

The Blueprint for Action on Housing Summary

Implementation Plan for the GN Long-Term
Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness
Strategy

Prepared by the
Nunavut Housing Corporation

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Igluliuqatigiilauqta
“Let’s Build a
Home Together”



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Letter From The Minister

While Nunavut's housing crisis is characterized by many complex issues, the Blueprint for Housing on Action (Blueprint) aims to address the challenges that impact the delivery of adequate, suitable and affordable housing for Nunavummiut.

The Blueprint describes the numerous actions that will be undertaken by the Government of Nunavut (GN) through interdepartmental collaboration, or with partners, to address Nunavut's housing crisis. It focuses on a number of issues, including the Sivumut Abluqta obligations to delivery more energy efficient and economical solutions, and ensure more affordable housing options and alternatives are available to meet people's varied needs, including the needs of a growing elder and youth population. Together, these actions will help the strategic direction, goals and objectives that were put forward in the Government of Nunavut's Long-term Comprehensive Housing and Homeless Framework (2012), and Strategy (2013).

The Blueprint for Action on Housing attempts to address the GN's overarching challenge that it must balance the needs of a young and growing population with limited financial means., The Blueprint must also address a legacy of underinvestment in the territory's infrastructure that began before Nunavut was created. All of these factors are critical towards achieving adequate, suitable and affordable housing in Nunavut.

Addressing Nunavut's housing crisis is something that the GN must undertake collaboratively and cannot tackle alone. As we continue to work together, I look forward to addressing the challenges and working towards implementing the Blueprint for Action on Housing in Nunavut.

Sincerely,

Hon. George Kuksuk
Minister Responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Message From The Chair

We welcome the work of the Blueprint for Action on Housing (Blueprint) as a strategic, long-term action plan that outlines the GN's response to housing and homelessness in Nunavut. It further supports the vision set out in the GN's 2014 – 2018 mandate Sivumut Abluqta, where it is critical that communities are strong and made up of healthy families and individuals with the skills and resources required to be self-reliant and to contribute to the territory.

Addressing the housing crisis in Nunavut requires greater collaboration between many stakeholders in order to address the challenges that impact the delivery of adequate, suitable and affordable housing for Nunavummiut. The Blueprint for Action on Housing consists of 60 concrete actions that will be implemented over the next few years. Focused on engagement and cooperation between Government of Nunavut departments and agencies, the Blueprint sets the stage for accountability and transparency from year to year, over time. The Blueprint addresses the underlying issues associated with reducing the costs of housing, increasing the supply of housing and determining more definitively the housing needs of communities in Nunavut.

Access to adequate housing is fundamental to the overall health, education and well-being of Nunavummiut. It is critical that the Blueprint reflects the collective responsibility of government and other stakeholders in the creation of suitable, safe and affordable housing for Nunavummiut.

