

Equity + Inclusion = Pathways to
Belonging

25 Years of Leading Change

2020-2021 ACTIVITIES
AND ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT



ABORIGINAL HOUSING
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION



"As an Indigenous agency, AHMA brings a cultural lens to our relationship with members. We recognize residential schools, the sixties scoop, and consequences of colonization have caused the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. We aim to reclaim self-determination through culturally appropriate housing that honors Indigenous traditions."

AHMA CEO Margaret Pfoh



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Photos opposite and this page: Connie Mah

OUR MISSION
 Lead and advance the housing rights for all Indigenous peoples living in British Columbia

OUR VISION
 A globally recognized leader in Indigenous housing solutions across the housing spectrum

OUR VALUES
Responsive – Valuing a responsive working culture, which is relationship-centered and collaborative in its approach

Capacity building – Empowering our stakeholders with self-sufficiency and visionary practices

Holistic – Honoring diversity, partnership and growth

Innovative – Striving for innovation through flexibility, entrepreneurship, and creativity (while honoring our experience)

Respect – Respecting our stakeholders through trust, reliability and accountability

Advocacy – Advancing the quality of housing for the collective interests of our communities

We raise our hands up to the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nation people for allowing us to operate and live in their traditional territory.

Hearing Indigenous VOICES



“I have half a pancreas and no spleen or gall bladder, a painful congenital birth defect. When I moved to Vernon with my five-year-old daughter over 20 years ago, we rented a dark basement suite with drug dealers living next door. After paying rent, I had \$200 left for food each month. The situation was so stressful I was in hospital every month for pain control. So I put our names in for a new VNHS building. We drove by and watched our apartment being built each week, which gave us the courage to keep moving forward. **We feel safe here, our neighbours are wonderful, and the rent is so reasonable**, I have a small savings account for the first time in my life. I feel protected by the Elders in the society. Karen [VNHS Executive Director] has never let me down. After a fire in our apartment six years ago, she found us a place in another building. When I go to tenant events, I feel so loved by my people.”

Kat, tenant, Vernon Native Housing Society (VNHS)

“I was seven years old when I went to residential school. When my dad passed, mom asked if I wanted to stay in school and I said no, I didn’t like it. My family came from Alberta and there were 11 of us kids. Now we’re just two, me and my sister in Vancouver. I moved away from Vancouver in 2011, because it was too crowded, and came to Vernon. I call it Vernon town, even though it’s a city. **I like it here; people are friendly and always talk nicely to me.** I go to the Elders group at the Friendship Centre every week and they’re teaching us how to can food right now. Last year, my granddaughter moved here and lives above me on the next floor. She drives with me to Calgary because I can’t go back and forth on my own anymore, and we went together in July when my sister passed. I was always alone before and now I’m getting old, she wants to help support me.”

Elder Inez Baptiste, tenant, Vernon Native Housing Society

“AHMA decided to sell this house in 2018. I love this property and didn’t want to let it go. We’re just 10 minutes from downtown Williams Lake, but it’s like country living. I was waiting to get residential day school money for my down payment, so AHMA postponed the sale date, but I still had challenges with the financing. Three of my kids still live with me and were so sad when I initially told them we had to move. But we purchased the place and my oldest daughter started crying when she found out we don’t ever have to move again. **I wanted this sense of stability for my children and for their future**, if they want to come home to stay or visit me. My children loved the big yard when they were young and now my grandchildren can too. Everything fell into place like it was meant to be. It’s awesome.”

Dallas, a new homeowner in Williams Lake, who recently purchased a Rural Native Housing home she had rented from AHMA for almost 10 years

“I decided to move to BC in 2015, so I transferred from the University of Manitoba to UBC and camped on my way here. A woman at the UBC Aboriginal Centre suggested I call Vernon Native Housing Society to find a place to live. I got my first apartment in June 2016; then moved to a new VNHS building last year. My home is quiet and affordable, and I have a nice view outside my window. One of the prettiest lakes in the world, Kalamalka Lake, is not far away. The railway beside the lake was replaced with a bike path, and **I like to ride my wheelchair along the lakeshore.**”

Maurice, tenant, Vernon Native Housing Society

“Moving in here last December was synchronistic. I was renting a basement suite from a friend who decided to sell her home and I thought, ‘Oh no, I can’t afford regular rent prices.’ I found out on a Sunday and put my name in for subsidized housing on Monday, thinking the wait might be a couple of years. But a suite was available and I got it, like a little blessing. It’s lovely, a fresh new place. I work at the school district and get laid off every spring break, summer and Christmas, which is really hard, so having affordable rent makes a huge difference. I wanted to be near nature and have a pond outside, so I can sit on the deck and watch the snow or see buds growing on the trees. **It’s very peaceful. I love my place.**”

Sandra, tenant, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society



MESSAGE

from Our President & Chief Executive Officer

The Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA) is celebrating our 25th year of supporting affordable housing created for Indigenous, by Indigenous people. We are proud of our members' success in serving Urban Indigenous people in BC.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, AHMA has expanded our services in the past year and is leading the way for members and government with a new Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy (URNIHS) in BC.



Gary Wilson
President,
Board of Directors

Margaret Pfoh
Chief Executive
Officer



AHMA is Leading Urban Indigenous Housing

"AHMA is arguably Canada's foremost subject matter expert on urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing," says **Margaret Pfoh**, AHMA's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). "We were hopeful the federal government would take action on a National Urban Indigenous Housing Strategy, as mandated following the 2019 election, but two years later, there's been no progress."

"As a result, AHMA's Board decided to invest our own funding to create a *BC Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy*, for Indigenous, by Indigenous, rather than wait for government to take action," adds **Gary Wilson**, President of the AHMA Board of Directors. "Ultimately, our goal is for this strategy to be considered for federal funding and as a model for other provinces."

"We constantly have to educate the government and public on how Urban Indigenous people differ from First Nations, Métis and Inuit," says Margaret. "More than 80% of Indigenous people live off-nation and are not captured in these three groups governments focus on. We represent that off-nation majority. Urban Indigenous housing providers came together to create AHMA, because we recognized the gap with the dispossession of our people from their sense of belonging in traditional communities. Urban Indigenous people want to feel the safety of belonging; our membership has provided affordable, supportive housing communities for them for 50-plus years."

25 YEARS

Expanding AHMA's Capacity

AHMA has grown substantially in the last year, with 13 new Indigenous housing providers joining as members. We have hired new staff in Housing Operations and Asset Strategies to expand our support and advocacy for our members and communities. We have three interns working with us, two in Communications and one in Asset Strategies. And we are developing a new Indigenous Operations Framework to guide AHMA's housing operations from a cultural context.

"We're also excited about a new partnership with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the first outside our traditional funding from BC Housing," says Margaret. "CMHC is providing \$250,000 for AHMA to create a new Housing Internship for Indigenous Youth program. We're optimistic this program will pave the way for additional agreements with the federal government."

AHMA will manage the program, with 20 internship positions for our members in housing-related work—office positions, maintenance, construction, client counseling, marketing or management. Our goal is to give Indigenous youth opportunities that provide work experience and skills training to help improve housing in their communities and empower them to pursue longer-term employment in the housing sector.

"We never detract from governments' responsibility to address the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit. But Urban Indigenous people must have an equal seat at the table."

"We will continue to lobby provincial and federal governments to include this fourth stream, Urban Indigenous people, in planning, budgeting, decision making, and allocating Indigenous housing," says Gary. "First Nation leaders are limited in their capacity to help those who live away from home. AHMA bridges the gap."

Indigenous Advisory Council

AHMA has established an Indigenous Advisory Council to help us develop the new strategy. We have a diverse, inclusive group of housing leaders on the council, representing the First Nations Housing and Infrastructure Council (FNHIC), Métis Nation BC, BC Housing, Coastal First Nations, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Cariboo Friendship Centre, First Nations Health Authority, BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA), and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

Building Board To Board Priorities

"We want to recognize and honour the life and many accomplishments of **Katherine McParland**, former BC Housing Board member and founder of A Way Home Kamloops, who passed away in December 2020," says Gary.

"AHMA and BC Housing's Boards started meeting regularly to strengthen our relationship in the last year. Our Board's priority is to advocate on behalf of our members and lobby the provincial and federal governments to give AHMA equal status to BC Housing to ensure members are given the same consideration as their provincial counterparts.

"In addition to strengthening our relationship with BC Housing, the Board still wants to work towards a relationship protocol agreement with the provincial government to ensure our members are given the due respect they deserve.

"We are also targeting the DRIPA* consultation as a key priority to work on together, so Urban Indigenous leaders are at the table working on reconciliation strategies with BC Housing."

"At present, DRIPA looks to First Nations and Métis to speak for Urban Indigenous and they can't," adds Margaret. "I'm optimistic we can create new pathways to reconciliation for Urban Indigenous with AHMA's Board working at an embedded level with BC Housing."

