



# NAN HOUSING STRATEGY

*At the Environment, Climate Change & Housing Symposium*

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## Environment, Climate Change & Housing Symposium

The NAN Environment, Climate Change & Housing Symposium was hosted over two days, March 26 & 27, 2019, in Thunder Bay. The Symposium was organized to support the development of the NAN Housing Strategy as well as the NAN Climate Change Strategy and Waste Management Initiative. These initiatives support community-based solutions that plan for local and regional housing, infrastructure and energy needs.

## Housing Strategy Session

Day 1 of the Housing stream was dedicated to developing the NAN Housing Strategy. The session was divided into two parts – discussions and sharing circles in the morning and a design charrette in the afternoon. Housing professional, leadership, youth and Elders engaged in the full day of activities to share their housing experiences, goals and ideas.

## What We Learned

Participants explored themes that address different housing needs, which included discussions based around youth and singles housing, Elders housing, emergency and supportive housing, and reimagining the standard on-reserve home. Within these broader topics, participants were encouraged to elaborate on perspectives and experiences, exploring housing issues and their potential solutions.

***"In some households, families end up doubling or tripling and there is hidden homelessness because of the lack of regular and transitional housing."***

Individuals shared their ideas of healthy communities, outlining priorities for safe and accessible conditions. Many participants emphasized the importance of family and maintaining traditional values in creating and designing housing solutions. Participants also voiced concerns with lack of adequate housing, highlighting

## Developing the NAN Housing Strategy



The Nishnawbe Aski Nation Housing Strategy will fulfill the right of access to adequate housing and end the collective housing emergency in NAN territory. NAN and Together Design Lab have partnered with NAN First Nations for a 3 year project to:

1. Work at the community and regional level to develop housing solutions and action plans that recognize the unique needs, geographies and cultures of NAN First Nations.
2. Create community-led approaches to data collection and problem identification.
3. Support NAN First Nations' right to self-determination to their housing systems.
4. Encourage flexibility and creation of design solutions rooted in local lived experience.

experiences of overcrowding, homelessness and long construction periods.

Accompanying this housing shortage were infrastructure issues related to outdated buildings, flawed construction methods and materials, leading to mould, sewage and insulation problems.

Throughout the afternoon participants focused on solutions from governance, policy, health and design perspectives. Potential solutions included the development of workshops on basic housing maintenance and establishing educational programs and training for construction and trades in-community.



*Workshop participants collaborated to design different types of housing to meet the needs of youth, singles, elders and families.*

Many tables focused on the importance of providing housing and care for elders in community. It was shared that it is important for elders' housing to have both quiet spaces and shared spaces for family and community gatherings. At another table, solutions included having space for multi-generational living and secondary suites or smaller detached housing units where youth or elders could live independently but near to the main family home.

***"A home should be comfortable. You should have your privacy and have good, clean running water."***

The session was able to bring together participants from across NAN to share their expertise and experiences with housing. Many of the ideas, designs and solutions shared focused on the importance of supporting individual and community well-being, emphasizing that housing solutions require a holistic approach to be successful. Learnings from the session will be analyzed by the NAN Housing Strategy team and will be used to guide strategy development and the potential design of pilot homes.

## Next Steps

The Housing Strategy team will be visiting 7 communities over spring and summer 2019 to host housing plan workshops.

To participate, please apply to host a NAN Housing Strategy: Community Housing Plan Development Workshop by **May 3, 2019**.

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