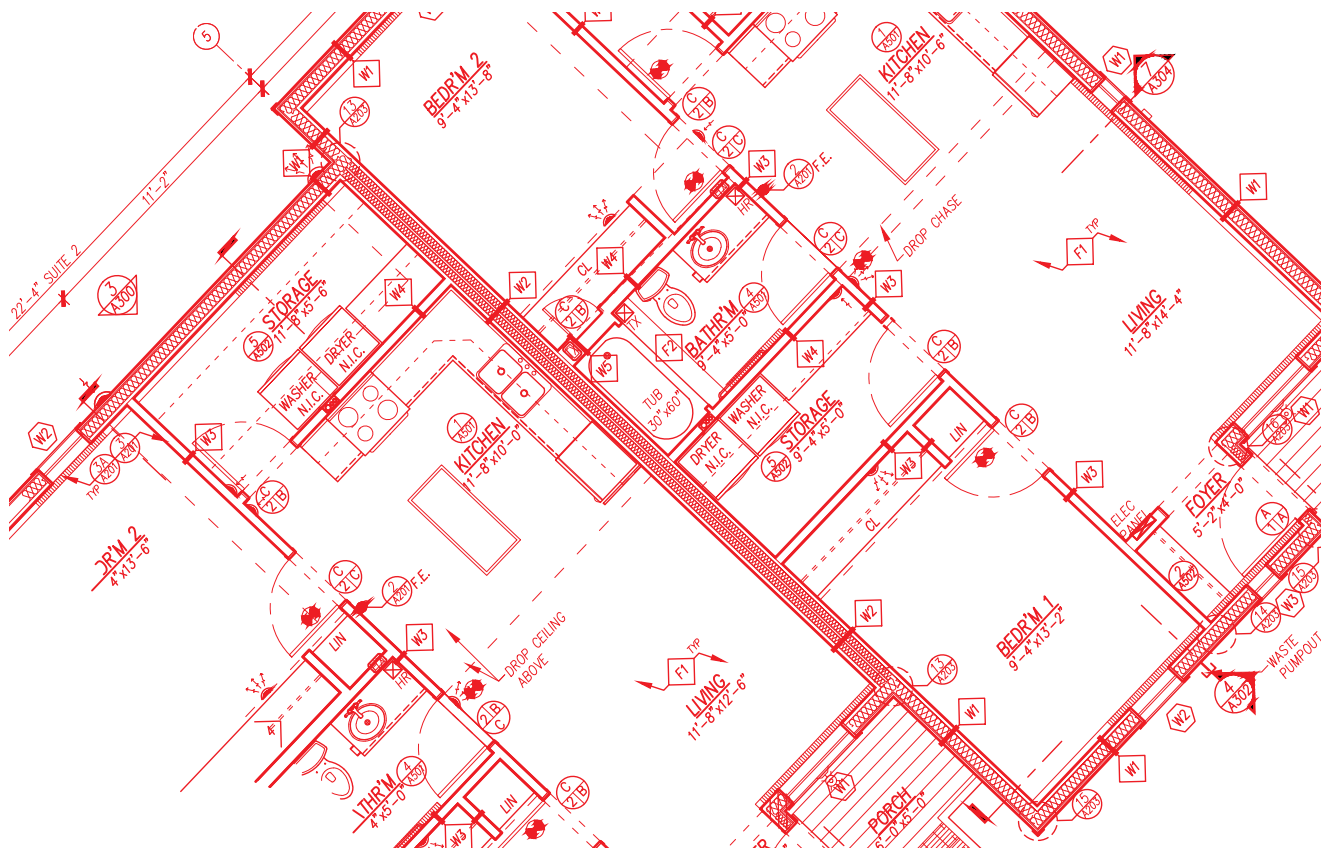
Sincerely,

Bob Leonard
Chairperson, Nunavut Housing Corporation

Addressing Nunavut's Housing Crisis: A Plan Of Action

The Blueprint for Action on Housing (Blueprint) is a strategic, long-term implementation plan that outlines the Government of Nunavut's (GN) response to housing and homelessness in Nunavut. The Blueprint represents the third and final step of the GN's comprehensive and overarching approach to meeting the housing needs of Nunavummiut: Igluliuqatigillauqta/"Let's Build a Home Together" initiative, launched in 2012.

The Blueprint builds on the strategic directions, goals and objectives established in the Government of Nunavut's Long-term Comprehensive Housing and Homeless Framework (2012), and Strategy (2013), and outlines a realistic and achievable plan of action to drive the collective effort of GN departments to overcome the daunting and complex, but not insurmountable challenges facing housing in Nunavut.



Nunavut's Blueprint For Action On Housing

In the construction industry, a blueprint represents a considerable degree of planning to ensure the fundamental aspects of building a house – structural, architectural, mechanical, and electrical – have been appropriately taken into consideration. By ensuring all of the necessary elements have been planned for, a blueprint helps to coordinate the work of more than a dozen different trades, all equally important in completing a home. Similarly, the Blueprint for Action on Housing was envisioned as a whole-of-government approach to inform the GN's actions in addressing the many separate, yet interconnected, issues impacting the delivery of suitable, safe and affordable housing for Nunavummiut.

