive Director, First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council (FNHIC)**

Michael Sadler, Executive Director of FNHIC, emphasized that governments will not move forward without First Nations leadership, guided by community voices and traditional worldviews. Drawing on his own experience as a Sixties Scoop survivor who reconnected with his Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en roots, Sadler reflected on collective trauma, cultural reclamation, and the ongoing journey of self-determination. Referencing Chief Dan George's 1967 speech, he reiterated that First Nations must learn the systems of government, take their place in them, and create change from within to care for their people and the land.

Sadler shared FNHIC's vision for a self-sustaining, community-led housing and infrastructure system grounded in trust, data, and collaboration. "Built from the ground up," FNHIC works to empower Nations to take control of their housing through two streams; service delivery: providing on-the-ground support and training; and transfer: strengthening governance and readiness for autonomy and independence. He emphasized the importance of returning to traditional, culturally grounded housing as a form of innovation and decolonization and highlighted the need for housing that keeps families together.

Presenter Recommendations

1. Include First Nations voices in every funding and policy decision, "nothing for us without us".
2. Invest in people first; build homes that care for communities, not just structures.
3. Embrace traditional knowledge to guide culturally grounded and sustainable housing solutions.
4. Pursue financial independence by developing community investments and private partnerships.
5. Address trauma and homelessness holistically by integrating cultural, mental, and spiritual wellbeing into housing programs.
6. Communicate and connect; share stories, progress, and lessons learned to strengthen collaboration.

Participant Recommendations

1. Homes built with First Nations for multigenerational households are necessary to continue cultural teachings and values.
2. Speakers reflected on the shared struggles of housing shortages, intergenerational trauma, and the importance of strong leadership grounded in compassion and accountability.

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Decolonizing the First Nations Housing Development Process

- **Dave Ward, CEO, Lu'ma Development Management**
- **Todd McBride, Director of Development, Lu'ma Development Management**

This breakout session followed the work of Lu'ma Development Management (LDM), an Indigenous-led real estate development company working to decolonize how housing is planned and built through a relationship-first approach. CEO Dave Ward emphasized, "If we are not in the room and decisions are being made on our community's behalf, there is something wrong with the system...To do this work, you have to have people around you that you trust."

Lu'ma replaces the traditional linear housing development process with a circular framework grounded in Indigenous values where land, people, funding, and buildings are relational in a project's lifecycle. Director Todd McBride shared a few exciting housing projects born from this approach working with and for Indigenous communities and organizations. One example he shared was the Hastings Housing and Healing Centre, created in collaboration with the Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT), guided by elders and knowledge keepers from three host Nations. The project reimaged a colonial heritage site as a healing space for Indigenous people, which was made possible through collaboration with the City of Vancouver to prioritize Indigenous futures over preservation rules.

Another Lu'ma partnership included the Hiyám̓ ta S̓w̓wú7mesh Housing Society, supporting the Squamish Nation Council's goal to house its members within a generation, resulting in four projects totalling 300 units. They also worked with the Tla'amin Nation and Ch'iyáqtel First Nations to create affordability and cultural reflections to support the Nations' housing needs. The last notable project was from a partnership with Gitxsan Child and Family Services for "The Bringing Our Children Home Longhouse," which offer supportive housing for women, children and youth transitioning from care. Together these projects show that decolonizing housing is about restoring Indigenous decision-making, to create housing reflective of the communities it serves.

Presenter Recommendations: Practical Strategies for First Nations

1. Land Back Program
 - a. Access and work with existing programming for land back mechanisms for housing developments on land off reserve.
 - b. Ways to access: public funding, will asset bequest, and financial donations.
 - i. Examples include WSÁNEĆ Lands Trust (BC), Aboriginal Land Trust (BC), Xaxe Tenew Sacred Land Society (BC).
2. Indigenous participation plans
 - a. Commitment to Indigenous employment and engagement in levels of housing development and construction.
 - b. Cultural awareness and employment training.

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- c. Capacity building and training.
- d. Joint ventures.
- e. Endorsed business registry.
- 3. Funding strategies
 - a. Maintain awareness of available funding sources.
 - b. Ensure a project team with experience with similar funding programs.
 - c. Best to access funding that supports proposal work to reduce risks.
 - d. Work to ensure that the project meets funders goals and Nation requirements.



PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Real Talk for Housing Managers: Peer-to-Peer Solutions That Work

■ Lory Oberst, Director, BC First Nation Housing Managers Association (BCFNHMA)

This breakout session highlighted how the BCFNHMA is working to support housing managers and outlined the resources the association provides. Over the past five years, BCFNHMA has engaged with communities to understand gaps in housing management. The main finding was that housing managers often feel isolated and unsupported, with limited access to resources and peer networks.

BCFNHMA now supports 235 members, providing services such as one-on-one assistance, online resources available via their website and app, educational courses, workshops, webinars, regional housing forums, and networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities. Housing managers can access and connect with FNHIC on their website at <https://www.bcfnhousingmanagers.ca/> or download the Hawk Solutions Communications app to learn more about these supports and find more information to connect with FNHIC staff. The discussion highlighted key recommendations listed below.

Presenter Recommendations: Practical Strategies for First Nations

1. Grow pilot initiatives such as the Floating Housing Manager Project to help communities establish housing departments and systems before hiring staff.
2. Continue building local support networks for housing managers through education, one-on-one assistance, and peer-to-peer learning.
3. Expand BCFNHMA training opportunities, such as the Foundations in Housing Management course and upcoming 2026 regional housing forums.
4. Strengthen knowledge sharing through tools like the Hawk Communications app, BCFNHMA's website, and monthly Chat & Chew sessions.

Participant Recommendations

1. Address housing manager burnout by creating more opportunities for mentorship, networking, and emotional support.
2. Revisit eviction practices to align with community values and cultural teachings, focus on education, family engagement, and collective solutions rather than punishment.
3. Strengthen rent collection systems through community buy-in, elder guidance, and transparent communication about housing costs and responsibilities.
4. Update housing policies and bylaws to reflect current realities, including the high cost of materials and labour shortages, especially in remote areas.
5. Develop community engagement and communication strategies, social media, home visits, and community events to connect with members and foster trust.
6. Support youth and first-time renters through education on tenancy, conflict resolution, and home maintenance.
7. Encourage job creation and local business development to increase community income and reduce dependency on external funding.

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

New Developments in Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Housing Support Program for BC Region

- **Averil Lamont, Director, Community Infrastructure, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)**
- **Keith Grier, Regional Program Development Team Leader, ISC**
- **Simmi Sandhu, Regional Housing Officer, ISC**

The ISC Housing team presented updates on new developments for the 2025-2026 Housing Support Program. Key announcements included the removal of stacking limitations, allowing full funding combinations with other sources, the continuation of double subsidies into 2025-2026, newly available Housing Technical Services Funding, and expanded support under the First Nations Children and Family Housing Funding stream.

Averil Lamont opened with a review of ISC housing investments over the past decade totalling 809 single family units, 496 multiplex units, and 3,729 renovations. Beyond the numbers, ISC housing work continues to expand to strengthen community governance and long-term housing systems by providing community access funding for:

1. **Governance:** funding for communities to plan and develop housing policies that reflect their own priorities.
2. **Affordability:** a split initiative between single units and multiplexes development and renovation.
3. **Energy efficiency:** helping Nations modernize homes with updated technologies and methods available.
4. **Capacity:**
 - a. Housing managers salaries fund for basic capacity needs of community.
 - b. Housing Technical Services funding for communities to access technical support, delivery hubs, enhancing capacity training, for quality infrastructure.
5. **Family and Child Housing Supports:** ISC has committed to an agreement in principle on long term reform for First Nations Child and Family Service Program and Jordan's Principle to keep families together and address barriers faced by at-risk youth. This includes eligible costs such as lot servicing, subdivision development, major repairs, and renovations.

In response to feedback from Nations, ISC introduced initial changes: allowing fund stacking, simplifying processes with annual work plan model to replace traditional proposal-based processes, targeting support toward highest need communities. These adjustments are part of larger shift within ISC to engage with First Nations to align programming with new approaches to meet diverse community needs by tackling some of the social, capacity, and access challenges that are barriers to building the infrastructure for community care.

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Presenter Recommendations

1. Take advantage of full stacking when combining ISC funding to be able to fund project 100%.
2. Incorporate energy efficiency into projects with ISC subsidies available.
3. Housing Support Program supports capacity building for governance, planning and housing management.
4. Consider other Nations' approaches to unique shared challenges, such as home equity. For example, Skowkale First Nations have approached this issue with using a loan instrument.

