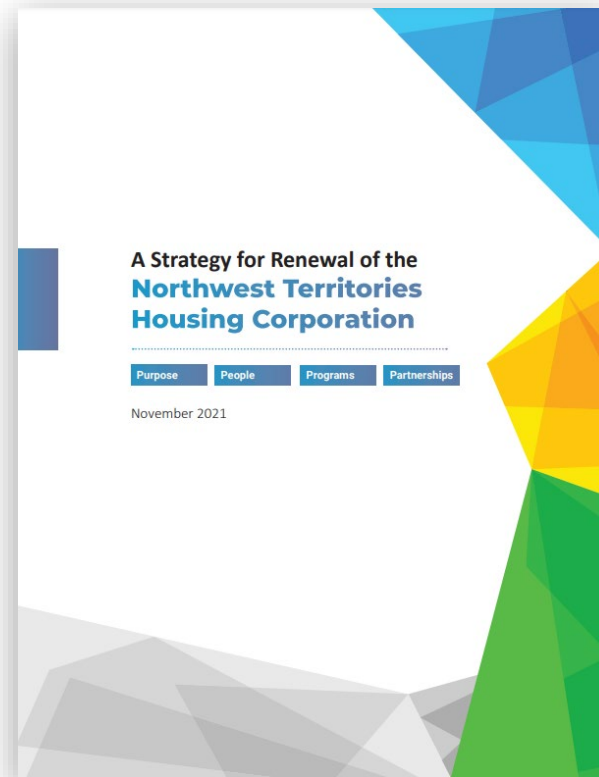


Housing NWT Renewal – Policy & Program Review Action Update

August 2025



INTRODUCTION

Housing NWT's program and policy review is part of the strategic renewal of Housing NWT set out in [A Strategy for Renewal of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation](#). The review arose from a political commitment from Premier Cochrane and Minister Chinna made to the NWT Council of Leaders (COL) on June 11, 2021 to conduct a joint review of Housing NWT programs and policies with a COL Housing Working Group ('Working Group') established for that purpose.

In Fall 2021, the review began with input from staff and the Working Group on changes to Housing NWT's mandate, guided in part by a March 2021 motion of the Legislative Assembly entitled "[Actions for Improved Housing Outcomes](#)" and the Northwest Territories [Ombud Special Report 01-2021](#) "Fairness in Homeowner Assistance Programs". In January 2022, the resulting new [Housing NWT mandate](#), consisting of a Mission, Values, and Vision, was issued.

Forty-one proposed changes to Housing NWT's programs, policies, and approaches were identified based on discussion with the Working Group, Local Housing Organizations, evaluation of past reports including [Voices on Housing](#), and other sources including the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls calls for Justice](#) and the [2022 Anti-Poverty Roundtable What We Heard Report](#). The proposed changes were evaluated through the lens of the new mandate and its animating values of client focus, collaboration, accountability, innovation, reconciliation, and sustainability. The forty-one proposed changes were approved as actions in November 2022. Further engagement with the Standing Committee on Social Development led to the addition of a forty-second action (#18 below), a ban on smoking in Housing NWT owned or administered residential rental units.

This is the second and final interim update on the strategic renewal, as all outstanding actions are anticipated to be completed in the life of the 20th Legislative Assembly. Effective August 2025, thirty-one of the forty-two actions have been completed, eight are in progress and the remaining three actions are considered ongoing in nature. While this update reflects a point-in-time status of policy and programming changes resulting from this review, it does not reflect the many further changes, small and large, that continue at Housing NWT. Housing NWT's new mandate includes a commitment to continue to improve and innovate. These demonstrate a beginning to that commitment.

