



Session #107:

# Innovations in Urban Aboriginal Housing

Introduction by Adene Kuchera, SHS Consulting



# Session Overview:

- 1) “Setting the Stage” by Adene Kuchera, SHS Consulting
- 2) Marco Guzman, New Frontiers Aboriginal Residential Corporation
- 3) Angus Palmer, Wigwamen Incorporated

# Urban Aboriginal Housing

- “Like a fire that lives under the moss, burning slowly and gently but with little smoke” *(Rodney Bobiwash, 1997)*
- Programs and projects have been in Canadian cities for decades.
- Many urban Aboriginal housing organizations had their start in the 1970s with roots in the friendship centre movement; others in the 1980s with CMHC’s development of the Urban Native Housing Program.
- Rent supplements and operating subsidies are the mainstay of the projects developed until recently.
- Like other affordable housing in Ontario, funding today for off-reserve Aboriginal housing is in the form of forgivable capital loans

# Miziwe Biik Development Corporation

- Established in 2004 with a mission *“to serve as a vehicle for the economic advancement and self-sufficiency of the Aboriginal community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).”*
- Focus on business development and training, business loans/grants, and *affordable housing.*
- Conducted the Greater Toronto Area Aboriginal Housing Consultation (Final report – 2008)
- Selected to be the Program Administrator to deliver the *GTA Aboriginal Housing Program*
- “Aboriginal housing under Aboriginal control”
- Continue to use the findings of their consultation in the delivery of housing programs.

# GTA Aboriginal Housing Program

- Federal and provincial funding
  - **Initially:** Off-Reserve Housing Trust funding
  - **Now:** Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) for Ontario Program funding
- Three original program components:
  - Aboriginal Rental Program-GTA
  - Aboriginal Downpayment Loan Program-GTA
  - Aboriginal Home Repair Program-GTA
- Current funding is until 2020:
  - \$11,017,900 over six years (2014-2020) to be targeted to the **Rental Program** and the **Home Ownership Program**

# Affordable Rental Program

- Interest-free, forgivable loans to non-profit Aboriginal Service Providers
- \$150,000/unit available of capital construction, renovation or conversion
- Units developed must be targeted to Aboriginal households off-reserve and in the GTA
- Target groups (in order of priority):
  - Large families\*
  - Small families\*
  - Seniors and singles\*
  - Victims of domestic violence
  - Persons with disabilities
- Rents below or at 80% of AMR, tenants to pay minimum of their income on rent.
- All utilities included.

# Constraints... Opportunities...

- Land acquisition and high capital costs in the GTA
  - *Funded programs have included renovations*
- Individuals and families must be able to pay up to rents at 80% of AMR.
  - *Provider can seek rent supplements/allowances*
- Program administration and legal costs can be passed on to provider.
- Limitations to program stacking.
  - *Partners can bring things to the table*

# Successes!

- At least **8 projects** funded for a total of **143 units** of affordable rental housing for Aboriginal individuals and families.
- More than **\$21,000,000** in funding towards *affordable rental housing projects owned and operated by local, community based, non-profit Aboriginal organization.*
- Combination of new construction and acquisition/rehab projects
- New homes in **Toronto, Brampton and Oshawa**
- Current funding carries through until 2020 and can be used for new builds, home ownership, rent allowances



Na-Me-Res (Native  
Men's Residence)

192 & 194 Dunn  
Avenue, Toronto

22 affordable housing  
units (Sept. 2012)





Nishnawbe  
Homes Inc.

425 Dundas Street  
East, Toronto

32 affordable housing  
units (Oct. 2012)

Nishnawbe  
Homes Inc.

6 & 8 Peel Avenue,  
Brampton

8 affordable housing  
units (Nov. 2012)







Nishnawbe  
Homes Inc.

109 Park Road South,  
Oshawa

17 affordable housing  
units (under  
construction)



Investment in  
Affordable Housing for Ontario

Programme d'investissement  
dans le logement abordable de l'Ontario



Canada

Ontario

CMHC  
SCHL

# And others:

- **Nishnawbe Homes Inc.** – 14 units at 22-26 Norwood Road, Toronto (completed November 2013)
- **Wigwamen Incorporated** – 9 units at 160 Kenwood, Toronto (completed February 2015)
- **New Frontiers Aboriginal Residential Corporation** –
  - 20 units at 3087 Danforth, Toronto (under construction)
  - 22 units at 3738 St. Clair Avenue East, Toronto (under construction)

*Thank you and enjoy the rest of the session.*