

A large, white, serif capital letter 'R' is positioned on the left side of the page. It is set against a dark, grayscale background image that shows a close-up of a computer keyboard and some papers.

RESEARCH REPORT

AN EXAMINATION OF FIRST NATIONS HOUSING MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS



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An Examination of First Nations Housing Management Training Programs

2004-02-25

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Additional Material

The full version of this report includes the survey questionnaire, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) *Competency Profile—Public Works Manager* and the Training Needs Survey questionnaire.

Copies of the additional material are available from:

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AN EXAMINATION OF FIRST NATIONS HOUSING MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS

Introduction

It is in the best interest of every First Nation to have a housing manager who is well-trained and suited to the position, and a local housing committee or authority, which is well managed and financially sound.

This along with long term strategies, can reduce the incidence of crises and alleviate housing pressures.

The primary goal of this research project was to identify what skills a housing manager in a First Nations community needs to be effective and what training opportunities are available or required.

Methodology

Input was sought across Canada specifically from educational and governmental institutions involved in the delivery of training programs, experts in the housing field, government officers and housing managers in First Nations, in order to:

1. Identify what specific skills are required to be an effective housing manager in First Nations communities;
2. Determine what training programs currently exist to provide the necessary training to housing managers in First Nations communities;
3. Through a gap analysis determine the extent to which existing training programs are meeting the identified specific skill needs required to be an effective housing manager in First Nations Communities; and
4. Produce a model training plan for housing managers in First Nation communities that is generic and can be utilized in any First Nation.

First Nations communities were selected to represent a cross section of large, small, urban, rural and remote locations. Where it was possible communities were selected from various Tribal Councils in each region to provide further diversity of the sample set.

The researchers initiated contact with 37 First Nations communities. 17 housing managers responded and expressed an interest in participating in the research. This resulted in:

- 7 face-to-face interviews with housing managers.
- 10 telephone interviews with housing managers using a survey questionnaire.

The researchers also examined job descriptions and evaluated the effects of geography and demographics on the position.

This included an analysis of task identification and what skills were required to perform those particular tasks. Because the performance of a housing manager or department is directly related to the environment where the activities take place, the following were examined:

- the geographical location of the community,
- the First Nation affiliated population both in and outside of the community,
- the financial status of the First Nation,
- the existing policies,



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- the local community cooperation with the housing manager, and
- the level of experience that the housing manager has.

Results

Job Functions

The researchers found that in order for the housing department in a First Nations community to run effectively there are three distinct types of functions:

1. The functions of a housing manager coordinator or director;
2. The functions of a housing finance administrator; and
3. The functions of a housing project manager

The functions of the manager involve developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the community's housing strategy on a daily basis. This includes making recommendations to Chief and Council, looking after maintenance and new construction budgets, enforcing policy and doing contract administration.

The position of housing finance administrator is to plan, control and report monthly on the cash flow and budget. In addition, the administrator can perform rent collection, respond to housing inquiries, review insurance policies and procedures, process loans and monitor budget take-up. Usually the finance position is shared with other departments and interacts with Chief and Council.

The position of a housing project manager involves overseeing the renovation and construction of housing, the development of the community's infrastructure, contract administration, specification review, estimation of costs and budgets. This position requires a broad knowledge of housing technology.

Each position identified requires a fair amount of the "soft skills" of diplomacy, confidentiality and common sense. At times these skills, along with the ability to manage numerous priorities in spite of a limited number of staff and budget restrictions, can be the most important skill set within each job.

Skills for Housing Managers

Skills for housing managers were classified into four categories in decreasing order of priority:

- Housing construction knowledge,
- Housing administrative knowledge,

- Housing financial management skills, and
- Communication and interpersonal skills

Specific skills and knowledge are itemized in Table 1.

Table 1: Required Skills and Knowledge for Housing Managers

Skill Area	Important Specific Skills
Housing Construction	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction materials and methods • Blueprint reading • Building codes • Construction coordination • Lot servicing • Contract administration • Tendering processes • Specification writing • Maintenance protocols
Housing Administration	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time manage • Develop policy • Process applications and loans • Keep detailed records of transactions • Generate reports • Create an organized filing system • Develop emergency measures • Develop a protocol for general inquiries • Develop a housing manual • Develop maintenance protocols • Computerize the department
Housing Financial Management	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding procedures • First Nation budgeting – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) • Subsidies • Resource planning • Leasing processes • Cash flow management • Financial statements • Accounting principles • Bookkeeping
Communication and Interpersonal	<p>Ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively in writing and verbally • Deal with stress • Provide leadership • Motivate staff • Be culturally sensitive • Have community awareness • Resolve conflicts

The most important attributes are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Most Important Attributes for Housing Managers	
1. Housing Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma or classroom training acquired • Knowledge of residential construction • Ability to schedule maintenance programs • Hands-on experience • Knowledge of the subtrades
2. Housing Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to prioritize • Writing skills • Record keeping • Computer skills
3. Housing Financial Management Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget preparation • Cost estimating • Property management • Mortgage financing
4. Communication and Interpersonal Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Stress management • Conflict resolution

Environment

The researchers identified six distinct work environments:

1. remote First Nation communities without road access,
2. remote First Nation communities with road access,
3. First Nation communities adjacent to small rural communities,
4. First Nation communities adjacent to large rural communities,
5. First Nation communities adjacent to small urban centres, and
6. First Nation communities adjacent to large urban centres.

They found that the housing manager must have a wider range of skills and be increasingly sensitive to cultural differences the more isolated the community.

In remote communities:

- The housing manager must be able to assist with virtually every aspect of the housing department.
- The access to training is very limited.
- High transportation costs lead to a reduction in the homes being constructed, which in turn increases housing pressures in the community.
- Reduced building inspections affect the quality control of housing.
- There is greater need for cultural sensitivity, diplomacy, and awareness of potential language barriers.

In First Nations communities adjacent to urban areas:

- Traditional urban property management skills are necessary, including the hiring of renovation staff, knowledge of accounting practices, purchase agreements, leasing options and rent collection.
- There is need to provide more financing options for community members.
- Access to training is more readily available.
- Accessibility to industry, materials and roads can allow for an increased production of houses.

Training Available in Canada

Currently, there are approximately 155 accredited colleges and universities across the country, with many having rural and remote satellite campuses. There are also courses given by agencies which are not accredited.

The researchers found that housing management training specifically aimed at First Nations where individuals need to be aware of the politics and financial approaches specific to First Nations is very limited.

Federal Agencies

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation offers information on programs that target specific issues that housing managers in First Nations communities will encounter. These include Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP), Non-profit On-Reserve Housing Program (Section 95), and On-Reserve Loan Insurance Program (Section 10).

CMHC has also developed courses such as the First Nations Builders Series Workshops that can be integrated into a formal course curriculum.

Training Needed

The researchers found that there are several areas of training that would be useful for housing managers in First Nations communities but that are not presently available. These include:

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Construction knowledge
- Financial management with a focus on housing planning and funding
- The opportunity for internship programs, job shadowing and mentoring.

Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Very few courses deal with the softer side of housing management such as communication, negotiation skills, cultural awareness, stress management, socio-economic studies or behavioural sciences.

Courses of this nature are highly recommended due to the complexity of First Nation housing issues.

Housing Knowledge

Many of the housing managers lack formal training in housing construction and had limited practical experience.

Those training programs available are generally of a longer duration than is practical for most housing managers. Shorter training sessions are recommended, and particularly those where the house is viewed as an integrated system.

Financial Skills

Financial Skills management training is needed that is specifically focussed to the needs of First Nations housing managers, across the country but especially in northern and remote communities. This should assist housing managers to efficiently perform their financial duties and daily transactional routines.

Organizational Skills

There are courses related to financial management, computerization, policy development and time management, but very few for housing managers in First Nations communities who have to meet the challenges of housing authorities or departments that do not have a formalized infrastructure and who have limited staff.

Other factors were identified that contribute to the difficulties that many First Nations housing managers have in obtaining the necessary training:

1. Distance which must be travelled to get to courses.
2. The limited funding that is available for training the housing manager.
3. The formal education that is required to participate in training courses, and the individual motivation of a trainee or trainer.
4. The lack of time to travel and attend classes.
5. The difficulty in adapting to an urban centre or non-native community.

Conclusions

The researchers identified skills needed by housing managers in First Nations communities in regard to housing construction, administration, and financial management and communication and interpersonal skills. They found that remoteness of First Nations communities and lack of courses specifically focused on First Nations commonality issues and environment contribute to the general lack of sufficient training for housing managers in First Nations communities.

The researchers made the following recommendations.

1. Develop a national training and certification program for housing managers with First Nations.
2. Establish a First Nation advisory board.
3. Establish a First Nation Housing Managers Association.
4. Prepare a matrix of credit courses for certification by the association.
5. Establish a network of all existing Aboriginal institutions.
6. Prepare a database that provides current listings for funding and courses.
7. Provide preferred training methods as pilot programs.
8. Investigate the practicality of mentoring and job shadowing.
9. Develop two types of curriculum, student and adult.
10. Provide shorter training sessions for housing managers, supplemented by additional take home materials.
11. Develop a needs assessment tool for use in profiling each workplace and skill sets required for it.
12. Develop a needs assessment tool to profile each housing manager and identify any training needs for that particular person.
13. Review pay scales once certified.