GENERAL

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
1.	Re-establish appeal path for Housing NWT decisions, with independent appeal committee as final step	- Accountability - Fairness	April 1, 2023	Complete (November 2022) Appeal process has been re-established and heard its first appeal on November 4, 2022 Further consideration is being given to the possibility of a legislated appeals process (see action 4 below).
2.	Establish on-going venue for collaboration between Housing NWT & Indigenous Governments on housing	- Accountability - Collaboration - Reconciliation	Depended on option selected	Complete (June 2023) NWT Housing Forum Terms of Reference agreed upon April 17, 2023, inaugural meeting held on June 9, 2023. NWT Housing Forum is Co-Chaired by an Indigenous Government and Housing NWT and meets four times per year. The first in-person Housing Symposium, to be hosted every two years, was held in January 2025.
3.	Change name of corporation from Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to Housing Northwest Territories	All values	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) Amendment to Housing Northwest Territories Act in effect April 1, 2023.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
4.	Substantive Amendments to <i>Housing Northwest Territories Act</i>	All values	20 th Legislative Assembly	In Progress A list of possible changes was collected during the renewal process. Further input will be reviewed and augmented with NWT Housing Forum and stakeholder input and developed into a Legislative Proposal in the 20th Legislative Assembly.
5.	Changes to Housing NWT's STEP (Solutions to Educate People) courses on home ownership	Client Focus	April 1, 2023	Complete (November 2023) STEP has been discontinued as it was out-dated, difficult to deliver and clients often had to take unpaid leave from work. In November 2023, resources from the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada were made available on the HNWT website as a resource for NWT residents. HNWT and LHO staff can use the resources while they counsel clients and tenants. The target is young potential clients and tenants. https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/en/services/education-development-opportunities

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
6.	Share potential opportunities to provide market housing at a profit with Indigenous Governments	• Collaboration • Reconciliation	April 1, 2023 and ongoing	Complete (May 2023) and Ongoing Letter of invitation from Minister to Indigenous Governments, with community fact sheets was sent in May 2023. HNWT, along with ECE, HSS and NTHSSA, updated the GNWT's market housing needs in January 2025. A second letter of invitation was sent to Indigenous Governments and private developers, with community fact sheets, in May 2025.
7.	Facilitate transition from appointed housing authority boards to community-established housing associations for interested communities	• Collaboration • Reconciliation • Accountability	April 1, 2023 and ongoing	In Progress Housing NWT has invited discussions and has received interest from more than one community. This will be further explored as part of the legislative initiative (Action #4).

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
8.	Increase engagement with Indigenous Governments and LHOs on the design and location of housing	• Collaboration • Reconciliation	Fall 2022	Complete (April 2024) and Ongoing This is an ongoing activity where Housing NWT engages with communities, LHOs, and local Indigenous Governments early in the planning stages for new construction projects, to seek input into the design and location of units. In 2024-2025, this has included meetings in Tuktoyaktuk, Paulatuk, Behchoko and Fort Smith to discuss the design and location of planned new construction projects. Additional engagements will be held as new projects are undertaken.
9.	Providing more systematic, universal training and instruction for Local Housing Organization staff	• Collaboration • Accountability	In progress	In Progress Orientation checklists, along with LHO staff training plans are being developed. An LHO Administration Manual has also been drafted and is currently in the review process. In addition, an LHO Maintenance Manual is also in the process of being updated with targeted completion of Fall 2025.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
10.	Review of adequacy of funding formula for Local Housing Organizations	• Sustainability • Collaboration	In progress	Complete (April 2022) and Ongoing Housing NWT is committed to annual assessments of LHO funding requirements in conjunction with the GNWT's annual business planning process. Recent funding formula enhancements, based on LHO feedback include annual funding increases for inflation, incremental funding for specialty contracts (e.g. elevator maintenance) and funding for extraordinary items outside regular day to day operations (e.g. legal fees for collective bargaining). Since 2021-2022, LHO base operating budgets have been increased by approximately \$2.7 million (13%).
11.	Improve communication between Local Housing Organizations and all levels of Housing NWT	• Reconciliation • Client Focus	TBD	Ongoing Housing NWT recognizes the need for more systematic communication between District Offices and LHOs. An internal communication plan to facilitate the flow of information between the different branches of Housing NWT (Headquarters, District Offices and LHOs) has been developed and is being operationalized. In Winter 2023, Housing NWT began holding quarterly teleconferences with the LHO managers, maintenance foreman and TROs in their districts. Beginning in 2025, Housing NWT are also now hosting two annual in person LHO manager meetings, one of which includes TROs for tenant relations type training.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
12.	Begin collection of data on Indigenous self-identification of Housing NWT clients to better understand impacts of programing and promote collaboration with federal and Indigenous Governments	• Reconciliation • Client Focus	April 1, 2023	In Progress Work has been initiated and there is general support from Indigenous Governments. The Federal government has expressed an interest in this data in aggregated form. Implementation of this action will require IT system upgrades which may cause significant delays.
13.	Determining and supporting Indigenous Government preference on Community Housing Planning approach rather than requiring the completion of a Community Housing Plan for every NWT community	• Collaboration • Reconciliation	Upon Approval	Complete (March 2023) and Ongoing A revised, more flexible Housing NWT approach has been implemented. Community Housing Plan Policy Examples: • Supporting Gwich'in Tribal Council development of Community Development Plans • Supporting Tłıchq Government consideration of an integrated regional approach to Community Housing Planning Housing NWT is undertaking the completion of a territorial housing needs assessment, expected to be completed by the Fall of 2025