The Blueprint consists of two major sections: the Action Plan itself, which identifies 60 concrete actions to be implemented over the long term; and an Accountability Framework designed to ensure that this comprehensive list of actions gets incorporated into the GN's regular planning cycles.

Accountability Framework

With more than 60 action items, a critical challenge in implementing the Blueprint will be maintaining focus and momentum to complete these actions over the long term. Many of the actions identified in the Blueprint are multi-year in nature, or dependent on other actions for their completion. Most of the actions require substantial collaboration between departments and other stakeholders. Sustaining such a level of coordination requires a clear governance structure, supported by a strong reporting mechanism to ensure accountability and transparency.

The Blueprint's proposed reporting mechanism and accountability framework is designed to align with Main Estimates and business plan reporting. This reporting will enable an ongoing process of interdepartmental planning and dialogue to ensure that the actions of the Blueprint are carried forward from year to year.

Oversight and Implementation

Led by the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and using the proven accountability framework of both Sivumut Abluqta and the Nunavut Human Resources Strategy, every action has an identified a department which is both responsible and accountable for its successful implementation.

If appropriate, associated departments are identified as either co-leads or supporting entities.

Acting through the appropriate committee of Deputy Ministers, departments continuously report back to the NHC on progress to date, milestones attained and outputs/outcomes achieved.

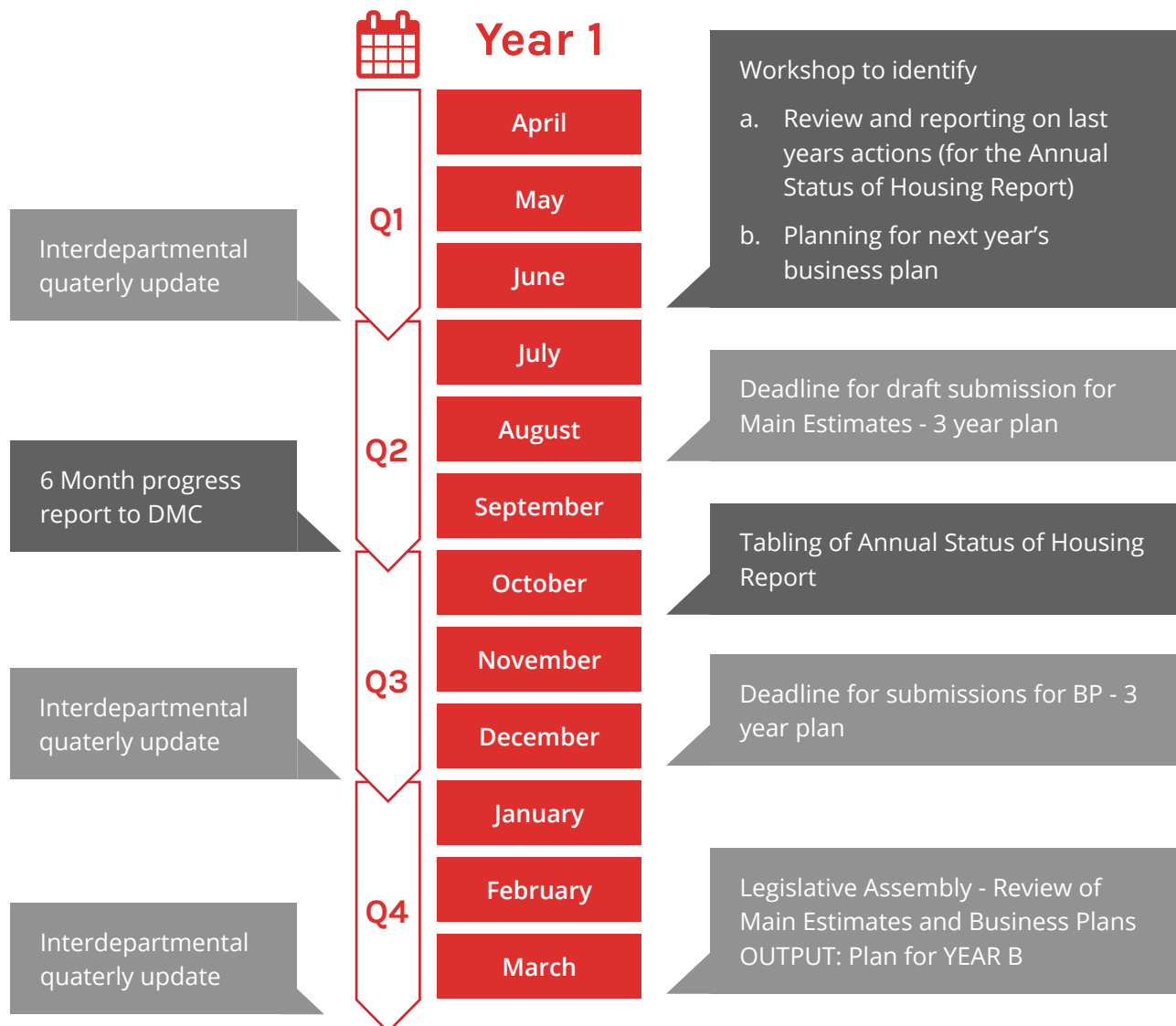
Annual Interdepartmental Blueprint Workshop