Other useful information from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Free Publications

About Your House Fact Sheets:

Measuring Humidity in Your Home CE 1
(Product number 62027)

Combustion Gases in Your Home CE 2
(Product number 62028)

Asbestos CE 3 (Product number 62029)

After the Flood CE 7 (Product number 60515)

Fighting Mold—The Homeowner's Guide CE 8
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Insulating Your Home CE 19 (Product number 62039)

Log Homes—Frequently Asked Questions CE 21
(Product number 62040)

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Carbon Monoxide CE 25 (Product number 62046)

Hiring a Contractor CE 26a (Product number 62277)

Sample Renovation Contract 26b (Product number 62351)

Assessing The Renovation Project CE 28a
(Product number 62246)

*Before You Start Renovating Your Basement
—Structural Issues and Soil Conditions* CE 28b
(Product number 62248)

*Before You Start Renovating Your Basement—Moisture
Problems* CE 28c (Product number 62250)

Before You Start Renovating Your Kitchen CE 28d
(Product number 62252)

Before You Start Renovating Your Bathroom CE 28e
(Product number 62254)

Before You Start Window and Door Renovations CE 28f
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of Your Home's Mechanical Systems* CE 28k
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Before You Start a New Addition 28l
(Product number 62268)

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(Product number 62303)

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Model* (Product number 62329)

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Regions* (Product number 62298)

North Series 5: Eagle Lake Healthy House
(Product number 62154)

North Series 6: Arctic Hot Roof Design
(Product number 62313)

Reports:

A Better Way to Renovate, (Product number 60958)

A Guide to Residential Wood Heating
(Product number 62310)

ACT Case Study: How Taloyoak, Nunavut Territory, Created Affordable Housing for Youth Through Funding Partnerships and the Lessons Learned (Product number 62328)

At Home with Alzheimer's Disease: Useful Adaptations to the Home Environment (Product number 60849)

Before You Renovate (Product number 61001)

Building Communities: First Nations Best Practises for Healthy Housing and Sustainable Community Development (Product number 62317)

Capital Replacement Planning Software - Windows 95/98
(Product number 63202)

FlexHousing from Concept to Reality
(Product number 61942)

FlexHousing Pocket Planner (Product number 61943)

Healthy Housing Fact Sheets (Product number 62803)

Healthy Housing Practical Tips (Product number 60916)

Maintaining Seniors' Independence: A Guide to Home Adaptations (Product number 61042)

Maintaining Seniors' Independence Through Home Adaptations: A Self Assessment Guide (Product number 61087)

Moisture and Air: Householder's Guide—Problems and Remedies
(Product number 61033)

Mold in Housing: An Information Kit for First Nations Communities (Product number 62244)

Radiant Hydronic Floor Heating (Product number 62030)

Radon: A Guide for Canadian Homeowners
(Product number 61945)

Renovation Information Package (Product number 62402)

Priced Publications

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Building Materials for the Environmentally Hypersensitive, \$29.95 (Product number 61089)

Clean Air Guide and This Clean House Package, \$19.95
(Product number 61827)

Cleaning Up Your House After the Flood, \$3.95
(Product number 61094)

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Homeowner's Inspection Checklist, \$19.95
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Investigating, Diagnosing & Treating Your Damp Basement, \$9.95 (Product number 61065)

Renovator's Technical Guide, \$34.95 (Product number 61946)

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This Clean House (Video) \$14.95 (Product number 61770)

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Série socio-économique 03-024

EXAMEN DES PROGRAMMES DE FORMATION EN GESTION IMMOBILIÈRE À L'INTENTION DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS

Introduction

Les Premières nations ont tout intérêt à disposer d'un gestionnaire immobilier bien formé et compétent, de même que d'un comité ou organisme local de l'habitation qui soit bien administré et financièrement viable.

Ce n'est que dans ce cas, et avec la mise en place de stratégies à long terme, que l'on pourra réduire les situations de crises et alléger les pressions sur le logement.

Ce projet de recherche a pour objectif principal de relever les compétences dont un gestionnaire immobilier travaillant dans une communauté autochtone a besoin pour être efficace et les possibilités de formation qui lui sont offertes ou nécessaires.

Méthodologie

D'un bout à l'autre du Canada, on a fait appel à la contribution des établissements d'enseignement et des organismes gouvernementaux s'occupant des programmes de formation, d'experts du domaine de l'habitation, de représentants du gouvernement et des gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations afin de :

1. relever les compétences particulières qu'un gestionnaire immobilier doit posséder pour être efficace dans une communauté des Premières nations;
2. établir quels programmes de formation existent à l'heure actuelle pour fournir la formation nécessaire aux gestionnaires immobiliers des communautés autochtones;
3. par une analyse des carences, déterminer dans quelle mesure les programmes de formation existants répondent aux besoins particuliers des gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations désireux d'améliorer leur efficacité;
4. produire un plan de formation type à l'intention des gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations qui soit générique et susceptible d'être utilisé dans n'importe quelle Première nation.

On a procédé à une sélection des communautés autochtones afin d'obtenir un échantillon représentatif des collectivités grandes et petites, urbaines, rurales et éloignées. Lorsque c'était possible, on a sélectionné dans chacune des régions des communautés appartenant à différents conseils tribaux afin de favoriser une meilleure diversité de l'échantillon.

Les chercheurs ont communiqué avec 37 communautés autochtones. En tout, 17 gestionnaires immobiliers ont répondu et ont accepté de participer à la recherche. Pour ce faire, nous avons réalisé :

- sept entrevues en personne avec des gestionnaires immobiliers;
- dix entrevues téléphoniques avec des gestionnaires immobiliers au moyen d'un questionnaire de sondage.

Les chercheurs ont également étudié les descriptions de poste et évalué les effets des caractéristiques géographiques et démographiques sur la nature des postes.

Ils ont également procédé à une analyse des tâches et des compétences nécessaires pour exécuter chacune de ces tâches. Comme le rendement d'un gestionnaire immobilier ou d'une organisation d'habitation est directement lié au milieu dans lequel les activités qu'il réalise ont lieu, on a également examiné les points suivants :

- l'emplacement géographique de la communauté;
- la population apparentée d'une Première nation à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la communauté;
- la situation financière de la Première nation;
- les politiques existantes;



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- la collaboration du milieu local avec le gestionnaire immobilier;
- le niveau d'expérience dont dispose le gestionnaire immobilier.

Résultats

Fonctions professionnelles

Les chercheurs ont constaté que pour qu'une organisation d'habitation fonctionne de manière efficace à l'intérieur d'une communauté des Premières nations, elle doit exercer trois types de fonctions distinctes :

1. les fonctions de coordination ou de direction de la gestion immobilière;
2. les fonctions d'administration financière des habitations;
3. les fonctions de direction d'un ensemble d'habitations.

Dans le cadre de la gestion immobilière, les fonctions consistent à élaborer, mettre en œuvre, suivre et évaluer la stratégie de la communauté en matière d'habitation, et ce, sur une base quotidienne. Cela implique la formulation de recommandations au chef et au conseil, la gestion du budget d'entretien et de construction, la mise en application des lignes de conduite et l'administration des contrats.

Les fonctions d'administration financière consistent à planifier, contrôler et communiquer les états financiers et les budgets mensuels. En outre, on doit percevoir les loyers, répondre aux demandes de renseignements sur les logements, examiner les lignes de conduite et les méthodes en matière d'assurance, faire le traitement des prêts et faire un suivi de l'utilisation des budgets. En règle générale, les fonctions de gestion financière sont partagées avec d'autres services et nécessitent des interactions avec le chef et le conseil de bande.

Les fonctions liées à la gestion d'un ensemble d'habitations consistent à superviser la rénovation et la construction des logements, la mise en place des infrastructures collectives, l'administration des contrats, l'examen des devis, l'estimation des coûts et des budgets. Ces fonctions nécessitent une connaissance globale de la technologie en matière d'habitation.

Chaque catégorie de fonctions nécessite des qualités générales sur le plan de la diplomatie, de la confidentialité et du jugement. Il arrive que ces compétences, avec l'aptitude à gérer de nombreuses priorités malgré un personnel et un budget restreints, s'avèrent essentielles pour l'exercice de chacune des fonctions.

Compétences des gestionnaires immobiliers

Nous avons classé les compétences des gestionnaires immobiliers en quatre catégories selon un ordre décroissant de priorités :

- connaissances en matière de construction résidentielle;
- connaissances en matière d'administration immobilière;
- compétences en gestion financière des immeubles résidentiels;
- compétences en matière de communications et de relations interpersonnelles.

Les compétences et connaissances particulières sont énumérées au tableau I.

Tableau I Compétences et connaissances des gestionnaires immobiliers

Domaine	Compétences particulières
Construction résidentielle	Connaissances : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matériaux et méthodes de construction • Lecture des plans • Codes du bâtiment • Direction des travaux • Viabilisation des terrains • Administration des contrats • Procédés d'appel d'offres • Rédaction des devis • Protocoles d'entretien
Administration des logements	Compétences : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gestion du temps • Élaboration des lignes de conduite • Traitement des demandes et des prêts • Tenue à jour des relevés d'opérations • Production des rapports • Mise sur pied d'un système d'archivage • Élaboration de mesures d'urgence • Élaboration d'un protocole à l'égard des demandes de renseignements généraux • Rédaction d'un manuel sur le logement • Élaboration des protocoles d'entretien • Informatisation de l'organisation
Gestion financière	Connaissances : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modes de financement • Budget des Premières nations – Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada (AINC) • Subventions • Planification des ressources • Traitement des baux • Gestion de trésorerie • États financiers • Principes comptables • Tenue des livres
Communications et relations interpersonnelles	Compétences : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communiquer de manière efficace par écrit et oralement • Composer avec le stress • Démontrer du leadership • Motiver le personnel • Démontrer de la sensibilité culturelle • Avoir une conscience communautaire • Résoudre les conflits

Le tableau 2 présente les éléments les plus importants :

Tableau 2 Éléments les plus importants des gestionnaires immobiliers	
1.	Construction résidentielle <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtention d'un diplôme ou acquisition d'une formation en classe • Connaissances de la construction résidentielle • Capacité de mettre en place des programmes d'entretien • Expérience pratique • Connaissance des corps d'état du second-œuvre
2.	Administration des logements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aptitude à mettre en priorité • Compétences en rédaction • Tenue des livres • Compétences en informatique
3.	Compétences et connaissances en gestion financière <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Préparation des budgets • Estimation des coûts • Gestion immobilière • Financement hypothécaire
4.	Compétences en communications et relations interpersonnelles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Gestion du stress • Résolution des conflits

Environnement

Les chercheurs ont établi qu'il existait six environnements de travail distincts :

1. communautés autochtones éloignées sans accès routier;
2. communautés autochtones éloignées avec accès routier;
3. communautés autochtones adjacentes à de petites collectivités rurales;
4. communautés autochtones adjacentes à de grandes collectivités rurales;
5. communautés autochtones adjacentes à de petits centres urbains;
6. communautés autochtones adjacentes à de grands centres urbains.