* *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, Bill 41, legislation to harmonize BC laws with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.*

Indigenous Research Relationships

Municipal Housing Study

“We are always interested in building relationships to learn from and influence other organizations,” says Margaret. “This year, we participated in an important research study with the University of BC (UBC), examining municipal responses to urban Indigenous housing needs in BC.”

With so many Indigenous people living in urban centres and First Nation communities nearby, municipalities are well positioned to respond to Urban Indigenous housing needs. But little information was available on municipal responses to these needs. AHMA partnered with the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning to investigate if and how municipalities in BC currently acknowledge or address Urban Indigenous housing needs in Official Community Plans (OCPs) and local housing strategies.

The report, *Urban Indigenous Housing in BC: Municipal response through housing policies and plans*, found:

- Although there is a desire to engage in reconciliation efforts, most municipalities—90%—do not acknowledge or address Urban Indigenous housing needs in their OCPs or housing strategies
- A lack of financial and human resources, ambiguity over whether Indigenous housing needs are distinct, and uncertainty around the role and jurisdiction of municipal governments are barriers to addressing Urban Indigenous housing needs

“We are calling on the Union of BC Municipalities to hold local governments accountable for sharing data on their Indigenous populations, housing needs and homelessness in their communities,” says Margaret. “This study lays the groundwork to identify Indigenous-led and informed approaches to municipal housing policy, incentives and actions.”

Joining Forces with Métis Nation BC

“We’re delighted the Métis Nation BC (MNBC) joined AHMA this year and signed a letter of support for us. We wanted to build a stronger relationship with the organization, given our Métis membership and the large population of Métis people in the province.

“Daniel Fontaine, CEO of Métis Nation BC, agreed to work together and strengthen our impact in areas of mutual benefit like data sharing. MNBC gathers Métis specific data; AHMA does not yet have such data to help build the case for new Métis housing.”

Surrey Indigenous Housing Solutions Lab

AHMA also participates in Skookum Lab’s Housing Solutions Lab, convened by the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee and funded by CMHC. Surrey is home to the largest Indigenous community in BC, but has one of the highest rates of Indigenous children and youth poverty in western Canada. The Lab is assessing the needs and aspirations for Indigenous housing in Surrey.

Pathways To Belonging

“It’s been a difficult year with the COVID pandemic,” notes Gary. “I want to acknowledge and thank our leadership at AHMA and our membership for their heroic efforts to continue the good work in the face of the pandemic. My deepest respect goes to our members who put in long hours to make sure tenants and staff were safe. They are our frontline heroes and we need to honour them.

“I want to give a shout out to our **Náča?mat Leləḥ** Committee members, who are the eyes, ears and heart of the members, and bring what they hear at the grassroots level forward to the Board.

“And I would like to acknowledge my fellow Board members for their support and diligence in facing the challenges of the past year. My term is winding up. I have found the last three years on the Board inspiring, and it’s been an honour to sit at the table. It would be my pleasure to continue on the Board if the members so wish.”

“AHMA’s growth and priorities are founded on our members’ direction to build our capacity to be more responsive to them,” says Margaret. “We have made impressive progress and the next step of AHMA’s evolution will also reflect what our members need. We will continue to advance, based on the *Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy* we’re creating for BC.

“AHMA has laid the pathway to the solution for Urban Indigenous peoples: an equal seat at the table for Urban Indigenous leaders.”

Chet kw’emantumiyap

(In Squamish, “We are thankful to you all”)



Margaret Pfoh
Chief Executive
Officer



Gary Wilson
President,
Board of Directors

Speaking Out

CEO Margaret Pfoh has been speaking out to raise awareness of For Indigenous, By Indigenous as the foundation for reconciliation, with an equal voice at decision making and allocation tables:

- Joint COVID-19 Planning with BCNPHA and Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (CHF BC)
- Canadian Urban Institute Panel: Cities in the Time of COVID-19
- AHMA’s Spring Gathering
- Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children: Expert Working Group
- Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres: Urban Indigenous Housing
- City of Vancouver: Non-Profit Housing Roundtable with Mayor Kennedy Stewart
- AHMA Member Regional Gatherings
- Canadian Urban Institute: Panelist & Partner for Housing Week
- CHRA Housing on the Hill
- City of Surrey – Housing Leadership Circle
- Community Housing Transformation Centre: Board of Directors Meeting & Strategic Reflection on Sector Transformation
- BCNPHA Housing Central Conference
- Expert Working Group: Recognizing Critical Expertise in Gender-based Work
- HUMA* Standing Committee Presentation: Report on Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing, presented to the Parliament of Canada

* House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities

L-R: Thom Armstrong, CHF BC CEO, Jill Atkey, BCNPHA CEO, and Margaret Pfoh, AHMA CEO, at the Housing Central Conference

HUMA Standing Committee Recommendation:

That the Government of Canada and other orders of government (provincial, territorial and municipal) work with Indigenous peoples, governments, communities, and organizations to co-develop an Urban, Rural, and Northern Housing Centre founded on the “For Indigenous By Indigenous” principle and an urban, rural, and northern Indigenous housing strategy to realize the housing rights of Indigenous peoples living in urban, rural, remote, and northern areas, and that sustainable, sufficient, and long-term funding be allocated to support this centre.

INDIGENOUS HOUSING: THE DIRECTION HOME, HUMA Report



Elder Shane Point from the Musqueam Indian Band, Housing Central

Recognizing Our History

Janice's Story

In November 2020, **Elder Janice M. August** moved into an affordable housing development run by Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society in Kelowna. Her one-bedroom apartment is her refuge, a safe place that's her own.

"I thought I had dealt with all my issues concerning roman catholic school," says Janice. "But when I heard about the remains of 215 children found on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School, the news brought up terrible memories of my time there. Memories that were shoved down so far. I fell apart hearing that news. This battle against us was about the land; it's why they tried to get rid of us and killed so many of our children.

"I can hear the priest and nuns' voices who took my brothers and sister. The priest looked at me and said, 'Let's take her.' I was excited to join my brothers and sister because now I was a big girl. I didn't know the abuse that was coming when I got to that school. What would a five-year-old know?

"The priests and nuns do what they want with you, you have no say. The priest told the nun to make sure no one touches her. He just meant he wanted me first. I didn't understand what the words meant. Until you're older and start dealing with these issues; then I understood.

"In the roman catholic school, we were stripped from our families. The priests and nuns told me I better get used to it there because mom didn't want me at all. I wanted my mom, but grew up believing the lie, and I know it broke her heart that I made it rough for her.

"I used to get slapped, beaten up. If you didn't like the food, they would hit you so hard your head hit the plate of food or smacked the table. They taught us to fight amongst ourselves, to poke fun at each other. How dare they act so righteous! They called us all kinds of nasty names. Everything they did to us they called discipline.

"It's hard to have all these things done to you and be trained not to stand up for yourself. At the age of 14, I heard drinking could kill you, so I took to it. I was sleeping under bushes. Many times, some guy would wake me up and offer to feed me at McDonald's, then drive me into the wilderness for sex and drive me back. I lived like that on the streets until I got pregnant. I had to grow up.

"Drinking didn't kill me, so I thought I better start learning how to live. I went to Alcoholics Anonymous. I wanted so badly to change my life from everything falling apart and being on the streets, just to know how to live a good life, so I did. I have 41 years of sobriety since October 17, 1980.

"I see the next generation doing better for the most part. I have two daughters and still see the damage from the roman catholic era. For the first few years, I was beating my daughters, thinking I was disciplining them like the nuns and priests did. It hurt me every time I hurt my daughters. I had to start teaching myself how to be a mom.

"I shook hands with my daughters in agreement that we weren't going to fight, we would talk instead.

"I realized children like to play so I made everything I did with my daughters into a game—picking up toys, cleaning, setting the table for dinner. I wanted no bad memories for my girls.

"I started going to counselling in 1990. I had 27 years of learning how to love and live life with my partner, George, who took my daughters as his own, along with his children.

"Today, my oldest daughter is so thoughtful, calls, comes to pick me up, treats me out together. My youngest, it pains me to see her struggles. Someday, I would love to rekindle our mother-daughter relationship.

"I called Rhonda [Worthington, Ki-Low-Na Property Manager] last fall, we looked at this place, and she gave me the key. My family and friends helped move me in.

"I am a true Christian. Through the roman catholic experience, I have learned they are counterfeit to Christianity, cowards abusing children in every way possible. I have learned the true God is loving, patient, compassionate, faithful, giving. God has shown me there are good people. I will accept you in my life if you add to it."

Elder Janice August in 1992 with her then partner, George, during "the best years of my life. He truly loved me, my daughters and my grandchildren."



I wanted so badly to change my life from everything falling apart and being on the streets, just to know how to live a good life, so I did.





AHMA Stands With Our Communities

The Aboriginal Housing Management Association team shares our sorrow and love for the lost children found at former residential schools: 200 children at the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School by the Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc First Nation; 751 unmarked graves in a cemetery near the former Marieval Indian Residential School by the Cowessess First Nation; remains of 182 people at the former St Eugene's Mission School by the Lower Kootenay Band; 160 undocumented and unmarked graves near the former Kuper Island Indian Residential School by the Penelakut Tribe; and surely more to come.