Participant Recommendations

1. Interested in building investment for First Nations to have equity in homes to support communities building wealth and oppose homes remaining unrecognized with no value within existing realty system. Would like ISC to create access and opportunity.
2. Reassess existing fund to create homes to support teachers' recruitment and retention education in community. One participant shared her community Gitxaala does not qualify but faces many barriers making it an impossible situation to maintain long term education for the needs of community. Participant recommends changes to program to ensure it serves communities who need the support.
3. Consider a tiered system to allow individuals and families' changing needs such as youth supported living arrangements graduating to independent living spaces.



PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

First Nations Best Practices in Asset Management and Infrastructure Development

- **Jody Rechenmacher, Technical Director, First Nations Infrastructure Institute (FNII)**
- **Jason Calla, Technical Director, FNII**
- **Martina Lewis, Director of Asset Management, First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council (FNHIC)**
- **Kear Porttris, Director of Infrastructure, FNHIC**

The breakout discussion was opened by emphasizing that housing and infrastructure must go together, noting that communities require extensive infrastructure plans to support their long-term housing goals. Nations were encouraged to develop comprehensive community plans (CCPs) that reflect local needs and priorities, highlighting FNHIC's role in helping communities build capacity and secure the infrastructure they need. The First Nations Infrastructure Institute (FNII) shared that it is an Indigenous-led, no-cost resource available to help Nations plan, fund, and manage infrastructure projects, from defining needs to implementation and operations.

FNII urged communities to reach out early for support and to adopt a comprehensive approach that integrates housing, water systems, transportation, and community buildings. Asset management is also essential; knowing what assets exist, their condition, and how to maintain them supports communities to make informed decisions and extend the life of their infrastructure. Participants were encouraged to invest in asset management systems and training to improve planning, reduce costs, and strengthen sustainability. FNHIC's Housing Asset Management Pilot Projects are helping Nations collect housing data, assess conditions, and train staff, and is another opportunity for communities to get involved and build their internal capacity.

Presenter Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive community plan (CCP) that connects housing, infrastructure, and long-term growth needs.
2. Reach out early to the First Nations Infrastructure Institute (FNII) for long-term planning and technical support.
3. Invest in asset management training and tools to extend the lifespan of community assets and improve decision-making.
4. Join FNHIC's Housing Asset Management Pilot Projects to strengthen housing data, staff capacity, and maintenance plans.
5. Collaborate and share knowledge with neighbouring communities to improve sustainability and reduce costs.
6. Use good data to make informed decisions. Asset management is about knowing what you have, what it's worth, and how to protect it.

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Keynote Address: BC Minister of Housing

- **Honourable Christine Boyle, Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Province of BC**

Honourable Christine Boyle shared that her previous experience as Minister of Indigenous Relations has provided her with a base to work in the new role as housing minister and to continue work in reconciliation guided by the Declaration Act. She emphasized the housing crisis impacting First Nations as one of many impacts of colonialism. She stated that this crisis requires practical, shared solutions to create safe and affordable housing for all to thrive. Part of this is demonstrated by BC as the first province to invest in housing on reserve, which is a well-known federal jurisdiction. Through this initiative 6,900 housing units are underway across the province, including 2,000 First Nation homes.

Boyle highlighted partnerships with Nations that are tackling housing construction and home ownership opportunities. Initiatives like BC Builds are identifying unused lands, streamlining approvals and offering low interest construction loans. Boyle acknowledged ongoing barriers like funding shortages, capacity gaps, and slow federal processes and called for stronger municipal-First Nations collaboration. Bringing leadership together to reflect worldviews for all in housing solutions.

Presenter Recommendations

1. Build on the Declaration Act framework to shift consultation to long term partnership in housing planning and policy.
2. Strengthen collaboration between municipalities and First Nations through formal structures to ensure joint decision-making.
3. Encourage municipalities to adopt inclusive planning models like Heather Lands in Vancouver where cultural workers guide projects.
4. Strengthen advocacy with the federal government for sustained and expanded funding for Indigenous housing.
5. Whole system supports and housing options to connect, heal and recover for First Nations families impacted by the child welfare system.
6. Housing design should be inclusive to multigenerational households and those that need it most in BC housing future.

Participant Recommendations

1. Improve affordability and access to First Nations multigenerational households.
2. Develop ISC integrated support frameworks that address First Nations homelessness and support at-risk youth, women, and families, including those transitioning from care.
3. Provide protections against gentrification and affordability in a housing crisis.
4. Take innovative taxation approaches to empty housing and speculative buying activities.

PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Practical Strategies for Municipal–First Nation Partnerships in Housing and Homelessness Initiatives

- **Trish Mandewo, President, Union of BC Municipalities**
- **Chief Don Tom, UBCIC Vice President**
- **Michael Moses, Councillor, Williams Lake City Council**
- **y'ilmixʷm Greg Gabriel, Chief, snpink'tn Indian Band**

As homelessness increases across the province, speakers talked about the need for First Nations and local governments to work together to care for people living in vulnerable conditions. Panelists shared that outdated policies, colonial land-use systems, and a lack of coordination continue to harm First Nations people, while also acknowledging the progress being made toward better, more respectful partnerships.

There was broad agreement that reconciliation needs to move past words and into real action. Local governments must align their policies with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration) and include First Nations in all decisions related to housing, land use, and infrastructure. Several speakers emphasized that relationships must come before partnerships; building trust and fostering open communication is the foundation for any meaningful collaboration.

Examples were shared from Penticton and Williams Lake, where joint council meetings and shared planning are helping rebuild trust and improve how communities respond to housing and homelessness challenges. Panelists said keeping promises, returning land, and investing fairly in infrastructure are all key parts of reconciliation.

The conversation made it clear that governments at all levels need to remain at the table, communicate openly, and collaborate to address the systems that continue to leave people behind. As one panellist said, “We can’t fix housing or homelessness alone, we have to do this together.”

Presenter Recommendations

1. Governments should reform outdated legislation by modernizing the Local Government Act and related policies to align with the UN Declaration and uphold First Nations’ decision-making authority within their territories.
2. Leaders are encouraged to build relationships before partnerships by holding regular council-to-council meetings, sharing learning opportunities, and maintaining open communication as the foundation for lasting collaboration.
3. Governments must keep promises and uphold commitments by honouring land return agreements and previous commitments to rebuild trust and advance reconciliation.
4. Decision-makers should include First Nations in all housing discussions, ensuring that the principle of “Nothing for us, without us” guides every planning, zoning, and infrastructure

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process.

5. Governments and funding bodies should support local UN Declaration implementation by providing resources, tools, and sustained funding to help local governments and First Nations put reconciliation into practice.
6. Investments should focus on equitable infrastructure, ensuring First Nations have the same access to clean water, sewer, and housing systems as surrounding municipalities.



PRESENTATIONS, PANELS, AND BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Advancing First Nations Housing Priorities through Build Canada Homes

- Cheri Reddin, Director General, Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada (HICC)
- Gabrielle Feldmann, Senior Policy Advisor, HICC
- Pauline Mousseau, Senior Policy Advisor, HICC

Cheri Reddin, Director at Infrastructure Canada, outlined the vision for Build Canada Homes (BCH) as a fit-for-purpose agency that will scale up housing delivery through modular construction, streamlined approvals, the use of surplus federal lands, and flexible financing tools. BCH will act as a developer, financier, and market catalyst, offering predictable long-term financial support and a single-window approach for project proponents. Engagement sessions, including with First Nations leadership, highlighted the importance of designing BCH to reflect First Nations housing priorities, inherent rights, and access to infrastructure funding. Participants emphasized the importance of early and ongoing First Nations involvement in BCH's governance and design, flexible funding models for smaller or northern projects, investments in infrastructure readiness and local capacity, and improved coordination among federal departments. BCH is intended to complement, not replace, existing programs through stackable funding with ISC, CMHC, and provincial partners. Participants called for continued collaboration to ensure that First Nations voices are heard and that housing solutions are equitable, sustainable, and locally driven.

Presenter Recommendations

1. Ensure early and direct First Nations participation in the design and governance of BCH.
2. Adopt a First Nations lens in defining “affordable housing,” recognizing regional differences.
3. Tie housing funding to infrastructure readiness; prioritize investments in water, power, and sewage for northern and remote communities.
4. Simplify application and approval processes, enabling communities to engage more easily and build capacity to manage projects locally.
5. Provide seed funding for pre-development, planning, and land-use assessments to help communities reach shovel-readiness.

CONCLUSION

Over the two-day event, each session highlighted the importance of collaboration, not only between First Nations, but also at all levels of government to challenge the complex and intersectional issues of inadequate and unsafe housing in First Nations communities head-on. Presenters highlighted practical insights, community-driven solutions, and partnership ideas. Both the provincial and federal governments provided updates and heard feedback on how their programs and portfolios could be improved to meet First Nations' realities.