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
14.	Prioritize formal and informal partnership with Indigenous Governments on housing, facilitate progress toward self-government	• Collaboration • Reconciliation	On-going	Ongoing Four MOUs have been established since 2022: Tłı̨chǫ Government MOU May 2022 Sahtu Secretariat Inc. MOA August 2022 Délı̨ne Got'ı̨ne Government MOU February 2023 Gwich'in Tribal Council Collaborative Agreement April 2024 Housing NWT is in discussions for a new agreement, to be signed in 2025.
15.	Transition to an integrated asset management approach to improve maintenance responsiveness and to extend useable life of assets.	• Sustainability • Accountability	Develop Plan 2023-24 Implement Plan 2024-25	Complete (January 2025) and Ongoing Housing NWT's Asset Management Committee has been formed and an Asset Management Policy was approved in January 2025. Housing NWT continues to enhance its Asset Management Framework. This work includes review and modernization of current practices, evaluation of maintenance management systems, adoption of digital platforms for building assessments, and enhanced training, support, and capacity building for LHOs. Housing NWT is updating its maintenance management IT system, and this upgrade will allow for implementation of receiving and completing maintenance work orders on a mobile device. The upgrade will be completed by March 2026.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
16.	Develop and implement an Environmental Management Program (EMP), to help Housing NWT effectively manage environmental liabilities to ensure safe housing and regulatory compliance at all stages of asset life ending with disposal.	• Sustainability • Accountability	Develop EMP 2023-24 Implement EMP 2024-25	Complete (January 2025) and Ongoing The Environmental Management program is a component of the Asset Management Policy, which was approved in January 2025. Housing NWT has completed spill response training for frontline technical staff, provided spill kits for all LHOs in the NWT and replaced 400 aged fuel tanks since 2020-2021. Housing NWT's EMP will form part of the Asset Management framework enhancements outlined in Action #15. Data collection (Hazardous Assessments) of Housing NWT owned assets continues under the Asset Management framework. Results will be incorporated into the overarching Asset Management framework and risk management.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
17.	Develop systematic approach to energy management, with a Housing NWT-specific Energy Management Strategy and Action Plan that aligns with the GNWT's overall Climate Change Strategic Framework	• Sustainability • Collaboration • Innovation	Underway, target date March 2023	Complete (June 2023) and Ongoing Housing NWT Energy Management Strategy, What We Heard Report and Blueprint was publicly released in June 2023. Since 2023-2024, investments of up to \$2.5 million in energy projects were completed, in addition to completing the construction of a 20-unit biomass district heating system in Fort Simpson which will reduce the use of fossil fuel for space heat and domestic hot water by 80%. Housing NWT is also procuring construction services for a 14-unit biomass heating system in Fort Providence. In support of the Energy Management Strategy, Housing NWT partnered with the GNWT Department of Infrastructure (INF) and Arctic Energy Alliance to provide introductory training to biomass operators. Housing NWT reports annually on the Energy Management Strategy and Blueprint. To meet this requirement, Housing NWT provided its annual report to INF to incorporate into the GNWT's 2023-24 annual energy initiatives report.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
18.	Establish ban on smoking in Housing NWT owned or operating residential rental accommodations	- Client Focus - Fairness	New Action Commitment to make substantial progress during remaining term of 19th Assembly	Complete (March 2025) and Ongoing Housing NWT sought input from the NWT Housing Forum on an approach to implement a smoking prohibition and has collaborated with the Department of Health & Social Services on a joint approach. This change was announced in March 2025 and will be implemented in 2025-2026, in Housing NWT owned or operated residential rental units in conjunction with a public awareness campaign. Housing NWT will continue to explore the potential for legislative amendments prohibiting smoking in residential rental accommodations.