We stand as part of the Indigenous community to honour these lost ones in our hearts; we commit to not allowing their deaths to be forgotten. We support the work of communities to bring justice for all the stolen children, their families and communities.

We are also deeply grateful for the resilience of survivors. We hold space in our hearts to honour and respect survivors, intergenerational survivors and their communities.



Photo: Connie Mehn

Desiree Simeon, caretaker and curator of the memorial at the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery

HELPLINES for support with resurfacing trauma:

Kuu-us Crisis Line

ADULTS: 250-723-4050

YOUTH: 250-723-2040

1-800-588-8719

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25th Anniversary

Indigenous Housing Highlights

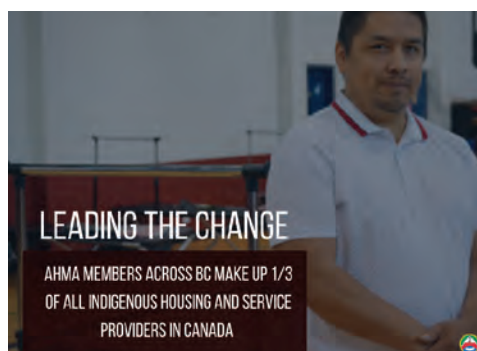
Housing Operations' Accomplishments

BC Urban, Rural & Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy

AHMA's leaders decided to create the *Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy* to support the majority of Indigenous people who live off-nation in BC.

"We awarded a contract to Indigenuity Consulting in October 2020 to help us develop the strategy," says AHMA Director of Public Affairs **Nizar Laarif**. "We gathered input from participants at the Housing Central Indigenous Caucus in November, followed by an extensive engagement process focused primarily on our members."

We will share the first draft at AHMA's Annual General Meeting on September 15, 2021, to get members' feedback, and then launch the strategy at the Housing Central Conference in December.



The new strategy will:

- Define who urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing and service providers are and measure their social and economic impact in supporting Indigenous peoples
- Identify current challenges in delivering urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing programs and propose solutions
- Conduct an assessment of urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing needs in BC
- Provide a 10-year plan to respond to these needs (fixing existing stock, building new units and creating new housing programs)
- Produce an implementation plan identifying the role of AHMA, member organizations, funders and partners
- Assess and build capacity for AHMA members in housing-related domains
- Identify key partners to support implementation (e.g., municipalities, provincial and federal elected officials, other Indigenous organizations)
- Develop a system to monitor and evaluate the strategy's success
- Measure the return on investment in Indigenous housing in government tax revenues and social returns
- Bridge the gap between on and off-nation housing

"Urban Indigenous people are often under-considered and underserved in various programs, and social housing is one area where the need is much greater than the supply. We will establish the evidence of need and supply shortages in the BC Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy. We're also looking at this issue in the context of reconciliation. Housing is the foundation that keeps families and communities together and provides the security and stability that enable people to further their education, job training and skills. Evidence shows housing is an essential social determinant of health. Housing run by and for Urban Indigenous peoples creates communities strengthened by Indigenous cultures and traditions, which is important for physical, mental and spiritual well being in urban settings where Indigenous people are often isolated from their cultural practices and sense of community."

Cheryl Brooks, President, Indigenuity Consulting Group

Impact of BC's Indigenous Housing Providers

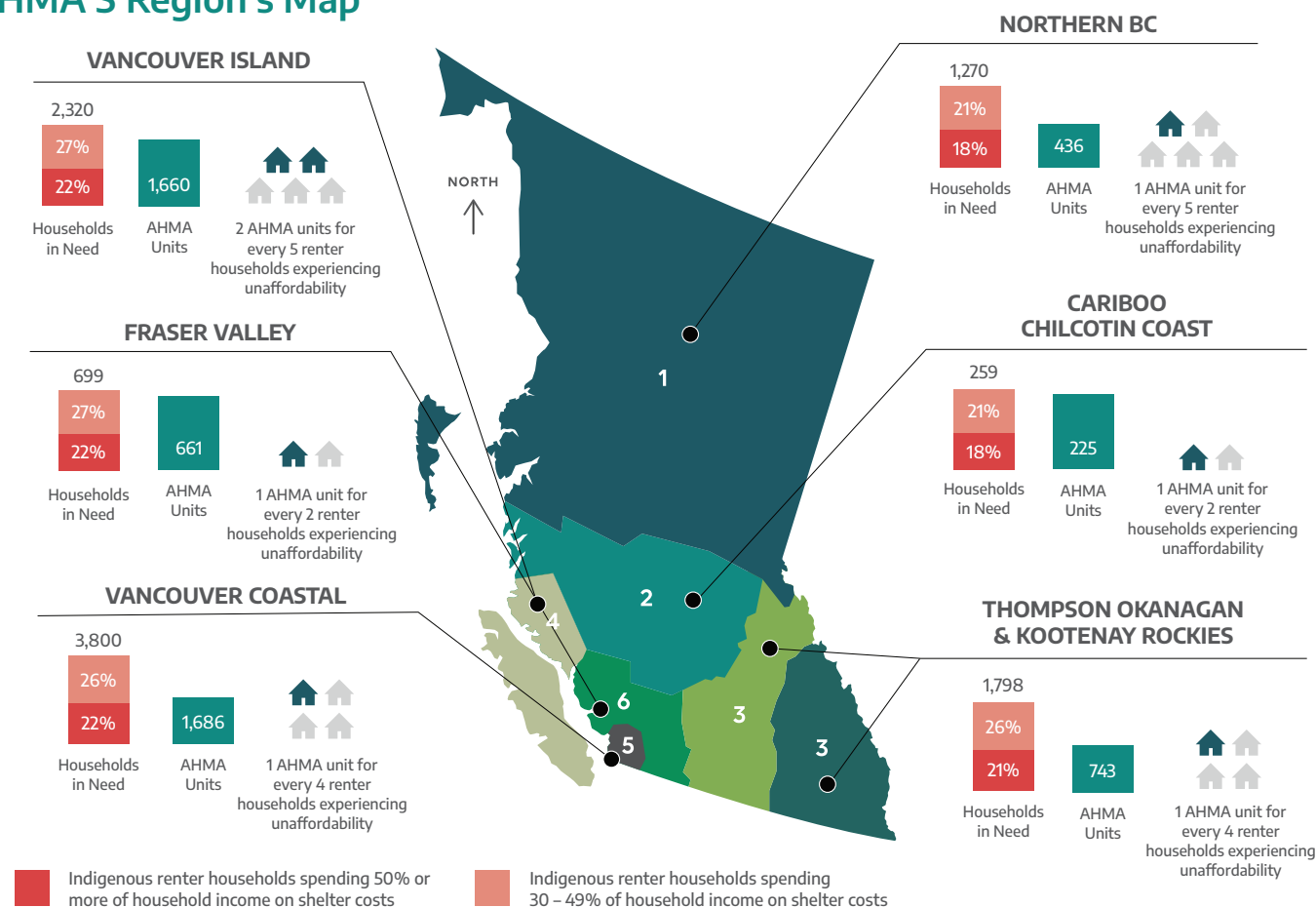
To help us prepare the *BC Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy*, AHMA needed data on the socioeconomic impact of our members' housing assets across the province. We hired Urban Matters in 2020 to conduct an environmental scan.

The findings? AHMA's portfolio and partnerships have resulted in significant socioeconomic benefits for our members, communities and the entire province:

- In addition to members served and units built, AHMA's programs and services have improved quality of life for individuals and created opportunities for people to overcome barriers like homelessness, substance use, mental health issues, discrimination and systemic racism
- The positive social impacts have also increased government savings and revenues by wide margins
- By combining savings and revenue benefits to government with spinoff activity in communities, an estimated return of \$2.30 is achieved for every \$1 spent by government on AHMA subsidized housing programs
- The true number is likely to exceed \$3 with spinoffs on spending and government savings, as people who were homeless returned to employment or those on income assistance transitioned into employment after moving into subsidized housing

Kudos to all the AHMA housing providers who engaged in the survey and interview sessions with Urban Matters!

AHMA'S Region's Map





Household Income Spent on Housing

In BC, Indigenous renters make up only 7% of all renter households. But the rate of core housing need is much higher for Indigenous households than for non-Indigenous ones:

- Almost half (46%) of Indigenous renter households spend 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities
- 21% of Indigenous renter households spend 50% or more of their income*
- Indigenous households spending 30% or more of income are living in precarious situations with little income left to cover other expenses
- Compared to non-Indigenous households, Indigenous households are also more likely to live in overcrowded conditions or homes needing repairs
- Need is most pronounced in single adults, lone parent or caregiver families, and Elders living alone, groups at the top of waitlists across AHMA regions

Additional funding and better housing policies are needed to address these housing challenges.

* Canadian Rental Housing Index, from 2016 Statistics Canada long-form census

COVID Rent Supplement Program

AHMA worked closely with BC Housing to implement the Temporary Rental Supplement Program so Indigenous housing providers who needed support received this funding. From April to August 2020, landlords could obtain temporary support towards rent payments for low and moderate-income renters who lost income due to COVID-19. Our team called AHMA members across the province to ensure they had access to the rent supplements, so none of their tenants would go homeless.