Based on conventional fiscal quarterly reporting, the Blueprint reporting cycle will center on an annual interdepartmental workshop. The Workshop, organized and lead by the Nunavut Housing Corporation, will be held in June (end of 1st Quarter). This workshop will be tasked with two clear objectives:

1. Establish a list of activities to be approved by Deputy Ministers (prior to the Main Estimate submission deadline in August) to inform departmental business plans; and
2. Review departmental progress on established activities to be included in the Annual Status of Housing Report.

Quarterly Reporting and 6 Month Progress Report

Quarterly Reporting and 6 Month Progress Report Blueprint reporting will be based on a quarterly cycle, as it best supports the strategic direction of improving collaboration.



Action Plan

The Blueprint for Action on Housing truly reflects a collective understanding of a shared responsibility for the development of a broad range of required actions to overcome what may be the GN's most daunting challenge. The Action Plan divides the 60 actions identified through the Blueprint's engagement process according to the four goals laid out in the GN's Long Term Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Strategy. To provide additional context to the actions, each section of the action plan begins with a recap of the key issues associated with each strategic goal and a summary of desired outcomes.



Goal 1: Define Housing Demand Factors

To ensure sufficient affordable housing in each community, there needs to be a diversity of housing options – a continuum of housing. A continuum that is complete offers a full range of housing options, from emergency shelter to homeownership.

Desired Outcomes:

- A stronger local non-profit sector will lead to increased services for vulnerable populations and targeted housing options outside of public housing.
- Increased cooperation between departments will ensure that appropriate programming can be incorporated into the design, plan, implementation, of government-subsidized housing.
- GN decisions related to the housing needs of GN employees will be guided by clear policy objectives and an understanding of the supports required to mitigate the impacts of decisions on GN programs, services, and employees.

Key Issue: Care And Supportive Housing

Nunavut's care and supportive housing requirements are lacking. For those individuals with underlying social, mental or physical health issues, or who are homeless for more complex reasons than simply lack of available shelter, targeted housing options outside of public housing will be necessary.

More research is required to determine what the specific housing needs of vulnerable populations are, and how these fit into a Nunavut-specific continuum of care. A collaborative, shared approach will assist the GN in meeting the social and health needs of the territory.

A major issue regarding care and supportive housing is the lack of a robust non-profit, non-government sector to supplement the supportive programming delivered by the GN. A capable not-for-profit organization has the ability to provide supportive housing targeted to very specific groups that the GN does not have the capacity to offer. The flexibility and size of not-for-profit supportive housing could fill significant gaps in the care side of Nunavut's housing continuum. A number of actions have been identified under care and supportive housing to promote the growth of the third party sector.