PUBLIC HOUSING

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
19.	Policy change to require that both members of an adult couple be listed as tenants in a public housing unit to reduce pattern of female caregiving tenant being left with responsibility for rental arrears	- Fairness - Accountability - Client Focus - Sustainability	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) LHOs are empowered to provide exemption from the requirement in exceptional situations.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
20.	Maintain community-based residency requirements established by LHOs, subject to conditions	• Reconciliation • Accountability	Upon Approval	Complete (April 2023) Maximum residency requirement of one year for <i>Charter</i> consistency. LHOs required to seek input from community Indigenous Governments on future changes to a residency requirement. LHO community residency requirement must contain an exception to allow access to treatment for a documented medical issue or disability, or family violence issue.
21.	Eliminate “rent acceleration” policy (reverting to charging unsubsidized or full rent) for the period of time a person remains in public housing after a Tenancy Agreement has been terminated	• Fairness • Accountability • Client Focus	Upon Approval	Complete (April 2023)
22.	Establish “Tenant Success Plan” approach to replace unsuccessful “Last Chance Agreement” approach to maintaining tenancies	• Client Focus • Fairness • Accountability	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) LHOs will not apply for termination of a tenancy until all steps in a Tenant Success Plan have been completed, subject to need for expedited evictions as provided for in the Residential Tenancies Act.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
23.	Revise Termination & Eviction Policy with focus on educating tenants on their rights and obligations, offering supports and referrals aimed at maintaining tenancy, and empowering LHOs with eviction follow-through in those cases where efforts are not successful	- Fairness - Accountability - Client Focus	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) Revised Termination and Eviction Policy in effect.
24.	Establish opt-in pilot program to build credit rating of public housing tenants based on reporting successful rent payments	- Client Focus - Accountability - Innovation	April 1, 2023	Completed (June 2023) Pilot program with third-party vendor Front Lobby . Fort Resolution and Inuvik have been selected as pilot communities. No uptake in the program. Review to be completed in 2025
25.	Updated Public Housing Rent Scale	- Supporting those most in need - Fairness - Client Focus - Accountability - Sustainability	20 th Assembly	In Progress Analysis and recommendations have been developed and are currently under review within Housing NWT and expected to be implemented in July 2026. This work is being completed in conjunction with updating public housing and homeownership income thresholds (Actions #26 and #40).

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
26.	Update income thresholds that determine who qualifies for public housing	- Supporting those most in need - Fairness - Client Focus - Accountability - Reconciliation	April 1, 2023	In Progress Analysis and recommendations have been developed and are currently under review within Housing NWT and expected to be implemented in July 2026. This work is being completed in conjunction with updating public housing rent scales (Action #25) and updating homeownership income thresholds (Action #40).
27.	Update and modernize point rating system (determines allocation priority on housing wait list) to better reflect Housing NWT mandate and GNWT priorities including addressing chronic homelessness and prioritizing victims of violence	- Supporting those most in need - Fairness - Client Focus - Accountability - Reconciliation	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) New point rating system implemented beginning April 1, 2023. Framework for Assessing if an Applicant is Eligible for Social Factor Points
28.	Work with Department of Education, Culture & Employment to find an alternative to existing requirement to be on public housing waitlist to access income assistance	- Client Focus - Accountability	In progress	Complete (March 2025) and Ongoing Through interdepartmental discussions, the requirement to apply for public housing for recipients of the Income Assistance for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (IASPD) program has been removed. ECE and Housing NWT will continue to implement and monitor this requirement for recipients of the Income Assistance for Adults program.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
29.	Increase focus on promoting tenant readiness for public housing	- Accountability - Client Focus - Sustainability - Innovation	April 1, 2023 (Eligibility Policy) On Approval (Transitional Programs)	Complete (August 2022) - New Tenant Eligibility Policy replaced the previous “Unacceptable Tenant Policy”. The Tenant Handbook has been launched on the website and has been distributed out to the LHOs. The online interactive Canvas program will be launched in 2025.
30.	Develop a pilot program to allow licensed childcare in public housing units, in collaboration with Education, Culture & Employment	- Accountability - Client Focus - Fairness	April 1, 2023	Complete (June 2023) Licensed Child Care Facility in Public Housing two-year pilot project came into effect in 9 non-market NWT communities. No uptake to date. Program is due to be evaluated in 2025
31.	Develop plain language Tenant Orientation Handbook describing tenant rights, obligations, basic information in relation to their units, and numbers to call for assistance	- Client Focus - Reconciliation	In progress	Complete (June 2023) Working in collaboration with the NWT Literacy Council, a Tenant Handbook was released in 2023. The Handbook is available in English, French and Tłıchǵ. Translations into other Indigenous Languages are ongoing, with Dene Zhatıé (South Slavey) to be released Fall 2025.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
32.	Develop new Community Housing Service Agreement template in collaboration with Local Housing Organizations	• Collaboration • Accountability	20 th Assembly	In Progress Information collected during Housing NWT's engagement with LHOs during the renewal process will form the foundation for additional engagement and collaborative development of a revised template.
33.	Increase Housing NWT presence in communities without Local Housing Organizations	• Client Focus • Collaboration	April 1, 2023	Ongoing Housing NWT continues monitoring to ensure that communities without LHOs receive a reasonably comparable level of public housing services. A review of Housing NWT's existing organizational structure to align with renewal-related changes will inform a longer-term response to this action. The program division met with the Government Service Officers (GSOs) during their annual training to present on Housing NWT programs. GSOs continue to be a source of information for residents in small communities, especially where there isn't a Housing NWT LHO office.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
34.	Review and consider changes to Housing NWT's template Tenancy Agreement	- Client Focus - Fairness	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) A fairness review of Housing NWT's template tenancy agreement by the NWT Ombud in 2022-23 did not result in any suggested changes. In collaboration with the NWT Literacy Council, Housing NWT has revised the template Tenancy Agreement to plain language format, and a legal review was completed.

HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
35.	Establish a single application intake period for home repair programs except the emergency repair and fuel tank replacement programs	- Fairness - Client Focus	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) From 2023-24 forward, non-emergency repair program application period is April 1-October 31 for work beginning on April 1 of following year to promote fair resource allocation and lead time for procurement and to maximize the short construction season.
36.	Establish one annual application form and process for all homeownership programs	- Client Focus - Innovation	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023)

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
37.	Make homeownership program changes to increase funding amounts for maintenance programs and to place more focus on emergencies and smaller maintenance issues	- Supporting those most in need - Accountability - Sustainability - Innovation	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) and Ongoing Program changes in effect: Emergency Repair maximum increased to \$15,000 Preventative Maintenance maximum increased to \$5,000 Fuel Tank Replacement maximum increased to \$15,000 (Program rolled into Emergency Repair Program in April 2024) Seniors Aging in Place maximum increased to \$15,000 Senior Home Repair Program – maximum retained at \$50,000 Mobility Modifications Program – maximum retained at \$50,000 Housing NWT intends to complete a review of its home repair and homeownership programs in 2025-2026 to modernize and find efficiencies in the delivery of the programs.
38.	Change Major Home Repair program into a seniors-only program; maintain existing funding level. Maintain Mobility Modifications Program at existing funding level.	- Supporting those most in need - Accountability - Sustainability	April 1, 2023	Complete (April 2023) Emergency Repair co-payment eliminated.

	Action	Mandate Values	Original Timeline	Current Status
40.	Update income thresholds that determine who qualifies for homeownership programming	- Supporting those most in need - Fairness - Client focus - Accountability	April 1, 2023	In Progress Analysis and recommendations have been developed and are currently under review within Housing NWT and expected to be implemented in July 2026. This work is being completed in conjunction with updating public housing income thresholds (Action #26).
41.	Explore a pilot program that will rebate a percentage of the cost of shipping building materials for individual private home builders in Zone C (rural and remote) communities	- Accountability - Innovation	Upon approval	Complete (March 2025) Housing NWT has completed a preliminary assessment of this program proposal. Recognizing the limited number of clients in rural and remote communities for this program, and the current focus on the Homeownership Initiative Program to support additional homeownership opportunities, this program will not be pursued at this time.
42.	Explore a pilot program aimed at ensuring common minor repair materials (such as heating and plumbing parts) are more readily available for purchase in select communities on demand.	- Collaboration - Innovation - Accountability - Fairness	Upon approval	Complete (March 2025) Housing NWT reviewed this proposed pilot project and concluded that a limited amount of basic maintenance materials related to heating and plumbing are already available for purchase by private homeowners in rural and remote local housing organizations to assist with emergency repair situations.