AHMA's Red Dress Campaign

AHMA wanted to support the National Day of Awareness of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), also known as Red Dress Day. We hired artist **Satsi Naziel** to design a red dress for AHMA to print on t-shirts we gave staff and sent to all our partners to wear on MMIWG Day. We also posted the design on social media to share our support.

Satsi's design style is BC First Nations, with housing across the centre band to represent our connection to the housing industry.



New Indigenous Housing

AHMA participated as a reviewer in selecting new projects through the Community Housing Fund and Indigenous Housing Fund programs and handles ongoing operational support.

We have **2,561 new units** in the works:

- 199 units – Aboriginal Housing Society of Prince George
- 209 units – Aboriginal Land Trust Society
- 39 units – Aqanttanam Housing Society
- 35 units – Citaapi Mahtii Housing Society
- 26 units – Dakelh & Quesnel Community Housing Society
- 31 units – Dze L Kant Friendship Centre Society
- 5 units – Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- 24 units – Gwa'sala-Nakwaxda'Xw Nation
- 208 units – Kekinow Native Housing Society
- 70 units – Lax Kw'alaams Waap Housing Society
- 26 units – Lu'ma Native Housing Society
- 603 units – M'akola Housing Society
- 119 units – Mamele'awt Qweesome Housing Society
- 30 units – Mount Currie Village Rental Housing Project
- 47 units – Nicola Native Lodge Society
- 12 units – Nikihk Management & Community Development Society
- 45 units – Okanagan Metis & Aboriginal Housing Society
- 78 units – Prince Rupert Indigenous Housing Society
- 28 units – Salish Sea Housing Society
- 62 units – Seyem Qwantlen Housing Society
- 24 units – The Crossing Place Housing Society
- 36 units – Tsawwassen First Nation
- 120 units – Urban Native Youth Association
- 162 units – Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society
- 152 units – Vancouver Native Housing Society
- 35 units – Vernon Native Housing Society
- 75 units – Wachiay Friendship Centre
- 61 units – Westcoast Native Health Care Society

"We need to recognize the long legacy of colonization and genocide in this country has adversely impacted Indigenous peoples in BC, who experience systemic disadvantages. We know stable housing is the cornerstone to greater inclusion, family stability, and better long-term health outcomes. This work tells us stronger support for Indigenous, by Indigenous peoples in BC will scale the impact AHMA and its members are already having."

Urban Matters Community Housing Consultant **Matt Thomson**

Creating New Capacities

AHMA signed a five-year Indigenous Social Housing Management Agreement (ISHMA) with BC Housing in 2019. Since then, we are seeing a 77% increase in units.



Within ISHMA, our work includes:

- Supporting the management and development of culturally appropriate, quality, affordable housing for Indigenous people in BC. When our operations team reviews and approves budgets, we are coming from this position.
- Administering housing programs under contract with funding authorities. Our housing operations group is designed to fulfill this role and integrate outputs from these other three points.
- Participating in housing policy and program development with all levels of government. We have a role in supporting public policy that is for Indigenous, by Indigenous.
- Providing representation, leadership, and support for managing and delivering quality, affordable housing for Indigenous people in BC. We take space at government tables and ensure the shared principle of culturally safe, affordable housing is on the table.

Indigenous housing providers in BC are expanding services to address the intersection of housing with poverty, discrimination, gender, family violence, childcare, substance use, and health equity. Meaningful cultural engagement underpins all their efforts.

Indigenous cultural safety is also the keystone to enable supportive housing initiatives within non-Indigenous housing providers.

AHMA plays an important role in supporting members to increase capacity for navigating the Indigenous housing landscape, from mobilizing funds to public policy, research, evaluation, and connections to Indigenous ways of knowing in how we engage.

AHMA is developing an Indigenous Operations Framework and an Indigenous Training Framework (see Asset Strategies training on page 19). The framework will embed Indigenous cultural ways of knowing and connection to the land in our reciprocal relationships with members. We will also develop an assessment tool to measure the impact of cultural safety.

We have several new positions in operations to support this work, some onboard and a few more to come, including a:

- Revitalization Manager
- Supportive Housing Specialist
- Supportive Housing Policy Analyst
- Senior Health Equity Policy Analyst
- Training and Capacity Policy Analyst
- Operations Team Assistant

AHMA Operations Director **Celeste Hayward** is leading her team in creating the new framework to bring an Indigenous lens and cultural connections to how we work with members: “We want to put relationships at the centre of reciprocity, creating a cultural understanding of Urban Indigenous housing in all we do, from conversations to operational reviews. We’re working with five members and two Elders to help us revamp our policies and procedures to reflect this new approach.”

Kudos to the operations team—Manager of Housing Operations **Alexandra Christian**, Portfolio Managers **Emelia Cheese**, **Katrina Cote**, **Sandra Eatmon**, **Krista Pilz** and **Debra Webber**, and Housing Operations Coordinator **Monica Rao**. And thanks to AHMA Financial Specialist **Sue Lee** and Financial Client Services **Cindy Williams**, who support the operations team with training for Portfolio Managers in working with members’ financial statements, budgets and subsidies.

Relationship Building

BCNPHA Indigenous Caucus – AHMA became a sponsor and co-host of the Housing Central Conference in 2017 and took the lead in designing the Indigenous Caucus. Our 2020 Indigenous Caucus sought feedback on the *Urban, Rural & Northern Housing Strategy* we’re developing. With more than 150 participants, the event was a great forum for community engagement.

In the last couple of years, we’ve noticed a growing interest from non-Indigenous stakeholders in attending the Indigenous Caucus. Many are non-Indigenous housing providers who house Indigenous tenants, as well as government officials from BC Housing, CMHC and other ministries.

CMHC – AHMA Director of Indigenous Strategic Relations **Cliff Grant** and Director of Public Affairs **Nizar Laarif** meet monthly with CMHC Regional Manager of First Nation Housing **Kim McPeterson** to discuss:

- Pandemic support for groups CMHC funds
- Funding Indigenous programs under the National Housing Strategy
- Types of funding available for AHMA members
- Data on the share of Indigenous funding compared to non-Indigenous funding
- Challenges our members face applying for CMHC funding
- Teaching CMHC about programs our members manage
- Comparison of on and off-nation housing programs

One outcome is the \$250,000 CMHC is giving AHMA to manage a youth internship program for our members. In addition, we are working towards a global agreement with CMHC, similar to the one with BC Housing, where CMHC will devolve management of all newly created Urban Indigenous projects in BC to AHMA.

Canadian Alliance of Non-Profit Housing Associations (CANPHA) – CHRA and a group of provincial non-profit housing associations came together to create this new alliance. CANPHA builds on efforts already underway to better represent the non-profit housing sector in Canada, align messages on topics of national importance, share resources, and initiate projects that leverage contributions and serve a collective need.

CHRA Indigenous Caucus – Our CEO Margaret Pfoh serves as the CHRA Regional Director for BC. The main topic of discussion in the last few years has been advocating for a National Urban Indigenous Housing Strategy.

BC Corrections – We are in early-stage conversations on housing and support programs for Indigenous people coming out of the corrections system.

National NDP Housing Roundtable – Federal NDP Housing Critic Jenny Kwan initiated a National Housing Roundtable in early 2020. About 50 affordable housing sector participants have attended the meetings and AHMA was a presenter at all four. AHMA, BCNPHA and CHF BC took the lead in sending a letter with 40-plus signatures from participants to the Prime Minister calling for a For Indigenous, By Indigenous National Housing Strategy.

Asset Strategies' Accomplishments

Enhancing Our Service Capacity for Members

“Our Asset Strategies team has grown in the last year in response to members requesting technical and strategic support for their housing,” says AHMA Director of Asset Strategies **David Silva**. “**Mae Flanders** moved from operations to become our new Indigenous Energy Advisor, and newcomers **Sara Fralin**, Indigenous Energy Advisor, **Atoine Archie**, Housing Condition Assessor, and **Carlo Vijandre**, Project Manager, also joined us.

“AHMA brings leadership and expertise in asset management to address the housing needs of Indigenous peoples in BC. Our partnership with AHMA helps to strengthen capacity in energy management to create and deliver affordable and culturally safe housing solutions that are also energy efficient and climate resilient.”

Amy Seabrooke, Program Manager, Conservation & Energy Management, BC Hydro

“UBC co-op student **Riley McLeod** is working with us for the summer. I'm always inspired by our team's passion for engaging with our members and enhancing the sustainability of the Indigenous housing portfolio.

“We've been able to grow our capacity and start initiatives thanks to seeking external partnerships with organizations that share mandates to support Urban Indigenous providers: BC Hydro, Fortis BC, Cheakamus Centre (School District 44 – North Vancouver), BC Institute of Technology (BCIT), Fraser Basin Council. Our partners contribute funding we use to support staffing and training to build high performance Indigenous trades capacity.”