Key Issue: Affordability Options

Gaps in Nunavut's housing continuum affect almost all Nunavummiut, at almost all income levels. There is a need to identify gaps in the continuum of housing options, research the demand pressures for specific types of housing, and examine the costs and opportunities for transitions between these housing types.

Coordinated government programming is required across the housing continuum to ensure that housing options remain affordable and accessible. A complete housing continuum will have adequate and appropriate housing options for all Nunavummiut and will be instrumental in reducing dependence on government funded housing and allowing for private market growth.

Key Issue: Meeting The Housing Needs of Gn Employees

Staff housing remains an important retention and recruitment tool in Nunavut where the cost of living is high and affordable housing options are limited. For the foreseeable future, meeting the needs of GN employees will require the continued provision of existing and new staff housing units.

However, moving into private homeownership or rental is a realistic option for many GN employees. For staff housing to become a stepping-stone to private market rental or homeownership, the GN needs to consider changes to the program that encourage employees to transition into the private sector when market conditions make this a feasible option.

Goal 1: Define Housing Demand Factors

Key Issue: Care and Supportive Housing

Action	Lead Department
Action 1: Develop a Policy and Intake Process for Purpose-Built Housing that Links Purpose-Built Units to Specific Programming Needs.	NHC; Health, DFS, JUS
Action 2: Research Challenges Faced By Not-For-Profit Organizations	DFS; EDT, NHC
Action 3: Research Legislative Changes to Support Not-For-Profit Organizations	JUS; DFS, Health, EDT, NHC
Action 4: Support Not-For-Profit Organizations Accessing Grants and Contributions.	DFS; FIN
Action 5: Assess the Feasibility of an Optional, GN Employee Wage Donation Program.	DFS; FIN, All Departments
Action 6: Examine Feasibility of Establishing an Umbrella Organization to Support Not-for-Profit Organizations.	NHC, DFS; NTI, Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Key Issue: Affordability Options

Action		Lead Department
Action 7:	Conduct Market and Statistical Analysis to Determine the Need For Public Housing Construction.	NHC; Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, CMHC
Action 8:	Conduct a Supportive Housing Needs Assessment to Identify Opportunities to Match Purpose-Built Units with Programming.	NHC; Health, DFS
Action 9:	Incorporation of IQ Principles into Housing Designs.	NHC; CH
Action 10:	Explore Legislative and Zoning Options for Creating Affordable Housing in Target Communities.	CGS, NHC; select municipalities
Action 11:	Examine the Suitability of Secondary Suites to Increase Private Rental Options.	NHC; CGS, municipalities
Action 12:	Review Best Practices for Alternative Subsidized Housing.	NHC
Action 13:	Collaborate with RIAs on Potential Provision of Affordable Housing for Inuit on Inuit Owned Land.	NHC; RIAs
Action 14:	Assess Feasibility of Expanding Local Housing Organizations' Maintenance.	NHC; EDT
Action 15:	Assess Feasibility of a Base Level Maintenance Grant for Homeowners	NHC
Action 16:	Conduct a Review of Past and Present Homeownership Support Programs, and Programs Offered in Other Jurisdictions	NHC
Action 17:	Develop a Plain Language "Toolkit for Renters and Homeowners"	NHC; EIA, FIN, financial institutions, CMHC

Action 18: Engage Banking and Financial Institutions on Expanding Service Areas to Include Smaller Communities. **EDT;** NHC, FIN, DFS

Action 19: Engage with Financial Institutions on the Provision of Homeownership Training Program as an Eligibility Requirement for NHC Homeownership Subsidies **NHC;** Financial Institutions, CMHC, NAC, EDU, DFS

Key Issue: Meeting the Housing Needs of GN Employees

Action	Lead Department
Action 20: Conduct a Survey of Staff Housing Tenants to Gauge Interest for Homeownership.	FIN, NHC
Action 21: Review and Revise the Current GN Staff Housing Policy.	NHC, FIN
Action 22: Analyze Current Staff Housing Subsidy to Determine Subsidy Levels that Encourage Transition Out of Government-Subsidized Housing.	FIN, NHC
Action 23: Review Procedures for Use of Existing Staff Housing Stock.	FIN, NHC

Goal 2: Removing Barriers to the Supply of Housing

The GN is responsible to ensure land availability and appropriate construction incentives for the housing market. The high level of perceived risk in developing housing in the North, in part related to construction costs and climate, limits the development of a strong private market. Creating incentive policies to stimulate construction will help grow the private market and improve housing in Nunavut overall.