Ils ont constaté que plus la collectivité est isolée et plus les gestionnaires immobiliers doivent posséder de compétences et être sensibles aux différences culturelles.

Dans les communautés éloignées :

- le gestionnaire immobilier doit pouvoir apporter son aide à tous les aspects ou presque du travail de l'organisation de logement;
- l'accès à la formation est très limité;
- en raison des frais de transport élevés, le nombre de logements construits est limité, ce qui aggrave la situation du logement dans la communauté;
- le nombre réduit des inspections compromet le contrôle de la qualité des logements;
- le gestionnaire doit faire montre d'une plus grande sensibilité culturelle, de davantage de diplomatie et d'une meilleure sensibilisation aux possibles barrières linguistiques.

Dans les communautés des Premières nations adjacentes aux centres urbains :

- le gestionnaire doit posséder les compétences traditionnelles en matière de gestion immobilière urbaine, y compris pour l'engagement des ouvriers chargés de la rénovation, la connaissance des pratiques comptables, des conventions d'achat, des options de location et des pratiques de perception des loyers;
- on doit pouvoir offrir davantage d'options de financement aux membres de la communauté;
- l'accès à la formation est plus accessible;
- l'accès à la main-d'œuvre, aux matériaux et aux routes permet une production accrue de logements.

Formation offerte au Canada

À l'heure actuelle, on compte environ 155 collèges et universités reconnus d'un bout à l'autre du pays, dont beaucoup possèdent des campus satellites en régions rurales et éloignées. Certaines organisations non accréditées donnent également des cours.

Les chercheurs ont constaté qu'il y a très peu de formation en gestion immobilière destinée spécialement aux membres des Premières nations qui mettraient l'accent sur la connaissance des politiques et des modes de financement particuliers aux Premières nations.

Organismes fédéraux

La Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement offre des renseignements sur des programmes qui visent certains problèmes que les gestionnaires immobiliers des communautés des Premières nations vont rencontrer dans leur pratique. Il s'agit notamment du Programme d'aide à la remise en état des logements (PAREL), du Programme de logement sans but lucratif dans les réserves (article 95) et du Programme d'assurance prêt dans les réserves (article 10).

La SCHL a également conçu de la formation, telle que la Série des ateliers des constructeurs à l'intention des Premières nations, la quelle peu être intégrée à un programme d'études formel.

Besoins de formation

Les chercheurs ont constaté que les gestionnaires immobiliers travaillant dans les communautés autochtones bénéficieraient de formation portant sur différents domaines, formation qui ne leur est pas actuellement offerte. Mentionnons à cet égard :

- les communications et les relations interpersonnelles;
- la construction résidentielle;
- la gestion financière avec un accent mis sur la planification et le financement des habitations;
- des programmes de stage, de jumelage et de mentorat.

Communications et relations interpersonnelles

Très peu de cours portent sur les aspects généraux de la gestion immobilière, comme les communications, la négociation, la sensibilité culturelle, la gestion du stress, les caractéristiques socio-économiques et les sciences du comportement.

Nous recommandons fortement des cours de cette nature en raison de la complexité des problèmes relatifs aux logements des Premières nations.

Connaissances en matière d'habitation

Beaucoup de gestionnaires immobiliers n'ont pas de formation dans le domaine de la construction résidentielle et ont peu d'expérience pratique.

Les programmes de formation offerts sont généralement de longue durée, ce qui est peu pratique pour la plupart des gestionnaires immobiliers. Nous recommandons la tenue de séances de formation plus courtes, en particulier où le logement est présenté en tant que système intégré.

Compétences financières

Les gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations ont particulièrement besoin de formation en matière de gestion financière, et ce, d'un bout à l'autre du pays, mais spécialement dans les communautés nordiques et éloignées. Ce type de formation aiderait les gestionnaires à exécuter leurs tâches financières et leurs opérations budgétaires quotidiennes.

Compétences organisationnelles

Il existe des cours portant sur la gestion financière, l'informatisation, l'élaboration de politiques et la gestion du temps, mais très peu s'adressent aux gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations qui doivent composer avec des organisations ou des services ne disposant pas d'une infrastructure formelle ou de beaucoup d'employés.

Nous avons également relevé d'autres facteurs contribuant aux difficultés que beaucoup de gestionnaires immobiliers autochtones éprouvent pour obtenir la formation dont ils ont besoin :

1. la distance à couvrir pour assister aux cours;
2. le peu de ressources financières disponibles pour la formation des gestionnaires immobiliers;
3. les pré-requis scolaires nécessaires pour être admis à la formation et la motivation individuelle dont font montre les formateurs et les apprenants;
4. le manque de temps pour se déplacer et assister aux cours;
5. les difficultés liées à l'adaptation à la vie urbaine ou à une collectivité non autochtone.

Conclusions

Les chercheurs ont relevé les compétences que les gestionnaires immobiliers des communautés des Premières nations doivent acquérir dans les domaines de la construction résidentielle, de l'administration et de la gestion financière, de même que dans ceux des communications et des relations interpersonnelles. Ils ont constaté que l'éloignement des communautés autochtones et le manque de formation portant spécialement sur les aspects et l'environnement propres aux Premières nations contribuent aux carences générales des gestionnaires immobiliers des communautés autochtones en matière de formation.

Les chercheurs formulent les recommandations suivantes :

1. élaborer un programme national de formation et d'accréditation à l'intention des gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations;
2. mettre sur pied un conseil consultatif des Premières nations;
3. mettre sur pied une association de gestionnaires immobiliers des Premières nations;
4. préparer une matrice de cours à unités en vue de l'accréditation par l'association;
5. constituer un réseau de tous les établissements d'enseignement pour Autochtones;

6. constituer une base de données contenant des renseignements à l'égard du financement et des cours;
7. mettre à l'essai les méthodes de formation privilégiées sous forme de projets pilotes;
8. évaluer la faisabilité d'activités de mentorat et de jumelage;
9. élaborer deux types de programme, un pour les étudiants et l'autre pour les adultes;
10. offrir des séances de formation plus courtes à l'intention des gestionnaires immobiliers, en les complétant par des travaux additionnels à faire à la maison;
11. élaborer un outil d'évaluation des besoins permettant de caractériser chaque lieu de travail et d'établir les compétences nécessaires à celui-ci;
12. élaborer un outil d'évaluation des besoins permettant de faire le profil de chaque gestionnaire immobilier et de relever l'ensemble des besoins de formation de chacune des personnes;
13. réviser les échelles de salaire après accréditation.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop and put in place a standardized national training and certification program that addresses the needs for First Nations housing managers.
- Use established courses of study from established institutions, such as Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Anokiiwin Training Institute, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Aboriginal Financial Officers of Canada, Turtle Island Association and Cambrian College, for modeling to develop a complete certification program.
- Put together skill sets for additional training in rural, urban and remote communities.
- Investigate the most effective ways to train, such as online, videoconference, computer software or workshops, based on location.
- Develop courses of study for student learning and adult learning.
- Investigate mentoring and job shadowing as a mandatory requirement for certification.
- Prepare a database for housing managers to allow them to access funding, training resources and networking opportunities.
- Establish a national, First Nation housing education advisory board made up of representatives of housing managers, federal and provincial government, professional associations, colleges and universities.
- Investigate forming a national association of Aboriginal housing managers and determine what courses could count for recognition as a Certified Aboriginal Housing Manager.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

It is in the best interest of every First Nation to have a well-trained housing manager who is suited to the position and a well-managed, financially sound local housing committee or authority.

This, along with long-term strategies, can reduce the frequency of crises and ease housing pressures.

The primary goal of this research project was to identify what skills housing managers with First Nations need in order to be effective, the training involved in acquiring these skills and what training is available.

Methodology

The researchers asked housing experts, First Nations government officers, housing managers and representatives of educational and governmental institutions offering training to:

- Identify the skills an effective housing manager in First Nations communities needs.
- Identify current training programs for First Nations housing managers.
- Through a gap analysis, determine how well training programs provide the skills an effective housing manager in First Nations Communities needs.
- Produce a model plan for training housing managers in First Nation communities usable by any First Nation.

The researchers picked First Nations communities representing large, small, urban, rural and remote locations. Where possible, the researchers selected communities from various Tribal Councils in each region to provide further diversity.

The researchers contacted 37 First Nations communities. Of the 37, 17 housing managers responded. This resulted in seven face-to-face interviews and 10 telephone interviews, using a survey questionnaire.

The researchers also studied job descriptions and evaluated the effects of geography and demographics. This included analysing tasks and determining the skills needed for the tasks. Because the role of the housing manager or department is directly related to local circumstances, the researchers also looked at:

- The community's geographic location.
- The First Nation's population in and outside the community.
- The First Nation's financial position.
- Existing policies.
- Community co-operation with the housing manager.
- The housing manager's experience.