Having greater internal capacity has expanded our external capacity building efforts too. Here are some highlights:

Indigenous Youth Home Energy Workshop

To address a gap in our outreach to Indigenous youth, AHMA hosted this virtual workshop with 21 participants from across BC, on and off-nation, in partnership with Fraser Basin Council (FBC) and Indigenous Clean Energy (ICE).

Our goal was to engage Indigenous youth interested in working on home energy efficiency to strengthen capacity in energy conservation.

Our panel of five young Indigenous professionals—ICE Youth Lead Program Manger **Ricky-Lee Watts**, AHMA Asset Data Analyst **Deanna Daniel**, AHMA Portfolio & Development Strategist **Trevor Casey**, Mae Flanders, and Atoine Archie—shared their experiences working in the energy and housing sectors. Witness and graphic recorder **Michelle Buchholz** and **Elder Syexwaliya Ann Whonnock** contributed their wisdom and talent to our event.

“We heard that youth care about sustainable housing and value connections to their community and culture,” says Sara Fralin, who coordinated the event. “Many participants were raised outside of their nation, traditional communities and culture, without a sense of belonging. But they believe a connection to and respect for land is paramount to Indigenous culture and sustainable, culturally appropriate housing is essential for healthy communities.”

Up next? A new Indigenous Youth Energy Efficiency forum on the ICE Network and a second workshop. We hope this is the beginning of a long journey that helps AHMA identify ways to support Indigenous youth.

Indigenous Train-The-Trainer Program

“We're excited about our new Train-the-Trainer pilot,” says AHMA Energy and Sustainability Specialist **Patrick Caraher**. “Currently, there's a shortage of Indigenous energy efficiency specialists, which means non-Indigenous contractors are hired in First Nation communities and by AHMA members. This program will increase the number of Indigenous specialists in the province, which will build capacity in energy-efficient, culturally appropriate construction and building condition assessments and create employment opportunities in Indigenous communities.”

The training combines in-person education through BCIT's Zero Energy Buildings program and virtual training sessions with energy efficiency experts. We have 21 Indigenous participants representing 16 different communities and AHMA members.



Indigenous Youth Home Energy Workshop, May 27, 2021

Michelle Buchholz | CASSYEX CONSULTING

When complete, select participants will facilitate energy efficient building workshops in First Nation communities. We're recording the virtual sessions to make the training more broadly accessible in future.

AHMA Technical Service Advisor **Lance Brommeland** is sharing his knowledge as an educator with the program. AHMA is partnering with BCIT, BC Hydro, FortisBC, and Nuxalk Nation Hereditary Chief and Housing Consultant Richard Hall, who is a member of ISC's Aboriginal Capital Committee of BC and serves on expert advisory groups for FNHC and ICE. Fraser Basin Council manages this project through the First Nations Home EnergySave program.

Indigenous Assessor Capacity Building

We are also building capacity in our sector to assess the conditions of AHMA assets to meet a longstanding need identified by members, through:

- Hiring and training an internal AHMA Housing Condition Assessor, Atoine Archie
- Developing a roster of Indigenous Assessors throughout the province
- Supporting BCIT to imbed Indigenous housing knowledge in their Housing Inspector Program
- Implementing Asset Planner software functionality in data gathering and reporting
- Building capacity to add assessment support services in energy performance, seismic and hazardous materials

New High Performance Tradesperson Course

To address Indigenous gender inequalities in the green building sector, AHMA is developing a high performance building training program to engage Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQIA+ people.

The building and construction workforce is largely dominated by men. Skilled employees in the high performance building sector can be difficult to find, especially in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. This pilot program will enable participants to develop skills that open career pathways in the green building sector and build local community capacity.

“Building a Greener Future Together” will include a hands-on retrofit of a heritage cabin at Cheakamus Centre in Brackendale and interactive online and in-person leadership and skills training. Participants will engage with both Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Elders and industry leaders. The project will build capacity in Indigenous communities and the home building and renovation sectors.

Sara, Patrick and Mae are recruiting students for the course, and AHMA is partnering with BCIT, B Collective Homes, and Cheakamus Foundation for Environmental Learning to offer the training.

Carrigan Tallio, Nuxalkmc First Nation, 2020 Zero Energy Building Course participant



Embedded in New Development

Our Portfolio & Development Strategist **Trevor Casey** is being mentored within BC Housing's Development Services group. Trevor has been taking a lead role on selected new projects with BC Housing since September 2020 to learn the new development process, as a first step in our long-range goal to build AHMA's development capacity.

Trevor is working on three Indigenous-led projects with:

- **Ki-low-na Friendship Society – Tupa Grandmothers Lodge** will provide supportive housing for new mothers at risk of losing their children due to inadequate stable housing. The lodge will have affordable bedroom units with shared bathrooms, kitchen and common spaces. Tupa is grandmother in the traditional language of people in the region; the lodge is called Tupa as an Elder will live there and help teach new mothers how to support their children.
- Ki-low-na is also creating an **affordable daycare facility** next to an Indigenous Housing Fund (IHF) project in Kelowna.
- **Nicola Native Lodge Society** – ~50-unit affordable Indigenous housing project for families and seniors in Merritt, with IHF funding.

“One of the biggest benefits for AHMA has been increased inclusivity with BC Housing,” says Trevor. “We now have monthly development meetings between AHMA operations and BC Housing development services staff.

Trevor continues to provide portfolio planning services, which includes helping members submit funding applications. With this mentorship experience, he also sees the other side of the development process, which enhances AHMA's ability to support the growth of members' housing portfolios.



Photo at top courtesy of Mamek'awt Oweosome Housing Society



Building Allies

In the last year, several partners have engaged the Asset Strategies team to participate in various advisory groups. Meaningful sector engagement has enabled AHMA to gain influence and learn additional best practices to better support our members

Energy Efficiency & Conservation Advisory Group – AHMA participates in this group of energy efficiency professionals who advise FortisBC on building conservation programs.

BC Energy Step Code Council (ESSC) – AHMA recently joined this provincial advisory council to recommend ways to engage and educate the building industry, public, local governments, and Indigenous organizations and communities on implementing the BC Energy Step Code. The code has energy-efficiency standards above the basic BC Building Code.

ESSC Capacity Building and Communications Subcommittee – AHMA is learning about collaboration opportunities, new incentive programs, training activities, public engagement, and resources to support education and outreach on high performance buildings in this group.

BC Centre for Women in the Trades (BCWITT) – AHMA is supporting women in trades by embedding hiring requirements into Capital Renewal Project construction tenders and being the Indigenous Sponsor at BCWITT's annual conference.

BC Community Clean Energy Project Funders Network – The network helps AHMA stay informed about funding and capacity building opportunities, access marketing and outreach materials, and learn about new projects in BC.

Energy Wise Network – AHMA has joined this community of energy leaders run by BC Hydro and FortisBC, which offers resources, access to training, networking opportunities, campaign toolkits, customized coaching, and incentive funding to develop engagement campaigns on energy conservation. About 60 organizations participate and AHMA has connected with Musqueam Nation to share engagement strategies targeting Indigenous communities.

“FortisBC is grateful for work AHMA is doing to advance energy efficiency with Indigenous housing societies and communities. While FortisBC provides financial support for staff, training opportunities and home equipment retrofit improvements, AHMA’s support and relationships have had a remarkable impact in moving this work forward.”

Carol Suhan, Manager, Community Programs, Conservation & Energy Management, FortisBC

Read All About Us!

We launched a new Asset Strategies webpage on AHMA’s website to share resources that support energy-efficient buildings and case studies on our Energy Champions:



Sandy White, Kekuli Centre Property Manager, North Okanagan Friendship Centre

Alanna Cowan, Conayt Housing Facilities Maintenance Manager, Conayt Friendship Centre

Asset Management BC – We are part of this provincial community of practice with First Nations, all levels of government, the private sector, and professional agencies to share lessons learned and best practices in the world of asset management.

Conservation and Energy Management Advisory Committee – AHMA’s energy team sits on this BC Hydro committee, a forum for stakeholders to engage in dialogue with and provide feedback to BC Hydro on issues pertaining to conservation and energy management.

Building Electrification Coalition Leadership Council – We participate in this council, which considers the benefits and challenges of electrifying/ decarbonizing home heating and hot water production, including the impact on energy poverty.

We connect with a broad range of organizations serving on these groups, including the Fraser Basin Council, BC Hydro, Fortis BC, BC Housing, CMHC, Natural Resources Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Western Economic Diversification Canada, New Relationship Trust, Union of BC Municipalities, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Metro Vancouver, BCIT, Camosun College, UBC, First Nations Energy & Mining Council, BCNPHA, Pembina Institute, BC Utilities Commission, Community Energy Association, Canada Green Building Council, City Green, Columbia Basin Trust, and the ministries of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development; Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation; Environment and Climate Change Strategy; Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation; and Municipal Affairs.