Reducing Barriers to Nunavut's Housing Supply requires greater interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination of land development, community infrastructure projects, capital planning, and housing construction.

Desired Outcomes:

- Strengthened interdepartmental and intergovernmental prioritization and coordination of land development and community planning;
- More robust community-specific information to inform the various stages of infrastructure development (from land planning through to building construction);
- An integrated, holistic approach to infrastructure and capital planning that takes into account community needs, existing assets, GN wide priorities and program mandates;
- Increase private sector land development and housing construction.

Key Issue: Land Development

There are many logistical and financial challenges to land development and neighbourhood planning in Nunavut. Greater collaboration within government is required to establish a mutual understanding of the current roadblocks to land development, priority issues, and to identify potential solutions to address them.

Further, creating policies that promote land availability, strengthen municipal capacity, coordinate strategic and community planning, and develop effective private market incentives are fundamental to reducing barriers to housing supply.

Key Issue: Capital Planning/Infrastructure Coordination

Increased collaboration among departments and agencies will provide a more efficient approach in the prioritization of government spending. By coordinating community infrastructure projects, land development, capital planning processes, and housing construction, the impact of the GN's limited capital funds can be increased and more opportunities for new housing created.

A key component of this will be to understand the current system of prioritizing capital, as well as departmental needs and planning processes, to begin to establish a strategic direction to guide capital infrastructure development over the short and the long-term.

Goal 2: Remove Barriers To The Supply Of Housing

Key Issue: Land Development

Action	Lead Department
Action 24: Re-Establish the Development/Planning Working Group to Facilitate Improved Community Infrastructure Planning Processes.	CGS; NHC, QEC, EIA, Municipalities
Action 25: Create Short-Term Development Plans to Support Community Planning and Infrastructure Development.	CGS, NHC; QEC, Municipalities, ENV
Action 26: Develop Guidelines for Determining lot Development by Community	CGS, NHC; EIA (Statistics Bureau), Select municipalities
Action 27: Assess Issues With Land Development Funds.	CGS; Municipalities
Action 28: Identify CGS Planning Expertise and Resources to Support Municipalities with Land Development.	CGS
Action 29: Continue to Develop the Electronic Filing System for Increased Efficiency in Planning and Land Administration.	CGS; Municipalities, JUS

Key Issue: Capital Planning/Infrastructure Coordination

Action	Lead Department
Action 30: Identify Departmental Representatives to Establish an Interdepartmental Working Group on Infrastructure.	CGS,FIN; All Departments
Action 31: Conduct a Government-Wide Review of the Interdepartmental Committee on Capital Planning (ICCP) Process.	FIN; All Departments
Action 32: Assess the Need for an Information Portal to Support Integration of Capital and Infrastructure Planning Processes.	CGS; NHC, Municipalities
Action 33: Develop a List of Public Housing Need by Community to Inform Private Sector Priorities.	NHC
Action 34: Determine Community Interest in Private Land Development or Other Models.	CGS, NHC; Municipalities
Action 35: Research Incentives that Stimulate Private Land Development and Housing Construction in Communities.	CGS, NHC
Action 36: Engage with RIAs on Potential P3 for Housing Construction, Block Land Development and other Opportunities on Municipal Inuit Owned Lands.	NHC, CGS; FIN, RIAs/ Associated Development Corporations
Action 37: Continue Participation SEAC to Deliver Coordinated Messaging to Potential Resource Development Partners.	EDT; NHC
Action 38: Assess the Feasibility of Using EDT's Business Development Programs to Encourage Growth in Nunavut-Based Contractors in Housing-Related Trades.	EDT; NHC