Results

Job functions

The researchers found that a First Nations housing department must play three distinct roles to run effectively. The roles are:

1. Housing manager, co-ordinator or director.
2. Housing finance administrator.
3. Housing project manager

Skills for housing managers

The researchers classified skills for housing managers in four categories, in the following order of importance:

1. Housing construction knowledge.
2. Housing administration knowledge.
3. Housing financial management skills.
4. Communication and interpersonal skills

February 25, 2004

The following table lists the skills, knowledge and most important qualities for housing managers.

Skill area	Important specific skills	Most important qualities
1. Housing construction	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction materials and methods • Blueprint reading • Building codes • Construction coordination • Lot servicing • Contract administration • Tendering processes • Specification writing • Maintenance protocols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma or classroom training acquired • Knowledge of residential construction • Ability to schedule maintenance programs • Hands-on experience • Knowledge of the subtrades
2. Housing administration	Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time manage • Develop policy • Process applications and loans • Keep detailed records of transactions • Generate reports • Create an organized filing system • Develop emergency measures • Develop a protocol for general inquiries • Develop a housing manual • Develop maintenance protocols • Computerize the department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to prioritize • Writing skills • Record keeping • Computer skills
3. Housing financial management	Knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding procedures • First Nation budgeting – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) • Subsidies • Resource planning • Leasing processes • Cash flow management • Financial statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget preparation • Cost estimating • Property management • Mortgage financing

2004-02-25

Skill area	Important specific skills	Most important qualities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accounting principles • Bookkeeping 	
4. Communication and interpersonal	Ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively in writing and verbally • Deal with stress • Provide leadership • Motivate staff • Be culturally sensitive • Have community awareness • Resolve conflicts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Stress management • Conflict resolution

Table 1—Required skills, knowledge and most important attributes for housing managers

Environment

The researchers identified six distinct work environments:

1. Remote communities without road access.
2. Remote communities with road access.
3. Communities close to small rural communities.
4. Communities close to large rural communities.
5. Communities close to small urban centres.
6. Communities close to large urban centres.

They found that the more isolated the community, the more important it is that the housing manager have a wider range of skills and be increasingly sensitive to cultural differences.

Training available in Canada

Many of the accredited colleges and universities in Canada have rural and remote satellite campuses. Agencies that are not accredited also give courses.

The researchers found that housing management training specifically designed for First Nations is very limited.

Training needed

The researchers found several training areas that would be useful for First Nations housing managers, but that are not now available. These include:

- Communication and interpersonal skills;
- Construction knowledge;
- Financial management focusing on housing planning and funding; and,
- Internship programs, job shadowing and mentoring.

Obstacles

Obstacles that make it difficult for First Nations housing managers to get training are:

- Travelling distance to courses.
- Limited training funding for housing managers.
- The formal education needed to be eligible for training courses.
- Not enough time to travel and attend classes.
- Difficulty adapting to an urban centre or non-Aboriginal community.

Conclusions

The researchers identified skills needed by housing managers in First Nations communities in housing construction, administration, financial management and communication and interpersonal skills. They found that remoteness of First Nations communities and lack of courses dealing specifically with First Nations community issues and circumstances contribute to the general lack of suitable training for First Nations housing managers.

CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

This research project's primary goal was identification of training available to First Nation housing managers.

The first step was to identify the specific skills an effective housing manager needs. The research found that the skills vary, depending on the size and location of the community. There are also specific skills needed to manage properties in First Nation communities. The research identified the skills through research on the Internet, consultation with educational and governmental institutions and interviews with First Nations housing managers.

The second step was determining training programs now available for First Nation housing managers.

The third step, a gap analysis, determined whether training programs meet the needs identified in the first step of the study. As part of the gap analysis, various methods of delivering training were explored.

The fourth step was preparation of a model training plan for First Nation housing managers that is general enough to be used by any First Nation.

First Nation housing manager—job description

To determine the skills needed for First Nations housing managers, the researchers studied three job descriptions from job postings for First Nation housing managers.

This exercise analysed tasks and the skills needed for the tasks.

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Sample job description I

Position Title: Housing manager/co-ordinator

Reporting Relationship: Reports to the Housing Committee.

Responsibilities

- assist the Chief and Council improve the overall housing conditions in the First Nation
- manage all operations of the First Nation's Housing Authority by planning, implementing, developing and administering the programs, projects and policies
- oversee and develop all operational procedures with Housing Authority staff
- provide guidance and supervision to the administration
- promote the housing policies to the membership and problem solve.
- research and develop housing programs. Tenure options and house designs
- initiate and manage new housing projects
- research financial options for First Nation members
- provide monthly reports to Housing Committee and Chief and Council for review
- provide training plan for new staff members and coordinate with other agencies, departments, schools, colleges or institutions
- ensure all decisions by the housing committee are followed through and provide follow-up reporting i.e. new initiatives, policies, projects, emergencies, planning, etc.
- prepare a manual for the Housing Authority and keep update policy and procedures available
- prepare job descriptions for new staff required and undertake annual performance evaluations
- ensure good public relations with membership and other First Nations
- develop expertise by attending training courses
- maintain the housing stock and report on its condition
- prepare a maintenance plan and promote to occupants

Working conditions

- must be able to work independently with a high degree of motivation. Ability to respond to all inquiries personally or appoint a staff member to follow-up
- must be sensitive to community needs and aspirations and act with diplomacy and tactfulness at all times
- must maintain confidentiality. Hours of work are flexible.

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Sample job description 2

Position Title: Financial/Administrator

Reporting Relationship: Report to the housing manager/Coordinator

Responsibilities

Financial

- plan, organize, direct and control all activities concerning budgets, accounting, bookkeeping and reporting for the Housing Authority
- prepare financial statements, forecasts, year-end reports and other various reports necessary throughout the year, i.e., proposals to INAC, CMHC or lenders
- provide financial reports necessary to access or satisfy government funding sources or lending institutions
- implement sound efficient accounting practices at all times through the implementation of security measures.
- monitor cash flow, cheques, bank accounts, arrears, interest rates and collections.
- make recommendations related to interest rates
- control processes for issuing cheques and develop procedures for security
- assist the Project Manager with the development of pro-forma statements for future housing needs and potential projects.
- issue payments for renovation and maintenance work.

Administrative

- recommend clients for approval concerning housing programs as requested
- provides housing reports for the "Board of Trustees" as needed
- promote and enforce housing policies and enforce. Interview membership on financial matters
- assist Project Manager prior and during the course of a retrofit or new housing project
- answer phones on a daily basis and respond to queries from membership related to housing issues, financial or procedural matters
- prepare letters for the collection of rents, maintenance, insurance, water and sewer and provide follow-up
- collect payments for rent, sewer, water and cable
- set up office administration i.e.: filing, accounting and protocol
- interview clients for new housing and retrofit programs

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- provide monthly and annual reports to housing manager as required
- process loan applications up to approval stage for loan to lenders
- process housing applications
- assist clients filling in RRAP applications and submit to CMHC
- process maintenance requests

Working Conditions:

- must maintain a high degree of confidentiality
- work hours must be flexible, but mainly 8:30 to 4:30 daily
- required to attend meetings in the evening for council, committee or department and report on any financial activity.

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Sample job description 3

Position Title: Project Manager

Reporting Relationship: Reports Directly to the housing manager/Coordinator

Responsibilities

- plan, organize, and implement all housing activities related to rehabilitation or new construction
- the Project Manager will acquire all materials and hire subtrades to complete work. Must have signed quotes, change orders or contract in place to proceed
- provide contract administration and report all activity to the housing manager monthly
- supervise and assist maintenance crew, complete all tasks assigned including preparation of training plan for workers
- prepare work schedules and ensure all deadlines are adhered to
- enforce housing policies where related to Project Management i.e. hiring of local labour to complete jobs
- inspect units requiring repairs and prepare cost estimates
- interpret blue prints for construction
- assist with development of tender packages and site selection for new units
- recommend house designs and interview potential clients. Make recommendations to Manager for final approval
- keep detailed records of each house
- recommend progress payments for maintenance, renovation and new construction
- make design changes on-site as required
- ensure quality workmanship and report any infractions to the housing manager.

Working Conditions

- must be able to work independently with a high degree of motivation. Ability to respond to all inquiries personally or appoint a staff member to follow-up
- must be sensitive to community needs and aspirations and act with diplomacy and tactfulness at all times
- must maintain confidentiality. Hours of work are flexible.

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Housing management consists of three distinct sets of tasks: manager-co-ordinator, financial-administrator and project manager.

Each set of tasks may be carried out by one or more people, depending on the size of the First Nations community and the size of the housing portfolio.

Manager-Co-ordinator	Financial-Administrator	Project Manager
General		
Assists, prepares, implements, monitors and evaluates all housing programs and housing-related activities.	Planning, organizing and controlling all activities related to cash flow; the practice of sound accounting strategies; and, providing financial reports to housing committee members and Chief and Council.	Oversees all construction activity for renovations, new construction and assists in administering all housing programs.
Minimum requirements		
Knowledge of construction techniques and building technology, and administrative and computer skills	Strong bookkeeping skills, organizational abilities, and diplomacy in interpersonal interactions. A background in construction is an asset	On-site construction experience combined with formal education, such as a construction technology diploma, and strong interpersonal skills.
Duties include...		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of housing • Renovation of housing • Development of new construction; plans • Contract administration • Planning; recommend clients for approval to housing committee or Chief and Council • Financial reporting • Development of policies and procedures • Prioritization of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to inquiries, processing requests • Rent collection • Renovation budget take-up • New construction budgets • Insurance • Water and sewer • Provision of monthly statements • Processing of loan applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection reports • Specification writing • Cost estimations • Tender packages • Contract documents • Recommendation of house plans • Maintaining databases • Scheduling • Material acquisition while working with the general contractor for the completion of contract

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Manager-Co-ordinator	Financial-Administrator	Project Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resources management (if applicable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritizing of applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> obligations • Ensures that the construction work is progressing and that the workforce is available.
Note: Each sample job requires a fair amount of diplomacy and confidentiality, which, along with common sense, can be the most relevant assets. These, however, are difficult to assess in a job interview unless the interviewers know the person being interviewed.		