Success Story **Nuutsumut Lelum** (All in One House), Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre’s Passive House project—up to 85% more energy efficient compared to typical construction standards—with 25 affordable suites for local urban Indigenous youth, Elders and families



Renewing Member Housing

Our Capital Project Team— Project Coordinator **Connie Mah** and Project Managers **Dave Garcia** and **Carlo Vijandre**—is instrumental in securing renewal funding and handling project management to help members complete these projects.

Newly Initiated Capital Projects in 2020/21

\$6,437,409
million

9
new
projects

150
units

71
new jobs
expected in BC



Seven Sacred Fires Society

Provides a safe environment for up to 12 Indigenous men to live while addressing addiction to help them return to their community and lead productive lives. Our team has led a full building envelope remediation project to repair water damage and put in new windows, insulation and siding.



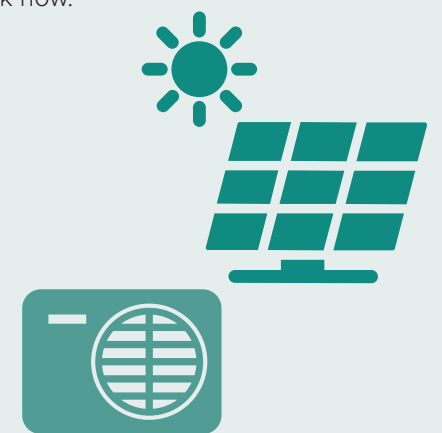
Vancouver Native Housing Society

We're partnering with VNHS to replace the balconies and put in new sliding doors on this building in East Vancouver.



Mamele'awt Qweesome/ To'o Housing Society

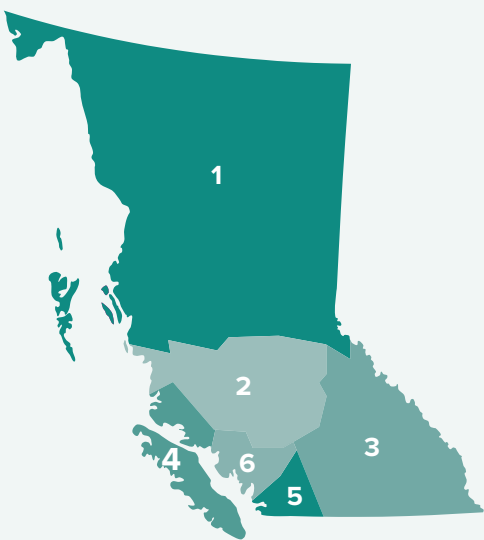
AHMA is also partnering with MQHS to transition the To'o building from gas boilers to electric high efficiency heat pumps and solar power. The upgrade was put on hold due to COVID-19, but is back on track now.



All Active Projects by Region*

REGION	PROJECTS	#UNITS	TOTAL\$
1 Northern BC	2 (1 new/1 ongoing)	9	\$264,650
2 Cariboo Chilcotin	1 ongoing	17	\$340,000
3 Thompson Okanagan	3 (1 new/2 ongoing)	26	\$1,887,000
4 Vancouver Island	13 (4 new/9 ongoing)	290	\$21,677,301
5 Vancouver Coastal	9 (2 new/7 ongoing)	406	\$14,004,890
6 Fraser Valley	5 (1 new/4 ongoing)	107	\$8,344,424
Totals	33	855	\$46,518,265

*This table reflects all currently active projects that span multiple fiscal years, so the totals differ from the 2020/21 Audited Financials Statements



Our Journey: 10-Year Growth*

2012

17
MEMBERS



182%
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

2021

48
MEMBERS

754
UNITS



948%
AHMA UNIT INCREASE

7902
UNITS

AHMA now manages 5,341 units, with another 2,561 new units moving ahead

7
STAFF



300%
STAFF GROWTH

28
STAFF

\$315 million
MANAGED BY AHMA

Since 2012, AHMA has managed almost \$293 million in subsidies and over \$22 million in capital repairs

Glass artwork by Henry Reece (Tsimsian Nation), courtesy of John Nutter Glass Studio; photo by Angela Chan Design

Branding Evolution Integrity, Ethics & Sustainability

AHMA is excited to share our proposed new logo—based on our rebranding consultation with members in the past year—and we look forward to members’ feedback.

“The evolution of AHMA’s brand contributes to sustaining our social impact and serving our vision and mission, while staying true to our values and culture,” says AHMA Media & Communications Manager **Laurie Brownrigg**. “We began consulting members in September 2020. We discussed how AHMA could implement tools, best practices and platforms to best support AHMA members in advocating for their communities.”

During the consultation process, we:

- Created and sent a survey to all members
- Hosted 12 member interviews, two from each AHMA region
- Held a session with directors from BC Housing, BCNPHA, CMHC
- Presented at the AHMA Gathering

Our presentation contained 30 recommendations that reflect our members’ input and will help empower them to achieve their goals. We were able to determine how AHMA’s role is perceived and where members want us to move in the coming years, which will enable us to attain an essential part of our mandate, representing our members’ voices.

We also have two interns working with us in Communications, **Qwuyumaat Elliott**, who is completing her Masters of Community Planning at Vancouver Island University and is a member of the Cowichan Tribes, and **Breanna Willms**, who is completing her Masters of Community and Resource Planning at UBC.

AHMA’s new logo is designed to:

- Modernize and improve our look
- Retain the equity of design elements showing traditional Indigenous housing across Canada—tipi, long house, wigwam, igloo and pit house
- Introduce a more earthy colour palette to signify connection to the land
- Enable more flexibility with a reverse version for dark backgrounds
- Create more readable typography and a more prominent organization name
- Use a typeface that accommodates Canadian Indigenous languages with diacritics for special characters and accents
- Acknowledge AHMA’s 25th anniversary



**Aboriginal Housing
Management Association**
Celebrating 25 Years

Indigenous Housing Success

We share the success stories of three Indigenous housing and service providers in this year's report—Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Child and Community Services, Helping Spirit Lodge Society, and North Okanagan Friendship Centre Society. Like all AHMA providers, these members bring a quiet passion to connecting youth, families and Elders with each other and with their culture. The affordable housing and supportive services they provide create safe spaces for Urban Indigenous people to live, learn and regain resilience.

Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Child and Community Services

“We are primarily a child protection agency and we serve the Métis population of Kamloops,” says Colleen Lucier, Executive Director, Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Child and Community Services (LMO). “The key to preventing children and families from needing child safety involvement is providing supportive wraparound services. An Elders program, support services, and cultural connections are woven through everything we do. As a result, we’ve evolved to a point where child protection is one of our smallest teams.”

Housing & Support Services

Lii Michif Otipemisiwak delivers housing and support services for Métis youth who have aged out of foster care, and works with families and children to help them sustain kinship and cultural connections:

Model of Practice – We’ve developed a model of practice founded in the principle of love and compassion. The first time a worker shows up at someone’s door, they bring food—tea and cookies—a Métis tradition to set a relationship that replaces fear with kindness and caring.

Kikekyelc: A Place of Belonging – Kikekyelc opened in September 2020, as a culturally safe, 31-unit development for Indigenous youth between 16 and 27 years old, who have aged out of foster care and are not well prepared to live independently.

Kikekyelc was seen as a last chance for some of the first youth referred to the program to avoid street life. “It was heartbreaking to see youth who’ve spent most of their life in foster care aging out with such low basic life skills, no connection to their families, and little understanding of what love means,” says Colleen. “Some were so entrenched in drug use and destructive lifestyle choices, we didn’t have the capacity to support them and keep others safe, so we had to transition them out. Youth should not leave the child welfare system so broken.”

Kikekyelc is intended to prevent young people from becoming chronically addicted to drugs or street entrenched. Our philosophy is to help them feel safe, move into life skills development, set life goals, and break the cycle of having children taken into care. We are committed to rebuilding a sense of belonging.

We wanted to co-house youth and Elders but put the plan on hold during the pandemic to protect the Elders, who were onsite during the day instead. Now, with COVID restrictions being lifted, we have one Métis Elder living here and two others moving in September 1st, with room for two more, to ensure youth experience Elders’ teachings in their lives.

New Outreach Service – After having to move some youth out due to behaviours beyond our capacity to support, we decided to create an outreach position to follow them on the street and in shelters to remind them we haven’t forgotten them and still care about them. Despite the hardships experienced, our young people still respond in a respectful way to Elders and traditional practices.





“We will take an Elder and traditional practices like smudging to reach the spirit of those broken children and hopefully get them to a place where they can come back to our housing and services.

Indigenous Youth Services – LMO offers Indigenous life skills, food services, hip hop music, and garden programs at Kikekyelc. Each of the four onsite support workers delivers a program, in addition to providing one-on-one support for the youth. We also have a Kikekyelc drum group planning to travel to powwows when they start up again.

Youth have formed their own tenants’ council and received a \$25,000 grant to develop their own programs. They welcome new tenants moving in and offer peer to peer support. Two of the older tenants are now on the on-call evening watch list, an outcome we did not anticipate, but is going really well.

Four tenants decided to take on the leadership for our food services. Now they take turns cooking, with staff and Elders just observing, and the tenants like it better that way. We’ve learned whatever the youth do is always better than what we can do.