In their closing remarks, Chief Don Tom, UBCIC Vice President, and Robert Phillips, First Nations Summit Executive, reflected on the two days of discussion and presentations. They emphasized that although there has been lots of progress, “we are still in a housing crisis with devastating impacts on our women, children, and families.” Chief Tom reminded everyone that housing is not a privilege but a human right, challenging leaders to coordinate efforts, demand accountability, and push for climate-resilient, culturally grounded housing solutions. Chief Tom called for governments to move beyond consultation toward genuine engagement shaped by First Nations laws and leadership. Robert Phillips reinforced Chief Tom's message by noting, “You are the experts and the ones doing the work at home, don't forget your power”, reminding Nations that the path forward depends on collaboration and shared advocacy. Both leaders challenged leadership at all levels to replace short-term programs with long-term, sustainable investments to address the dire housing gaps.

The Forum closed with clear calls to action, continuing the collective momentum and urging everyone to work together to strengthen relationships, uphold human rights, and invest in First Nations-led housing and infrastructure. Solutions already exist within communities; we need to continue building them together.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the 2023 and 2024 housing forums and supported by resolutions at the three First Nations Leadership Council organizations comprising the BC Assembly of First Nations, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the First Nations Summit, First Nations have called for a complete, system-wide reform of housing in BC and across Canada led by a by-First Nations, for-First Nations approach (BCAFN Resolution 08/2024 entitled Support and Endorsement for Phase 1 of the First Nations Housing & Infrastructure Council’s Housing Framework and Resolution 12/2025 entitled Advancing First Nations’ Right to Culturally Appropriate Housing And Infrastructure; FNS Resolution #1124.12 entitled Governance of First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council and Creation of a BC First Nations Chiefs Housing and Infrastructure Advisory Committee and Resolution #0425.15 entitled Advancing First Nations’ Right to Culturally Appropriate Housing And Infrastructure; and UBCIC Resolution 2024-53 entitled Governance of First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council and Creation of a B.C. First Nations Chiefs Housing and Infrastructure Advisory Committee). Furthermore, governments have been urged to recognize housing as a fundamental human right tied to safety, dignity, and cultural continuity and shift from punitive approaches to homelessness toward culturally informed solutions.

First Nations have previously called on all levels of government to move beyond colonial, one-size-fits-all programs to frameworks rooted in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration), free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), and self-determination. There was an urgent call for holistic, cross-ministerial collaboration and substantial, long-term investments to close the infrastructure gap—framed not as a cost but as a national economic benefit—and ensuring funding is flexible, stackable, and matched between jurisdictions.

Building upon this context, the following recommendations consolidate the key themes, shared solutions, and calls to action from this year’s gathering. They are directed at all parties involved in supporting the vision of First Nations-led, culturally grounded, and sustainable housing futures.

First Nations

First Nations are leading the way in developing housing solutions that are grounded in their worldviews. Recommendations from this year’s gathering focused on strengthening internal capacity, governance, and financial independence to build a self-determined housing future. First Nations must:

1. Develop comprehensive community plans (CCP) that connect housing, infrastructure and long-term growth based on First Nations goals and priorities.
2. Strengthen data collection and asset management systems to improve housing, quality of life, and financial planning.
3. Pursue financial independence through trust funds, community investments, and partnerships that reduce reliance on federal and provincial funds.
4. Improve access to training opportunities for housing managers.
5. Support youth and new renters with education on maintenance and tenancy to help build a foundation that leads to home ownership and stability.
6. Continue to practice “nothing for us, without us”, moving towards housing decision-making power.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Local Government/Municipalities

Reconciliation in housing requires proactive partnership at the local level. Municipalities are urged to move beyond consultation to shared decision-making, ensuring First Nations are included as essential governing partners in addressing housing needs. Municipalities and local governments must:

1. Focus on building relationships before partnerships. Prioritize council-to-council meetings, joint planning and cultural education.
2. Collaborate with First Nations to establish formal agreements for joint housing and infrastructure development.
3. Align local housing and land policies with the Declaration Act.
4. Ensure equitable access to municipal infrastructure (such as water and sewer) for nearby First Nations communities.