Table 2—Housing management tasks

Working conditions

As part of this study, the researchers examined the working conditions for a housing manager's work.

The intensity of a housing manager's work depends on the following:

- The population of the community,
- Geographic location,
- Financial status of the First Nation,
- Level of experience,
- Local co-operation
- Policy development.

The research identified six distinct work environments and categorized them as:

1. Remote communities
2. Remote communities with road access
3. Small rural communities
4. Large rural communities
5. Small urban centres
6. Large urban centres

I—Remote communities

In remote communities, the workplace is generally close-knit. Communication is usually quick and easy. The housing manager must be able to perform a variety of

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tasks, which reflect the job descriptions of the housing co-ordinator and project manager, along with many of the financial and administrative tasks.

First Nations community populations usually range from 200 to 600, but may be as high as 2,000. The smaller the community, the more the housing manager must do within all three job descriptions. This can create high-stress working conditions because they do not conform to an eight-hour working day. Housing managers in these positions often suffer from the health repercussions of high stress and overwork. This can lead to a high turnover of personnel.

The skills needed to be an effective housing manager in a remote community differs from other communities because:

- Budget restrictions mean housing managers do most of the work;
- Isolation and poor Internet access mean access to training is limited;
- Construction activity is reduced because of the high transportation costs;
- Where housing density is higher than four people per house, there is an increase in housing maintenance resulting in greater stress for the housing manager;
- There is reduced quality control because of infrequent inspections by qualified technicians, such as electrical inspectors; and
- There is greater need cultural awareness and the interpersonal dynamics of small communities.

Being the housing manager in a remote community quickly becomes a multi-task position.

2—Remote road-access communities

The communities that have road access, but are still considered remote, have similar characteristics to remote communities without road access. Availability of materials reduces construction logistical problems, unlike remote (fly-in only) communities that depend on seasonal transportation. Road-access communities have more opportunities for training although location is still key to training accessibility, because of limited financial resources for training-related travel.

Community size can vary from 200 to 2,500.

The skill sets required in road-access remote communities are similar to those required in remote communities, and being a housing manager is a multi-task position.

3—Rural communities

Rural communities are defined by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) as communities more than 50 km but less than 350 km from an urban centre. The population of rural communities can vary from 150 to 15,000 so required skill sets tend to depend on population size and financial position. In southern communities across Canada, access to training and development is quite good. Many housing managers are supervisors, co-ordinating and managing a six-to-eight-person department.

4—Small rural communities

In rural communities with populations of less than 500, access to training is similar to the larger rural communities. Two main differences are a reduced housing portfolio to manage and a smaller housing allocation from INAC. The skill sets required in small rural communities are very similar to those required in remote communities, and being a housing manager is a multi-task position.

5—Large rural communities

In large rural communities, those with populations of more than 500, there are usually at least 100 homes to manage. The INAC allocation for new construction is in the neighbourhood of five to 10 homes a year. There may also be large renovation projects.

In these communities, the housing manager's financial role is probably limited to budgeting and advance payments, as there is a separate finance department. The job description, or skill set, is similar to the sample job description for manager-co-ordinator. However, if there is no project manager working conditions have the potential to be very stressful.

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6—Small urban centres

In smaller urban communities—populations less than 1,000 and housing stock about 200 homes or less—there is likely to be a housing manager and finance administrator. The project manager—foreperson could be full-time or seasonal.

The skill sets may in fact be more demanding than those for a larger community, since the manager has to be multi-task oriented because of the small staff.

7—Large urban centres

First Nation housing managers in communities near large urban centres—population over 500—face different types of distractions and pressures. Although access to training is generally not an issue, being close to a non-native community influences housing in many ways, such as:

- A need for storage on construction sites because of higher crime rates;
- More activity because material costs are lower;
- Availability of alternative types of housing;
- Greater acceptance by community members of a rental regime;
- Access to a variety of financing methods; and,
- Better access to apprenticeship, training and education programs.

The skill set required for large urban centres is very similar to that needed by a typical property management company. Housing departments most likely operate in the same way as a property management company.

Summary

Although each workplace requires varying degrees of skill, there are still common elements, which are discussed in the next section.

The underlying difference is that the further north the community, the greater the need for a housing manager who is multi-skilled and culturally sensitive.

CHAPTER 2—PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Sample size

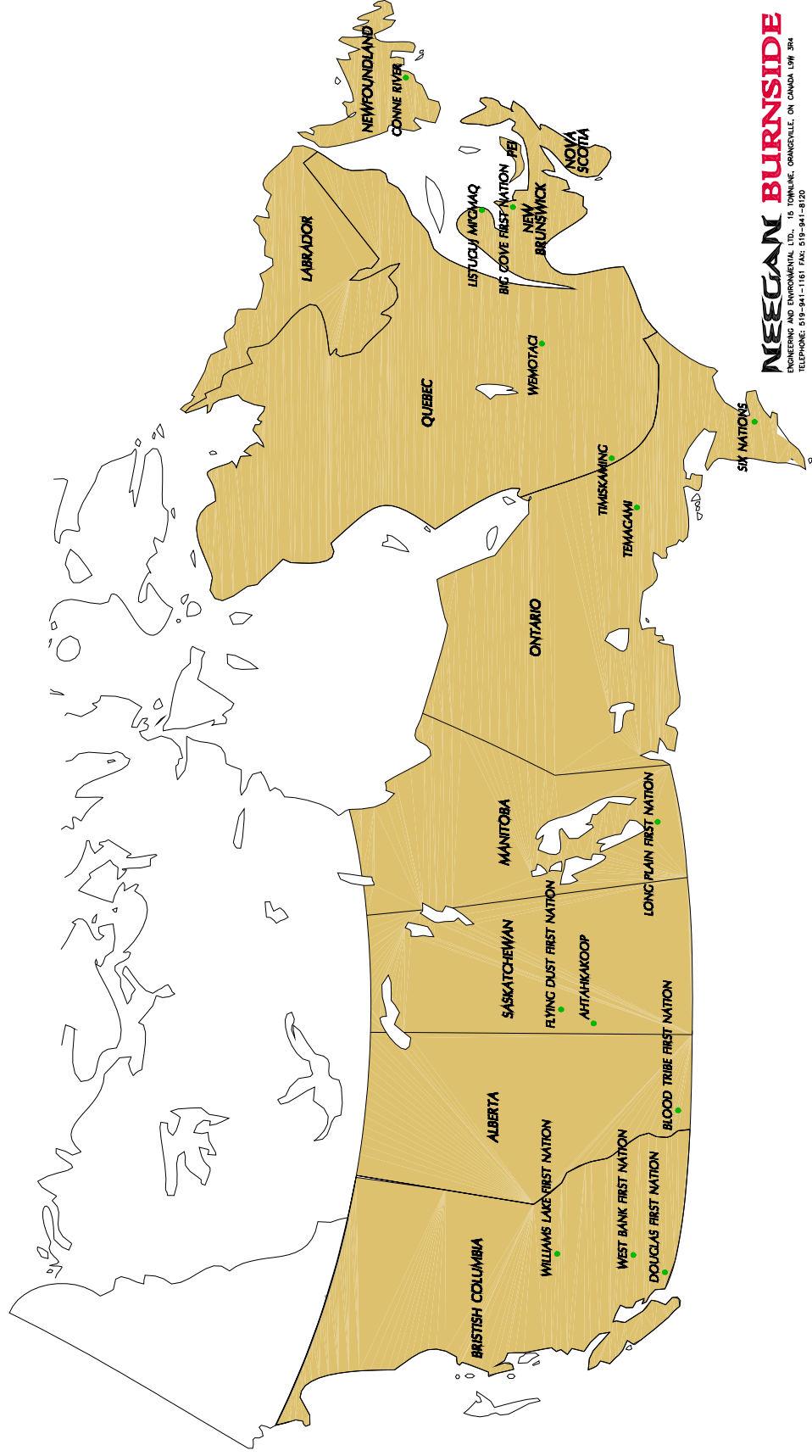
In consultation with CMHC's steering committee, housing managers in the following communities were selected for interviews.

Province	First Nation	Response
British Columbia	Nisga	No response*
	Chemainus First Nation	No response
	Williams Lake First Nation	Response*
	Westbank First Nation	Response
	Douglas First Nation	Response
Alberta	Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation	No response
	Peigan First Nation	No answer*
Saskatchewan	Nehneet First Nation	No answer
	Ahtahkakoop First Nation	Response
Manitoba	Peguis First Nation	No answer
	Barren Lands First Nation	No response
Ontario	Chapleau Cree First Nation	No response
	Moose Cree First Nation	No response
	Nipissing First Nation	No response
	Poplar Hill First Nation	No response
	Temagami First Nation	Response
Quebec	Eagle Village First Nation	Response
	Timiskaming First Nation	Response
	Wemotac First Nation	Response
	Odanak First Nation Cree	No answer
	Cree Nation of Mistissini	Response
New Brunswick	Woodstock First Nation	No response
Prince Edward Island	Lennox Island First Nation	No response
Nova Scotia	Shubenacadie First Nation	No answer
Newfoundland	Miawpukek First Nation	Response
*No response—The housing manager was contacted but did not provide the information.		
*No answer—No one available at the office or the phone number was not active.		
*Response—Community responded and completed the survey.		