Elders Council – Our council of Métis Elders mentors LMO social workers, family support workers, and caregivers caring for Métis children and youth, in Métis values and traditions.

Michif Early Childhood Development Services – We have two programs—Indigenous Supported Child Development and Indigenous Infant Development—to help parents, service providers and family members give Métis children the best possible start. We offer

one-on-one support and drop-in programs to nurture strong, positive attachments between children and parents.

Child/Youth Mental Health and Family Wellness – Our mental health teams bring a holistic approach to address the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual needs of children, youth and families. We help parents achieve goals that contribute to the safety and well being of their children and family.

Kinship and Community Caregivers – Our Michif Cultural Services Program is committed to providing opportunities for our children and youth, particularly those placed with a caregiver, to develop positive connections to their families, community, and cultural identity as Métis People.

“We think Kikekyelc will transition into full Elders’ housing in 20 years, as we won’t have youth aging out of care by then, which is exactly what we should be working towards.”

Colleen Lucier, LMO Executive Director



Making a Difference

“Our whole reason for existing is to respond to the legacy of trauma our people have endured through colonization and the child welfare system,” says Colleen. “By reclaiming responsibility, we are committing to doing this differently, moving to services that promote healing and do not perpetuate trauma by removing children from families. We work hard to support families who may be struggling so children don’t have to be removed. In a situation where the child is not safe, we try to find aunts, cousins, relatives, so the child can remain with family, and we work with parents so the child can be returned. In some sad stories where this cannot happen, we still welcome the parents and treat them with love and respect.

“We faced a neighbourhood petition against our rezoning application. But now neighbours send fruit and cards, saying how much they appreciate our tenants. At Christmas, we received handmade quilts for every tenant from one neighbour. Another always drops off puzzles they’ve finished. Such kind actions.”

Working with AHMA

“We really appreciate our relationship with AHMA. I work most directly with Sandra [Eatmon, AHMA Portfolio Manager]. She is always friendly, kind and understanding. I felt she shared a genuine interest and passion for our project, and it felt nice on a personal level that she identifies as Métis. AHMA has always been so complimentary and supportive, which makes me feel confident we’re doing something special.”



Traditional Territory Recognition

We are honored to be here and would like to acknowledge that Kamloops is located on the unceded territory of Secwépemc.

Helping Spirit Lodge Society

“We provide a safe place for Indigenous women and children fleeing domestic violence to go, supported by wraparound services,” says **Olivia Jim**, Executive Director, Helping Spirit Lodge Society (HSLs). “We also provide affordable housing for homeless individuals and families. We had our 30th anniversary in 2020 but were unable to hold a celebration due to the pandemic.”

Housing & Support Services

Helping Spirit Lodge Society evolved out of discussions on domestic violence during community forums in 1990:

Spirit Lodge Transition House – HSLs opened this 10-bed first stage transition house in May 1991. We provide immediate short-term housing of up to 30 days for Indigenous women and children who have experienced physical, sexual, and/or emotional abuse in an intimate relationship and are seeking a safe, supportive space to stay. We offer support from non-judgemental Indigenous women, access to food and clothing, and referrals to specialized counsellors for sexual abuse and/or substance use. More than 80,000 women and children have stayed at the lodge to date.

Spirit Way Transition House – We opened this 14-unit second stage residential program on National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21, 2000. Spirit Way provides housing for Indigenous women and children, who have suffered domestic violence and already experienced the initial stage of intervention, for up to 18 months.

“Some former clients are our workers now, having gone full circle and looking to give back. They got fed up with abuse, got educated, and got back on the frontline with a passion to help people.”

HSLs Executive Director **Olivia Jim**

We offer holistic healing through support services delivered with partner organizations.

Our team includes a housing navigator to help clients find a permanent home with other housing providers, when the time to move on nears. Our goal is to help Indigenous women become independent by providing them with an opportunity to make their own choices, access community services, and become involved in their community.

Journey Home Program – We provide a variety of support services for individuals and families to find and maintain permanent housing, with a focus on Urban Indigenous peoples who are chronically or episodically homeless.

Kingsway Sierra – HSLs has managed this 36-unit apartment building at Kingsway and Dumfries since 2007. Kingsway Sierra is a mixed market rental facility, with priority social housing for Indigenous women at risk of homelessness, and individuals who are episodically or chronically homeless.



L-R: *Melissa, Leila, Taleetha and Danielle during Food Delivery Day for the most vulnerable people during the pandemic*

Making a Difference

“I think the importance of the work is definitely ground breaking, helping people living in a domestic violence situation with no where to go,” says Olivia. “We get Indigenous families from all across Canada and help them make changes and get back on their feet again.”

“In my own life, there was a lot of domestic violence in my home town, not just from my dad, and I ended up in transition house when I was 13. They really helped my mom and our family. I don’t know where we would have been if we didn’t go there.”

Working with AHMA

“Working with AHMA is amazing. I feel we get a lot of support whenever we need it.”

Traditional Territory Recognition
 We acknowledge our work takes place on the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xWm̓əθkw̓əy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlílwata?/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, as well as the Hwlitsum, Katzie, Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem, Matsqui, Qayqayt, Semiahmoo, and Tsawwassen First Nations.

North Okanagan Friendship Center Society

“We provide culturally appropriate health and social programs and services for Indigenous people in the North Okanagan,” says **Patricia Wilson**, Executive Director, North Okanagan Friendship Center Society (NOFCS). “We began in 1977 and have been supporting local communities for 44 years.”

Housing & Support Services

NOFCS offers diverse support, from counselling to prenatal care, early childhood development, youth and Elder programs, housing for young people, employment and training:

Kekuli Centre – We provide safe housing for youth aged 19 to 29, who are homeless or at risk of being homeless because of a physical, social or mental condition or disability, in this 20-unit apartment building.

Shout Out to Sandy White – Our Kekuli Property Manager is an AHMA Energy Champion. Sandy obtained 14 new replacement fridges at no cost, through the provincial Energy Conservation Assistance Program. Kekuli residents received carbon monoxide detectors, LED bulbs, aerators for taps, low-flow showerheads, fridge thermometers and night lights. Sandy also helps youth with Rent Smart training, referrals to mental health services, and income assistance applications and tax returns.

Vernon Youth Safe House – We take in foster care breakdowns to give youth, who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or at risk of being in an unsafe environment, a safe place to come. We offer youth-centred services to encourage healthy lifestyle choices and goal setting and we refer youth to community services.

Aboriginal Infant & Early Development Centre – NOFCS runs a low barrier centre for young people expecting or with a child. We offer counselling and parenting groups to teach positive parenting practices and help new parents understand healthy development and interacting with young children. We provide:

- An Aboriginal Infant Development Program for families whose children have a risk of developmental delay
- An Aboriginal Supported Child Development Program for children who need extra support to be included in a community setting
- A counsellor for families dealing with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder
- A pregnancy outreach program with culturally appropriate support for pregnant women and their families until babies are six months old— weekly group sessions, individual counselling, prenatal vitamins and food supplements

Mental Health and Addictions Program – We provide individual, family, couple, and group outpatient counselling, with culturally appropriate treatment based on the medicine wheel. Our goal is to empower people to achieve personal wellness through avoiding or reducing alcohol and/or drug use.

“I have a quiet passion for working with vulnerable people who just need uplifting.”

NOFCS Executive Director
Patricia Wilson



Wellbriety – We hold weekly facilitated group meetings, similar to AA with an Indigenous focus, to talk about recovery, getting healthy, and gaining an understanding of our deeper meaning through Indigenous culture.

Family Support Program – Our Family Support Worker gives families confidential support in child protection, parenting, communication, conflict resolution, healthy choices, and more.

North Okanagan Employment Services – We offer employment counselling, training and education opportunities, life skills, advocacy, career exploration, resume/cover letter writing, support groups, and community referrals to increase the employability and employment rate of Indigenous people.

Seniors Outreach – We started this program in July 2020 to reduce the isolation and loneliness seniors were experiencing in the pandemic, with a “seniors helping seniors” approach. We provide seniors with laptops to stay in contact with friends and family. Two afternoons a week, we hold activities of their choice, from food preservation to medicine gathering and sharing a meal. Most gatherings have a safe sharing circle with lots of peer to peer listening and laughter.

Making a Difference

“The discovery of remains in Kamloops has rekindled hurt and trauma,” says Patricia. “We’ve had residential school survivors come in and talk about the experience for the first time with their families. My son and I are the first not to go to residential school; four generations ahead of me did, so it’s personal and impacts everyone.”

“With the outpouring of concern and sympathy from the public, we had to open space for people to come on National Indigenous Peoples Day. We hosted a fundraiser, encouraging people to fill out orange hearts that we took to Kamloops and offered in prayer in support of the community. We raised about \$2,500 for the centre.”

“Residential schools are the reason we have Friendship Centres in Canada. When children came home from those schools, they didn’t know their families and culture and families had gotten into addictions, so people came to urban centres to try to make a home. Friendship Centres were created as a place to belong for those displaced people, disconnected from their culture, identity and language.”



