

Housing

The igloo is an iconic image of Inuit and the Arctic and was the principal type of housing for Inuit until the 1950's. Recognizing the risk of winter blizzards, igloo building remains an important skill taught to younger generations. Yet, within the communities, wood framed houses are the predominant housing choice and, since the creation of Nunavut ten years ago, decent housing for all residents of Nunavut remains a fundamental priority of the Government.

Nunavut Housing Trust

Public housing, or social housing, provided by the Government of Nunavut (GN) through the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC), houses half of Nunavut's residents. As the territory's population grows, there is significant pressure put on the existing housing units. In some cases, extended families of up to 12 individuals reside under a single roof, and health and education outcomes are negatively affected by overcrowding.

To solve this situation, a Ten-Year Inuit Housing Action Plan was published in 2004 and submitted to the Government of

and social aspect of creating decent housing, played an invaluable role in setting priorities for the Nunavut Housing Trust (NHT) and the funding secured enables NHC to work towards fully achieving its fair housing mission for all Nunavummiut.



Building Capacity

Building houses and infrastructure in Nunavut is an excellent economic, training and

apprenticeship opportunity. There is much construction work to be done and, to an ever-increasing degree, it is being done by Nunavummiut. The Nunavut Housing Trust (NHT), combined with Training Programs through Nunavut Arctic College, has so far created training and employment opportunities for more than 50 Apprentices in 20 Nunavut communities. The NHC has achieved more than 60% Inuit involvement on NHT construction sites by requiring contractors to keep nine-hour work days and by offering training. The creation of construction jobs is a local economic stimulant that supports

Canada. The Action Plan was based on consultations with communities in every corner of Nunavut, and was a joint effort of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the NHC. It was instrumental in securing \$200 million in Nunavut Housing Trust funds from the Government of Canada for affordable public and social housing across the entire Territory. The funding was allocated over a three-year period and houses continue to be built. In total, more than 725 units will be added to the communities. In-depth community consultations beforehand, on every logistical



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self-reliance within
Nunavut communities.
Building local capacity will also allow communities to maintain the homes into the future.

Increasing Homeownership

Increasing homeownership in Nunavut is yet another solution to reducing overcrowding, as one family moving out of public or staff housing frees space for another family. As such, improvements have been made to Homeownership Programs in Nunavut to encourage home ownership. Income guidelines were changed and levels of assistance were enhanced in order to assist more Nunavummiut to become eligible. Recommendations from communities and clients across the Territory, directed through Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) field staff, have led to increased access to homeownership for Nunavummiut and resulted in greater retention of staff.

Award Winning Design

Inuit continue to host extended families for gatherings in their



homes and to harvest country food to feed their families. Recognizing that traditional, southern home designs do not adequately meet these needs, the Nunavut Housing Corporation designed a five-plex unit for use in new public housing construction. The kitchen and living room are wide open spaces to accommodate visiting family. There is a shared space for residents to prepare and butcher caribou, seal and other country foods and cupboards in the kitchen accommodate large cooking pots. These changes, plus increased energy efficiency, resulted in the design winning the Canada Mortgage and Housing

Corporation's award for Best Practices in Affordable Housing.

Energy Conservation

Nunavummiut have always paid extraordinary attention to energy conservation in their homes to protect themselves and their families. Nowadays this thinking extends to protecting the planet too. Delivery of energy efficient homes is therefore a priority of the Nunavut Housing Corp-

oration (NHC), as it must be for everybody. Toward this commonsense goal, with economic and environmental benefits, the Government of Nunavut (GN) introduced the Homeowner Energy Efficiency Rebate Program, then added energy enhancements to the Home Repair Program. These practical actions represent important savings in energy consumption throughout the Territory and encourage energy efficiency among homeowners respect unilingual Inuit and improve their access to services, to reverse the language shift among our young people, and to strengthen the use of the Inuit Language by all Nunavummiut.