Table 3—Communities contacted, responses

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LOCATIONS OF FIRST NATIONS



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All communities on the initial list were contacted at least twice and some communities up to four times. Research staff members attempted to contact all housing managers who did not respond once again before completing this report. Because there was little response from the first, targeted list of communities, the researchers contacted additional First Nations. Table 4 lists the communities.

Province-region	First Nation	Response
Atlantic	Miawpukek First Nation	Response
Ontario	Six Nations	Response
Quebec	Mistissini First Nation	Response
	Listuguj Migmaq First Nation	Response
	Eagle Village First Nation	Response

Table 4—Additional communities contacted

The researchers used the Internet, face-to-face interviews, phone interviews and faxed questionnaires for this study. To obtain significant results the researchers conducted face-to-face interviews in each region and used the questionnaire to obtain a diverse representation of small, large, rural, urban and remote communities.

Face-to-face interviews

The communities selected for the face-to-face interviews were:

- British Columbia—Westbank First Nation
- Alberta—The Blood Tribe First Nation
- Saskatchewan—Flying Dust First Nation
- Manitoba—Long Plains First Nation
- Ontario—Matagami First Nation
- Quebec—Temiscaming First Nation
- Atlantic—Big Cove First Nation.

The face-to-face interviews examined three separate areas:

1. Skills and qualities required to be an effective housing manager.
2. Training programs attended by First Nation staff.
3. Suggestions for improvement in training programs.

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The information from the face-to-face interviews was used to develop a detailed questionnaire for the telephone interviews. Additional research was also conducted through discussions with industry experts and Internet investigations.

Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire was distributed to selected First Nations communities across the country in CMHC's geographic regions (British Columbia, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec Atlantic).

CMHC geographic region	First Nation	Response
British Columbia	Douglas First Nation	Response
	Williams Lake First Nation	Response
Prairies	Ahtahkakoop First Nation	Response
Ontario	Six Nations	Response
	Temagami First Nation	Response
Quebec	Cree Nation of Mistissini	Response
	Eagle Village First Nation	Response
	Listuguj Migmaq FN	Response
	Wemotac First Nation	Response
Atlantic	Miawpukek First Nation	Response

Table 5—Questionnaire respondents

Communities were selected to represent a cross-section of large, small, urban, rural and remote locations. If possible, communities were selected from various Tribal Councils in each region to provide further diversity. The communities that are listed responded to the survey. In order to ensure a representation within each of the regions, additional communities were added when some of the initial ones did not respond.

Ranking of skills

In the face-to-face interviews First Nations housing managers said the most important skills are:

- Housing construction knowledge

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- Housing administrative knowledge
- Housing financial management skills
- Communication and interpersonal skills

The survey asked the housing managers to rank the skills. Most of the housing managers said that formal education is the key to being a successful or qualified manager. The housing managers ranked the priority of skills in each of the four skill sets. Table 6 shows the ranking.

Construction knowledge	Administrative knowledge	Financial management skills	Communication and interpersonal skills
1. Diploma or classroom training acquired 2. Knowledge of residential construction 3. Scheduling maintenance programs 4. Hands-on experience 5. Knowledge of the subtrades	1. Ability to prioritize 2. Writing skills 3. Record keeping 4. Computer skills	1. Budget preparation 2. Cost estimating 3. Property management 4. Mortgage financing	1. Communication skills 2. Ability to listen 3. Stress management 4. Conflict resolution

Table 6—Ranking of skills

The survey also asked housing managers to give the required, important specific skills for each skill set. Table 7 gives those skills

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Skill area	Important specific skills
1. Housing construction knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of construction materials and methods • Contract administration • Specification writing • Construction coordination • Building code • Maintenance protocol • Drafting and blueprint reading • Lot servicing • Tendering • Infrastructure (water, sewer, roads) • Landscaping • Heating, mechanical and electrical • Construction co-ordination • Drafting and blueprint reading • Structural.
2. Housing administrative knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to keep detailed records/transaction • Time management • Policy development • Organized filing system • Development of emergency measures • Develop maintenance protocol • Process applications and loans • Computerize the department • Develop a housing manual • Develop a protocol for general inquiries • Generate reports
3. Housing financial management skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to obtain funding • Leasing process • Bookkeeping • Subsidies • Resource planning • Accounting principles • Cash flow management • Financial statements • First Nation budgeting – INAC

Skill area	Important specific skills
4. Communication and interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to communicate well in writing and verbally • Able to deal with stress • Leadership skills • Motivation skills • Cultural and community awareness • Conflict resolution

Table 7—Required skills for housing managers

Construction knowledge

Housing construction knowledge is an understanding of construction aspects such as materials, codes, techniques and technology. This includes the knowledge required for ongoing maintenance, which relates to property and management skills.

Techniques can be itemized as follows:

- Lot servicing
- Excavation
- Forming
- Framing
- Rough-in of mechanical-electrical
- Insulating factors
- Finishes
- Site improvements.

Housing managers also need to be aware of building code requirements and have a basic knowledge of the subtrades required to do the work. Previous experience in building construction, repair or maintenance is an excellent background.

Knowledge of construction technology gives a housing manager the tools needed to understand how a house functions as a system. An understanding of electrical, mechanical, plumbing, heating, drainage and ventilation systems is very helpful in developing maintenance programs and in ensuring that the quality of workmanship is up to standard. It is not necessary to become a building inspector, but a combination of formal education, professional affiliations, classroom workshops and practical experience is extremely beneficial for a housing manager. Even if the housing

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manager is not inspecting buildings, it is very useful to have a general understanding of building construction when making decisions about housing repairs and dealing with contractors.

In some communities the housing manager-co-ordinator is not only a property manager, but also building inspector and project manager. In remote areas the housing manager probably has to do some of the construction work as well.

Training and development of housing knowledge can take many forms. For example, many jobs and disciplines can provide the necessary practical training such as:

- Bricklayer;
- On-site labourer;
- Helper for subtrades such as plumber, electrician, heating contractor, carpenter;
- Surveyor assistant;
- Clerk at a lumber yard;
- Employment at building and builder supply outlets;
- Building inspection department; and,
- Construction management, etc.

Most colleges, many federal, provincial and territorial governments and professional groups offer courses in construction management, building codes and related topics.

These hands-on, applied learning courses benefit the inexperienced and provide a solid theoretical background for becoming a First Nation housing manager.

Availability of courses depends on the institution. Table 8 lists training institutions and course descriptions.

Internships are ideal for training potential First Nations housing managers because they show real-life situations. It is best when an internship is combined with classroom training. Internships are most often offered during the construction season and interns must be able to learn quickly.

Having a solid construction background and the initiative to learn independently are desirable traits for becoming an effective housing manager. Keeping abreast of new

technology, new materials and computerization can benefit the housing manager and make the position exciting, interesting and innovative.

Administrative knowledge

During the research, it became apparent that an effective housing manager requires a variety of administrative skills. One of the most important functions of an organization—and its manager—is keeping detailed records of all housing department transactions.

Housing administrative knowledge skills include:

- Structuring the department (organization chart);
- Creating and following policies and procedures for housing development;
- Keeping records of all transactions;
- Keeping accurate loan files;
- Monitoring and evaluating systems and procedures;
- Developing and putting in place emergency measures;
- Setting up maintenance policies and procedures;
- Developing and using a regular reporting system for a housing committee or Band Council;
- Setting up, operating and maintaining a computerized management, accounting and database system for housing;
- Managing personal and staff time

Often the housing manager is responsible for more than one area of property management. This makes strong organizational skills vital, particularly in developing and putting housing policies and procedures into practice.

The housing manager's role may also include building inspector and construction project manager as well as property manager. Thorough knowledge of computers, particularly of database software, is essential to being organized. Being able to obtain information rapidly from an extensive database streamlines productivity.

A housing manager with basic administrative skills finds it easier to respond to enquiries from administrative personnel, tenants, First Nation membership, Tribal

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Council or funding agencies.

Financial management skills

Financial management is a very important part of a housing manager's job. A basic understanding of accounting principles, cash flow management, audit reports, cost control and financial statements is key to operating a financially sound housing authority or department. Although most housing managers delegate a lot of the day-to-day financial reporting and recording, they must always be aware of the organization's financial position.

Budgeting for new construction projects and ongoing operation and maintenance of housing stock is necessary. A housing manager must also understand First Nations finances, funding policies and procedures.

The financial requirements for construction and renovation from rent and funding income are often a juggling act. In many cases, needs are greater than the available funds. Skill at balancing the financial books becomes even more important. It is also very important that a housing manager be financially responsible, for both the Chief and Council and funding agencies. Providing a detailed resource plan and allocating identified funds only will help ensure future funding.

The roles of housing manager and finance administrator differ, but because budgeting is critical to the success of a project, a housing manager must be able to formulate and produce budgets.

Communication and interpersonal skills

Communication and interpersonal skills include:

- Being able to give clear and concise instructions
- Being diplomatic and putting community members at ease
- Being tactful
- Developing effective conflict resolution techniques
- Remaining calm during confrontation
- Ease at public speaking
- Strong writing skills

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- Taking a leadership role in training in the community
- Being able to manage stress
- Developing strong cultural and gender awareness

These skills are essential to being an effective housing manager, since a large part of the job is resolving issues raised by community members. Often, these issues are the result of poor communication or lack of communication among and between the housing department, Chief and Council and the people of the community. An effective housing manager liaises between the Chief and Council and the people they service. These skills are also important when dealing with Chief and Council and funding agencies.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of developing interpersonal communication skills in three areas: writing, speaking and body language. First Nation housing managers must be culturally sensitive and understand motivational factors of everyone and every group they deal with. A manager who communicates effectively has less stress and is more effective in answering community members' needs.