Working with AHMA

“AHMA has been a wonderful supportive agency to us. Our long-time board member Valerie Chiba was one of AHMA’s founding members and we benefitted from her advocacy and knowledge of AHMA.”

“I met Margaret and admire her leadership and vision. The AHMA staff we deal with are professional, knowledgeable, easy to work with, and ready to support us in whatever way they can.”

Traditional Territory Recognition

North Okanagan Friendship Center is situated in the beautiful North Okanagan Valley, the territory of the Okanagan Nation (Syilx people).



Náćwa?mat Leləm Committee Advocating For Members

By Committee Chair **Rosanna McGregor**

“What are the benefits of being an AHMA member? Building our own capacity at AHMA to give members broader support across the housing spectrum.”

Committee Chair **Rosanna McGregor**

AHMA’s Board of Directors began regular meetings with BC Housing’s Board to talk about common goals and achievements. This new forum is an important step forward in our mutual relationship, as we develop strategies for urban, rural and northern Indigenous housing. In addition, we completed the staggered term rotations with the Board of Directors this year, so these transitions will have a steady knowledge transfer in place going forward.

The past year has been unique with pandemic limitations, of course. Our committee members were unable to come together face-to-face, but we managed to maintain open communications by meeting on Zoom.

At the same time, sustaining a strong national presence was more challenging, given the restrictions. Nevertheless, we put forward motions to CHRA to give to federal leaders and Margaret joined CHRA and others in making a strong case to parliament’s HUMA Committee on the need for a National Urban Indigenous Housing Strategy.

I always ask myself, what are the benefits of being an AHMA member? One is the connections we’ve created with our community of Urban Indigenous housing providers. Another is building our own capacity at AHMA.

AHMA now has staff capacity to give members broader support across the housing spectrum, like assistance with building envelope projects, staff training in development services at BC Housing, or the new Energy and Sustainability team’s energy-efficient initiatives. The entire AHMA team has done an amazing job given the need to work remotely during the pandemic.

Náćwa?mat Leləm Committee members continue to play an important role informing the Board of members’ needs so they can advocate on our behalf. We let them know:

- What an amazing service the energy and sustainability team provides. Directors don’t necessarily know what a difference it makes in housing operations to be able to discuss boiler systems and geothermal heating and cooling. We did not have that kind of connection at BC Housing.
- The federal Rapid Housing Initiative is not what many of our communities need. We need second stage housing and other sheltering options, with deep subsidy or some form of support, not simply capital funding.

My aspiration for the coming year is for AHMA to have a strong relationship with BC Housing on our provincial Urban Indigenous housing strategy and with the federal government on a national strategy with a dedicated stream of Urban Indigenous housing.



Náćwa?mat Leləm Members
(from top):

Rosanna McGregor
Committee Chair
(Cariboo Friendship Society)

Roger Kishi
(Wachiay Friendship Centre Society)

Luanne Ruotsalainen
(Dakelh & Quesnel Community Housing Society)

Margaret Pfoh
Exofficio (AHMA CEO)

About AHMA

As Canada's first Indigenous housing authority, AHMA was created for Indigenous, by Indigenous people. AHMA is an umbrella organization of 41 Indigenous housing providers. Our members manage 5,400 units housing about 8,700* Indigenous people living in off-nation urban, rural and northern areas of BC.

In addition to affordable housing, AHMA members offer many support services, from homelessness prevention to transition homes, parenting skills and daycare, mental health programs, substance use support, and more.

AHMA's unique model of governance combines an independent Board of seven directors and the Náca?mat Leləm Committee of three elected members, who bring the voice of our members to the Board.

** Extrapolation based on survey responses from AHMA members and assumes an average occupancy of 0.7 persons/bedroom across AHMA members who were not surveyed.*



Indigenous artist Gerry Sheena in his workshop in BC. The finished totem pole, "A Mother's Teachings", now resides in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.



Photo courtesy of Artist Gerry Sheena

Meet Our Team

Toyuxsiim, thank you, to our Board of Directors and Náca?mat Leləm Committee members for their wisdom and dedication to helping AHMA support our Urban Indigenous members.

Board of Directors

- Gary Wilson** President (Region 4)
- Blake Scott** Vice President (Region 5)
- Trevor Morrison** Treasurer (Region 6)
- Jamie Pond** Secretary (Region 2)
- John Johansen** Director (Region 1)
- Mike Daigle** Director (Region 3)
- Annette Morgan** BC Housing Representative



AHMA Staff Team

- Atoine Archie**, Housing Condition Assessor (Canim Lake Nation)
- Stacey Bourque**, Training and Capacity Specialist
- Lance Brommeland**, Technical Service Advisor
- Laurie Brownrigg**, Manager, Media & Communications
- Patrick Caraher**, Energy and Sustainability Specialist
- Andrea Carter**, Revitalization Manager
- Trevor Casey**, Portfolio Planning & Development Specialist (Haida Nation)
- Emelia Cheese**, Portfolio Manager
- Alexandra Christian**, Manager of Housing Operations
- Katrina Cote**, Portfolio Manager (Gitxsan Nation)
- Deanna Daniel**, Asset Data Analyst (St'at'imc Nation)
- Sandra Eatmon**, Supportive Housing Specialist & Cultural Advisor (Métis Nation)
- Mae Flanders**, Indigenous Energy Advisor (Mamalilikulla First Nations)
- Sara Fralin**, Indigenous Energy Advisor
- David Garcia**, Project Manager
- Cliff Grant**, Director of Indigenous Strategic Relations (Haisla Nation)
- Celeste Hayward**, Operations Director (Wet'suwet'en Nation)
- Nizar Laarif**, Director of Public Affairs
- Sue Lee**, Financial Specialist
- Stephanie Lowe**, Supportive Housing Policy Analyst
- Connie Mah**, Project Coordinator
- Autumn Moreno**, Portfolio Manager
- Emma Owen**, Executive Assistant & Office Coordinator (Musqueam Nation)
- Margaret Pfoh**, Chief Executive Officer (Gitga'at First Nation)
- Krista Pilz**, Portfolio Manager
- Monica Rao**, Housing Operations Coordinator
- Vanessa Sheena**, Office Administrator (Okanagan Nation)
- David Silva**, Director of Asset Strategies
- Courtney Smith**, Team Assistant
- Lloyd Taghavi**, Chief Financial Officer
- Janine Tallio**, Junior Housing Policy Analyst (Nuxalk Nation)
- Carlo Vijandre**, Project Manager
- Debra Webber**, Senior Portfolio Manager (Squamish Nation)
- Jena Weber**, Senior Health Equity Policy Analyst
- Cindy Williams**, Financial Client Services

Revenues

BC Housing grants	\$45,101,705
BC Housing grants – COVID-19	\$1,800,000
Proceeds from sale of capital assets (RNH)	\$379,808
Interest	\$107,634
Tenant rents	\$140,213
Transfer (to) from deferred revenue	(\$1,105,061)

\$46,424,299 TOTAL

Expenditures

Advertising	\$5,884
Bank charges and interest	\$1,809
Conferences and gatherings	\$97,026
Contracted services	\$5,448
Depreciation	\$172,942
Insurance	\$37,178
IT Consultants	\$163,823
Management fees	\$1,027
Office	\$68,163
Professional development	\$28,837
Professional fees	\$133,119
Professional fees subsidy	\$49,182
Property taxes	\$31,422
Public relations	\$67,347
Rapid Housing Initiative Projects	\$45,068
Rent	\$217,206
Repairs and maintenance	\$146,061
Salaries and benefits	\$2,417,410
Staff travel	\$12,514
Subsidy payments	\$42,412,135
Telephone	\$16,419
Utilities	\$18,807

\$46,148,827 TOTAL

Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	\$275,472
Disposition of RNH capital assets at cost	(\$216,263)

\$59,209
TOTAL EXCESS OF REVENUES
OVER EXPENDITURES

5-year Revenue Growth

\$34,826,287 (2016/17) → **\$46,424,299** (2020/21)

33%
increase

Summary of Financial Statements

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Cash	\$15,942,180	\$14,049,338
Capital Assets	\$2,495,350	\$2,867,314
Other	\$210,954	\$499,148
	\$18,648,484	\$17,415,800
LIABILITIES		
	\$13,731,707	\$12,558,232
NET ASSETS		
Operating	\$2,421,427	\$1,990,254
Capital Assets	\$2,495,350	\$2,867,314
	\$4,916,777	\$4,857,568
CHANGES IN CASH		
From operating activities	\$68,607	\$108,352
Changes in non-cash working capital account	\$1,461,668	\$1,976,620
Cash from financing and investing activities	\$362,567	\$204,293
Net Increase in cash	\$1,892,842	\$2,289,265

AHMA's audited financial statements are available on request.

*"AHMA has laid
the pathway to the
solution for Urban
Indigenous peoples:
an equal seat at
the table for Urban
Indigenous leaders."*

AHMA CEO Margaret Pfoh



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