Action 39:	Consult with the Private Sector on the Blueprint for Action.	NHC; EDT
Action 40:	Conduct a Housing Need and Demand Study to Determine the Housing Needs of Nunavummiut.	NHC; Health, DFS, EIA
Action 41:	Conduct an Impact and Feasibility Analysis of Varied Approaches to Social and Staff Housing Delivery.	NHC

Goal 3: Reduce the Cost of Housing

Reducing the cost of housing in Nunavut as a whole can be achieved through more efficient utility use and cost reduction and efficiency initiatives, construction techniques and administrative reductions. Keeping with the Nunavut Housing Trust Lessons Learned document, the provision of public housing will be through multi-family needs based housing, maximizing private sector involvement and minimizing costs through combined supply and build processes.

Reducing the Costs of Housing will rely on strengthening local workforces in construction, maintenance, and administration of housing and related infrastructure; increasing technological innovation to build and maintain housing more efficiently; and on improving understanding of the true costs of service delivery.

Desired Outcomes:

- A comprehensive training continuum that strengthens local workforces in housing-related occupations.
- The adoption of new technology and innovation will lead to increased efficiency in maintenance and operations, reduced costs and extend the life expectancy of the NHC's housing stock.
- Greater understanding of and transparency in the municipal utility rate structure will increase predictability for the NHC.

Key Issue: Workforce Development

The development of a comprehensive training continuum that outlines all existing GN administrative/contractual measures, programs and spending that support, or could be used to support and sustain ongoing training and skills development. The continuum would align with adult education, career development, income support, etc., and would help identify training gaps that exist.

A strengthened local workforce will enable the GN to build and maintain housing more efficiently, thereby reducing costs. Increased local employment would also benefit the economy and contribute to self-reliance. Identification of opportunities for partnerships and better coordination between departments involved in local workforce development is key to strengthening Nunavut's capacity to meet the demands for housing and associated infrastructure.

Key Issue: Technological Innovation

Additional research in best practices and potential standards is required to strengthen our understanding of how technological innovation can help build and maintain housing more efficiently. Greater collaboration between GN departments and agencies on potential pilot projects will enable more economical construction and maintenance options.

Given the high cost of utilities across the territories, more energy efficient homes and more sustainable energy solutions will have large impacts on the costs of housing over the long-term.

Key Issue: Municipal Financing

Municipal financing structure is influencing the cost of housing. There is a need to examine the existing municipal financing structure, and the role of utility charges in reconciling municipal budgets. Investigating the level and appropriateness of control given to municipalities in determining the costs of municipal services and land development is also important, as well as exploring potential alternative financing models.

Goal 3: Reduce The Cost Of Housing

Key Issue: Workforce Development

Action	Lead Department
Action 42: Continue to Develop and Deliver the “Building Trades Helper” Program to Provide Students with Entry-Level Employment Skills for Building Maintenance and Construction Industry.	DFS; NAC, NHC, CGS
Action 43: Review Lessons Learned From the NEAT Program to Assess the Feasibility of Program Re-Establishment.	EDU; NHC, DFS, NAC
Action 44: Continue the Development of the GREAT Program to Prepare Social Assistance Clients for Employment.	DFS, NAC; NHC
Action 45: Review Positions within NHC and LHOs to Assess the Effectiveness and Suitability of Current Occupational Standards.	NHC; FIN, DFS, EDT
Action 46: Assess Feasibility of Incorporating Skills and Competencies into the Curriculum for Employment in Housing-Related Occupations.	EDU, NHC, DFS