Stress management and conflict resolution techniques allow the housing manager to deal with all types of clientele. Several managers who responded to this survey said there is a great deal of stress associated with their jobs and it would be useful to have stress management training.

The survey results show that leadership is also an integral part of being a good housing manager. Since several people often report to the housing manager, a housing manager must be able to lead and motivate staff. Interpersonal skills are also important in dealing with contractors and project managers.

CHAPTER 3—EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMS

Overview of training facilities

Most of the accredited colleges and universities across Canada* offer courses, certificate programs, diplomas or degrees in fields useful for prospective housing managers. Many colleges and universities have satellite campuses outside urban centres or distance learning programs.

Training programs identified in this report are limited to institutions, corporations, professional societies and government agencies that provide training that specifically addresses the needs of First Nations people and communities.

The following is a fairly exhaustive list of available training programs that are designed to meet the needs of First Nation housing managers.

Table 8 on the following pages summarizes available programs.

* For a list of Canadian universities and colleges, see <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/canu/>. (Website current in February, 2004)

An Examination of First Nations Housing Management Training Programs

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Institution	Location	Programs	Cost	Duration	Website
National					
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)	National Office 700 Montreal Rd. Ottawa, ON K1A 0P7	RRAP Section 95 Section 10 Aboriginal Capacity Development	Varies	Varies region to region	www.cmhc.ca
Real Estate Institute of Canada (REIC)	Offices throughout Canada. Refer to REIC for information	Variety of programs related to real estate property management.	\$295-\$795	Six months (approx.)	www.reic.ca
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)		Developing Effective Community Strategies (In conjunction with Mohawk of the Bay of Quinte)	Still to be approved	Awaiting approval	www.inac.gc.ca
Turtle Island Association	R.R3, Cornwall Island, Ont.	Client Counselling Workshop Arrears Management	\$925 a day; \$250 a person, varies by region	Two-day workshops	www.turtleisland.ca
Aboriginal Financial Officers of Canada (AFOA)	1066 Somerset Ave. West Suite 301 Ottawa, ON K1Y 4T3	Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager Online Courses Aboriginal Human and Fiscal Issues Aboriginal History and Development Strategy and Decisions	\$300 for professional exam	Six certificate courses; four diploma courses	www.afoa.ca
ONTARIO					
Confederation College (Negahneewin College)	P.O. Box 398 Thunder Bay, ON	Aboriginal Financial and Economic Planning	\$1,800-\$2,300	One to three years, depending on program	www.confederationcollege.ca

Institution	Location	Programs	Cost	Duration	Website
Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) Aboriginal Services	700 Bay Street Suite 700 Toronto, ON	Volunteer advisers	Depends on need and location	Depends on circumstances	www.ceso_saco.com/aboriginalsuc.htm
Algonquin College	1385 Woodroffe Ottawa, ON	Construction Management Certificate Construction Estimating Certificate	\$2,000-2,400	One year certificate	www.algonquincollege.com
Anishinabek Education Institute (in conjunction with Cambrian College)	Highway 17 West North Bay, ON	Anishinabek Governance and Management	\$2,172 for diploma program	Varies per course	www.anishinabek.ca
Cambrian College	1400 Barrydown Road Sudbury, ON	First Nation Construction Management Technology First Nation Financial Management	\$1,500 to \$2,500	Three years	www.cambrian.on.ca
Property Management Training Association (PMTA)	512 King St. East Toronto, ON M5A 1M1	Certified Residential Property Manager Property Management Accounting Property Management Career Preparation	\$300 to \$6,700	Two to four months	www.propertymgmttraining.on.ca
Ontario First Nation Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC)	Offices in Toronto and Thunder Bay RR #6 Hagersville, ON	Certification of Ontario's First Nations Housing Inspectors Advisory to First Nation Housing Policies			www.ofntsc.org
Manitoba					
Anokiwin Training Institute (ATI)	260 St. Mary Ave. Winnipeg, Man. R3C 0M6	House maintenance (community-based training) Building maintenance	Varies	Varies per course or workshop	www.anokiwin.com

An Examination of First Nations Housing Management Training Programs

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Institution	Location	Programs	Cost	Duration	Website
Yellowquill College	831 Portage Ave. Winnipeg, MB	Dealing with contractors First Nation governance diploma	\$3,500 (yearly) Distance \$450 per course	Two years, 12-week modules	www.yellowquillcollege.mb.ca
Saskatchewan					
Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology	4 th Avenue South Saskatoon, SK	Carpentry	\$2,161	30 weeks	www.siastr.sk.ca
Alberta					
Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) (Safety Codes Council)	106 Street NW Edmonton, AB	Verbal communication skills	\$195	1 day	
Northwest Territories					
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (in conjunction with School of Community Government)	Headquarters P.O. Box 2100 Yellowknife, NT	Community finance office Community government management	Varies	Depends on course	
British Columbia					
Native Education Centre	285 East 5th Ave. Vancouver, BC	Office administration training program	\$2,500	One year	www.necvancouver.org
Preferred Certified Services	2832 Powder Pt. Rd. NanOOSE Bay, BC	Construction management training Residential training	\$950-\$1,450	32 hours	
Capilano College	2055 Purcell Way North Vancouver, BC	Aboriginal financial management Certification program	Unavailable	2 years	

National programs

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) programs listed in this section are delivered through CMHC local and regional offices.

CMHC offers a variety of housing management training workshops and programs for both on-and off-reserve communities in partnership with First Nation communities and Tribal Councils. Usually, regional CMHC offices administer these programs. Some programs deal with understanding and delivering CMHC programs, such as the Section 95 Housing Program, Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) and programs for seniors and people with disabilities. Information about these programs is often provided through training workshops that cover topics such as applications for new housing funding, RRAP administration and adapting housing for seniors or the disabled.

The Native Inspection Services Initiative (NISI) provides for the contracting out of CMHC inspections for on-reserve programs to First Nations technical-inspection service providers. Through this initiative, CMHC is participating in building the capacity of First Nations technical services.

Another program offered by CMHC is the Aboriginal Capacity Development Program (ACD). ACD helps First Nations work towards self-sufficiency in housing through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, training and other resources. Training sessions are available on client counselling, property management planning, home maintenance, arrears management and indoor air quality. Funding is limited for this program.

CMHC has produced two capacity training videos. The first, *Because It's My Home*, features Saddle Lake First Nation in Alberta. The second, *Home Maintenance I Can Do It Myself*, outlines basic housing maintenance and repairs.

CMHC also co-sponsors regional housing conferences that include region-specific issues.

More details about CMHC programs is on the CMHC website at www.cmhc.ca.

Real Estate Institute of Canada

The Real Estate Institute of Canada (REIC), an association of professionals, has been educating and certifying professionals in real estate since 1955. Training programs range from seminars to professional education leading to professional designations. The goal of REIC programs is to establish, maintain, promote and advance high standards of practice through education, certification and accreditation in occupations concerned with real estate.

REIC offers courses on various topics related to property management. These courses can either be taken separately or as part of a program leading to certification or accreditation. All REIC programs are available in REIC regional offices and most are also available on an in-house basis or through home study. Subjects include Ethics, Legal Issues in Real Estate, The Leasing Process, Negotiation and Documentation, Basic Marketing, Managing O&M, Site Management and Risk Management.

REIC also offers a variety of half-day workshops on a variety of topics, with a focus on condominiums and rental apartments. Although REIC programs are related more to property management than First Nation housing management, some modules offer information relevant to First Nation housing managers.

REIC courses are accredited and many topics relate to First Nation housing managers. See the REIC website at www.reic.ca for more information.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

INAC's primary housing role is to provide First Nations communities with a minor capital budget for house construction and related infrastructure such as water, sewage, roads and drainage. INAC offers several training programs.

Usually, regionally certified trainers, arranged through a Tribal Council or First Nation Technical organization, deliver training workshops. There are now 16 authorized trainers who provide workshops in various regions of the country. More information on training programs is available on at www.inac.gc.ca, the INAC

website.

Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada (AFOA)

The Aboriginal Financial Officers Association of Canada (AFOA) is a national, professional association exclusively serving individuals working for, or aspiring to work with, lending institutions or First Nation organizations.

AFOA provides training, certification and professional development specifically in the area of financial management. AFOA offers six certificate level courses and eight diploma level courses at this time. Courses can be used towards the Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager designation or towards either a certificate or diploma in Aboriginal Financial Management.

The areas of competency for certification include: Aboriginal History, Communication and Personal Skills, Financial Accounting, Management Accounting, Computer Applications, Financial Management, Management Information Systems, Economics, Law, Quantitative Methods, Strategy and Decision Making and Aboriginal Human and Fiscal Issues.

Three AFOA courses are offered on the Internet and AFOA plans to offer more. The Internet courses are Aboriginal Human and Fiscal Issues, Aboriginal History and Development, and Strategy and Decisions.

Additional information is available on the AFOA website at www.foa.ca.

Turtle Island Associates (TIA)

Turtle Island Associates (TIA) is an Aboriginal corporation that provides information and training programs specifically for First Nation clients. Several of the housing managers surveyed had attended TIA training sessions. At this time, TIA does not have a comprehensive housing manager program but does offer several courses relating to housing managers and housing department-authority needs. Other courses TIA offers include:

- Housing Committees that Work
- Effective Presentations

- Successful Community Meetings
- Meeting Skills
- Communication Skills
- Time Management
- Conflict Resolution.