Provincial Government

The Province has a critical role in creating the legislative and funding environment for success in improving First Nations access to safe and appropriate housing. These recommendations call for policy alignment with the UN Declaration and strategic investments that enable collaboration and address systemic barriers. The Province of BC must:

1. Prioritize updating provincial legislation to align with the Declaration Act and uphold First Nations jurisdiction.
2. Provide long-term and flexible funding that allows First Nations and municipalities to collaborate on housing and infrastructure planning.
3. Prioritize infrastructure readiness by investing in water, sewer, power, etc. to support housing development, especially in northern BC.
4. Address housing affordability by implementing protective policies and taxes to prioritize communities first.

Federal Government

As the primary fiduciary, the federal government must evolve its approach from administering short-term programs to being a long-term investor in First Nations housing self-determination. This requires streamlining processes and providing capital that empowers First Nations-led solutions. The federal government must:

1. Honour the Crown's obligations and make the necessary infrastructure investments required to provide equitable housing and infrastructure to First Nations, both on and off reserve.
2. Move from short-term proposal-based funding to an investment-style funding that supports First Nations-led initiatives, governance, and transfer readiness.
3. Provide seed funding for pre-development and planning to help communities reach 'shovel readiness' and reduce risk.
4. Expand access to First Nations Fiscal Management Act tools to help finance housing and infrastructure projects.
5. Address housing affordability by implementing protective policies and taxes to prioritize communities first.

APPENDIX

Overview of Recommendations

First Nations	Local Government/ Municipalities	Provincial Government	Federal Government
<p>1. Develop comprehensive community plans (CCP) that connect housing, infrastructure and long-term growth based on First Nations goals and priorities.</p>	<p>1. Focus on building relationships before partnerships. Prioritize council-to-council meetings, joint planning and cultural education.</p>	<p>1. Prioritize updating provincial legislation to align with the UN Declaration and uphold First Nations jurisdiction.</p>	<p>1. Honour the Crown's obligations and make the necessary infrastructure investments required to provide equitable housing and infrastructure to First Nations, both on and off reserve.</p>
<p>2. Strengthen data collection and asset management systems to improve housing, quality of life, and financial planning.</p>	<p>2. Collaborate with First Nations to establish formal agreements for joint housing and infrastructure development.</p>	<p>2. Provide long-term and flexible funding that allows First Nations and municipalities to collaborate on housing and infrastructure planning.</p>	<p>2. Reform federal housing programs to allow First Nations access to equity for on-reserve housing, enabling communities to build wealth through home ownership and investments.</p>
<p>3. Pursue financial independence through trust funds, community investments, and partnerships that reduce reliance on federal and provincial funds.</p>	<p>3. Align local housing and land policies with the Declaration Act.</p>	<p>3. Update housing policies and bylaws to reflect current realities, including the high cost of materials and labour shortages, especially in remote areas.</p>	<p>3. Include First Nations voices in every funding and policy decision, "nothing for us without us".</p>
<p>4. Access and work with existing programming for land back mechanisms for housing developments on</p>	<p>4. Ensure equitable access to municipal infrastructure (such as water and sewer) for nearby First Nations</p>	<p>4. Prioritize infrastructure readiness by investing in water, sewer, power, etc. to support housing development,</p>	<p>4. Move from short-term proposal-based funding to an investment-style funding that supports First Nations-led</p>

APPENDIX

First Nations	Local Government/ Municipalities	Provincial Government	Federal Government
land off reserve.	communities.	especially in northern BC.	initiatives, governance, and transfer readiness.
5. Develop community engagement and communication strategies, social media, home visits, and community events to connect with members and foster trust.		5. Develop ISC integrated support frameworks that address First Nations homelessness and support at-risk youth, women, and families, including those transitioning from care.	5. Provide seed funding for pre-development and planning to help communities reach 'shovel readiness' and reduce risk.
6. Improve access to training opportunities for housing managers.		6. Address housing affordability by implementing protective policies and taxes to prioritize communities first.	6. Expand access to First Nations Fiscal Management Act tools to help finance housing and infrastructure projects.
7. Support youth and new renters with education on maintenance and tenancy to help build a foundation that leads to home ownership and stability.		7. Support local UN Declaration implementation by providing resources, tools, and sustained funding to help local governments and First Nations put reconciliation into practice.	7. Simplify application and approval processes, enabling communities to engage more easily and build capacity to manage projects locally.
8. Continue to practice "nothing for us, without us",			8. Ensure early and direct First Nations participation in the

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moving towards housing decision-making power.			design and governance of Build Canada Homes and adopt a First Nations lens in defining “affordable housing,” recognizing regional differences.







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