Key Issue: Technological Innovation

Action	Lead Department
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Action 47:	Explore Technology to Remotely Monitor Vacant Units to Ensure Ongoing Efficient Building Operations.	NHC; CGS
Action 48:	Review and update electronic system for maintenance work orders to improve efficiency and responsiveness of LHOs.	NHC
Action 49:	Continue Work on a Net-Metering Policy and Supporting Legislative Requirements.	QEC; NHC, NRI, Energy Secretariat
Action 50:	Establish a General Process for the Adoption of New Construction and Maintenance Technology to Ensure New Technology is Appropriate within the Nunavut Context.	CGS, NHC; Energy Secretariat; NRI
Action 51:	Engage with the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) on the Potential Opportunities to Reduce Costs Associated with Housing in Nunavut.	EDT, CGS, NHC, NRI; CHARS
Action 52:	Develop Information, Resources and Incentives that Encourage Housing Tenants to Monitor, Care and Maintain Housing Units.	NHC; Energy Secretariat , RIAs, NTI

Key Issue: Municipal Financing

Action	Lead Department	
Action 53:	Establish a Working Group Comprised of Municipalities and the NHC to Review the Water and Sewer Service Subsidy Program.	CGS; NHC, municipalities
Action 54:	Engage with NAM on the Development of Service Level Standards that Reflect Best Practices for Reducing Service Delivery Costs.	CGS; NAM,
Action 55:	Develop a Web-Based Inventory of Buildings by Community to Allow Departments to Identify Potential Opportunities for Repurposing Buildings to Meet Diverse Housing Needs.	NHC, CGS; FIN, All Departments

Goal 4: Increase Investment in Housing

Realistic solutions to Nunavut's housing challenges require considerable financial investment and the contribution and collaboration of multiple partners, including the federal government, Inuit organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Without increased investment, the housing situation in Nunavut will remain in crisis.

Increasing Investment for Housing will depend on the GN's ability to present a coordinated argument with its partners for increased investments in housing and related infrastructure from the federal government. An achievable and comprehensive long-term response to Nunavut's housing challenges requires collaborative government involvement and significant investment to address the entire continuum of housing.

Desired Outcomes:

- Increased collaboration within the GN on the collection, collation and analysis of existing data will lead to a stronger business case for increased investment in housing.
- Coordinated requests for federal funding that strategically address Nunavut's interdependent infrastructure and housing needs.
- Greater coordination internally between the NHC, EIA and FIN, and externally with NTI and RIAs will result in increased investment in housing.

Key Issue: Building a Stronger Business Case

Increasing Nunavut's housing stock will require additional capital investment on a regular basis. A review of projected needs (housing construction, maintenance, and related infrastructure) and the financial resources available to meet those needs is required to support a coordinated argument for increased investments for housing and related infrastructure from the federal government.

The development of a strong and integrated business case for investment must also identify the benefits of investment and present evidence that social housing construction contributes to the social and economic development of the territory.

Goal 4: Increase Investment In Housing

Key Issue: Building a Stronger Business Case

Action	Lead Department
Action 56: Develop an Evidence-Based Framework to Support the Creation of A Business Case for Increased Investment in Housing.	NHC, EIA; FIN, DFS, EDT
Action 57: Develop a Business Case for Renewed Long-Term Federal Investment in Housing and Infrastructure.	FIN, NHC; CGS, EIA
Action 58: Research the viability and suitability of alternative financing options for additional housing stock.	NHC; DFS, RIAs

Review and Accountability

Action	Lead Department
Action 59: Ensure Incorporation of Inuit Societal Values in Blueprint Implementation.	All Departments; NHC, CH
Action 60: Accountability Framework	NHC; All Departments

In the first quarter of each fiscal year, the NHC will coordinate an interdepartmental workshop to assess overall outcomes of the Blueprint for that fiscal year, and identify activities for the following year. The results will be a list of Blueprint for Action on Housing activities to inform departmental business plans.

An Annual Status of Housing Report will then be tabled in the fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly and will include the analysis of outcomes, and planned activities for the following fiscal year.

The NHC, DFS, and NTI will explore the potential for including Blueprint for Action reporting as a standing item on the Poverty Reduction Roundtable agenda, as well as possibilities for tying the Annual Status of Housing Report to the Poverty Reduction Annual Report.