Details of TIA programs are on Turtle Island's website at www.turtleisland.ca.

Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO)—National Office for CESO Aboriginal Services

The national office for the CESO Aboriginal Services is in Toronto. CESO Aboriginal Services assists Aboriginal communities, organizations and entrepreneurs with governance, business start-up advice and expansion advice. CESO Aboriginal Services supports the aspirations of Aboriginal Peoples in achieving self-sufficiency and self-determination and achieves this through the transfer of knowledge and skills by CESO Volunteer Advisers (VAs).

CESO VAs offer the expertise and skills of volunteer “native and non-native Elders” to First Nations, Inuit and Métis businesses and communities. Most VAs are retired and they work at the request of Aboriginal communities or businesses, offering advice and practical skills at the grassroots level. CESO VAs have worked with thousands of Aboriginal clients in hundreds of different ways—from helping establish or improve businesses and community governments, to advising on housing projects.

Some of the advisory and training services offered by CAS include Community Budgeting Seminars, Business Training and Advice, Organizational Development and Human Resources and Financial Management. Program details are available at www.ceso-saco.com/aboriginalsvc.htm, the CESO website.

Provincial programs

Ontario

Property Management Training Association—Online

The Property Management Training Association (PMTA), established in 1988, is based in Toronto and offers several courses in property management. Courses can either be taken separately or used towards becoming a Certified Residential Property Manager (CRPM). Requirements include a high school diploma and completion of four property management courses that include the Career Preparation Program, Intermediate Property Management, and two courses in Property Management Accounting. An additional eight hours of qualifying continuing education is also required each year.

Several PMTA courses, such as the Property Management Career Preparation Program, are offered as a 10-week classroom course, a 26-lesson correspondence course, or online at the students' own pace. The cost is approximately \$1,100 for the classroom course and \$874 for the correspondence or online courses.

At this time, PMTA does not offer programs targeted to First Nations communities although some of the topics may relate to housing management in First Nations communities located near large urban centers.

The property management diploma can be completed in four months at a cost of \$5,150. Additional information is available at the PMTA website at www.propertymgmttraining.on.ca.

Confederation College (Negahneewin College) of Indigenous Studies

Negahneewin, in Thunder Bay, offers two programs useful for First Nation housing managers: Business Management (Aboriginal Organizations) and the Aboriginal Financial and Economic Planning Program. The Business Management program is a six-semester diploma course and the Financial and Economic Planning Program is a four-semester program.

Algonquin College

Ottawa's Algonquin College offers a Construction Management Certificate Program with six compulsory courses. Although most courses are classroom courses, Algonquin has a few online capabilities.

Anishinabek Education Institute

The Anishinabek Education Institute (AEI) is accredited through Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology in Sudbury. This particular program has been spearheaded by the Union of Ontario Indians in North Bay. A main training focus is governance and First Nations organizational management. The curriculum, with tailoring, fits into a training plan for a First Nation housing manager.

Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology

Cambrian College of Applied Arts and Technology in Sudbury has developed a three-year diploma program geared specifically towards First Nations communities. First Nation Construction Technology Management (FNCM) is a three-year Diploma of Technology program. Most parts of the course provides the necessary background to perform project management functions, such as proposal and communication skills and overall maintenance, which would benefit a First Nation housing manager.

Tuition is about \$2,000.

Manitoba

Anokiiwin Training Institute

Located in Winnipeg and Thompson, the Anokiiwin Training Institute offers a full range of community-based training programs that allow students to remain in their home communities. Anokiiwin also offers several training workshops and seminars developed specifically for First Nation needs. Anokiiwin consults extensively with individual First Nations to match the needs and expectations of each community.

Community-based training programs range from vocational development in the trades to project management, including computer software programs. Each

program curriculum has been tested in the field and customized to meet each client's needs. Anokiwin will also develop customized community-based training programs.

Anokiwin is now developing a program specifically designed to meet the training needs of First Nation housing managers. This program will cover many of the areas addressed in this report, including practical housing knowledge and interpersonal, organizational and computer skills. Training will be divided into separate modules or courses, which will allow potential housing managers to take only the courses that they require. Whenever possible, Anokiwin Training Institute intends to use Aboriginal instructors. Details of Anokiwin Training Institute housing programs and other programs are on the Institute's website at www.anokiwin.com.

Yellowquill College

Yellowquill College, Winnipeg, was created in 1984 through a joint funding arrangement between INAC and the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council. Yellowquill College programs include:

- Certified Aboriginal Financial Manager (CAFM)
- Administrative Assistant Program
- First Nations Governance Diploma Program
- Social Development and Management.

Most of the programs are two-year diploma programs, however courses can be taken separately. One program of particular interest is the First Nation Governance Diploma Program. This program's goal is to provide participants with an understanding of First Nation political, cultural, historical, economic and legal issues, together with the study of general management practices. This can enable graduates to become an integral part of managing efficient and effective First Nation governments and organizations.

Yellowquill programs incorporate First Nation perspectives and beliefs into general management, leadership and administration. The Governance program incorporates several practical, workplace sessions during the two-year program to ensure that academic learning is complemented with work experience. The Governance program consists of 12, two-week modules at a cost of \$750 a module.

On completing the program, students are expected to produce a community project incorporating the skills and knowledge acquired from the program

Information about funding is available through the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council. Details of the program are on their website at www.yellowquillcollege.mb.ca.

Northwest Territories

Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (School of Community Government)

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWT HC) in Yellowknife is responsible for assisting communities to assume the role of providing housing and to sustain Northern economic development. This is achieved by providing leadership and support to communities in technical research and services, financial support, information sharing, training and economic development initiatives.

NWTHC training programs include a one-year certificate program and a two-year diploma program for Aboriginal housing managers. The objective of the programs is to provide students with the skills required for senior housing management tasks.

Specific areas in the programs include: planning and development, general accounting practices, governance issues, communication, issues related to social housing, tenant relations, maintenance management systems, leadership, informatics and community cultural values and ethics. Details are available on the NWTHC website at <http://nwthc.gov.nt.ca>.

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAT) offers a 30-week certificate carpentry program that covers all the information necessary to build a house. Courses in safety awareness, scaffolds and rigging are also available. On completion of the course, 750 hours can be credited towards an apprenticeship program.

Alberta

Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT)

Located in Edmonton, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) offers training in 32 trades, 35 engineering technologies, business, accounting, and high-tech programs. NAIT's goal is to develop long-term relationships with members of the First Nations, Métis Settlements and Aboriginal organizations throughout Canada and provide useful training opportunities.

NAIT has found that by offering the training programs directly in the community there is increased attendance and a higher rate of graduation, which is attributed to fewer issues related to relocating and adjusting to urban life.

One of the programs that NAIT offers is the CMHC New House Inspector Training Program. This course trains individuals to become inspectors for new house construction and follows the National Building Code. Trainees should have journeyman status in a construction-related trade such as carpentry or extensive hands-on experience building houses. The three-week course concludes with four exams—written, oral, plans and site—administered by CMHC. Students must obtain 80 per cent on all four to pass the course.

NAIT also offers CMHC's Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) Inspection Program. The three-week course trains inspectors for on-reserve houses for both CMHC and Indian and Northern Affairs. The course has the same entrance requirements as the New House Inspector Training Program, and concludes with written, oral, plans and site exams administered by CMHC. The pass mark is 80 per cent on all exams.

With the First Nations Technical Services Advisory Group (FNTSAG), NAIT is developing a training program for First Nation public works managers and housing directors covering Basic Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes, Communication Skills, Negotiation Skills, Staff Supervision, Finance, Preparation of Action Plans, Technology, Policies and Procedures, Consultation, Conducting Research, Proposal Preparation, Project Management, Infrastructure, Government Programs and Safety

Programs. Prospective students are assessed through a competency profile, which identifies their current skill level so applicants do not take courses in areas in which they are already competent. NAIT is now developing a two-year pilot project to deliver this course in the Edmonton area.

NAIT uses a large number of Aboriginal instructors to deliver programs and can provide distance education. NAIT has two fully equipped video-conferencing studios and offers many programs through two-way, live video.

NAIT has found that hands-on training, since it more closely matches historical Aboriginal methods of learning new skills, to be very effective. In view of this, NAIT prefers to alternate between classroom theory training and practical applied training that reinforces classroom training. Details of NAIT's programs can be found on NAIT's website at www.nait.ab.ca.

Safety Codes Council

Courses offered by Safety Codes Council (SCC) in Edmonton would benefit a housing manager. The courses include:

- Verbal Communication Skills
- Part 9 Housing and Small Buildings
- Building Structures
- Solid-fuel Burning Appliances.

The course curriculum focuses on safety, but provides depth to a housing manager's background.

British Columbia

The Native Education Centre

The Native Education Centre in Vancouver has been offering culturally relevant education and training to the Aboriginal community since 1967. The courses most relevant to First Nation housing managers are in the Office Administration Training Program.

This program offers courses ranging from basic computer training to interpersonal skill training. The program is 10½ months and is designed for students interested in

learning administrative and technical office skills. A valuable component of the program is a practical-training placement during which students apply their new skills in an office. For program details, see the Centre website at www.necvancouver.org.

Preferred Certified Services

Preferred Certified Services (PCS), based in Nanoose Bay, has programs for First Nations communities that include courses developing capacity in housing. The housing courses include:

- Renovation
- Computer Systems
- Architecture
- Building Management Training
- Construction.

Capilano College

Capilano College offers an Aboriginal Financial Management Certificate Program, a practical, hands-on program taught at a pace most people can manage. The 20-month program, associated with the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOC), provides experience in intermediate accounting, computer applications, leadership and communication. Formal accreditation is being pursued.

CHAPTER 4—NEEDS AND GAPS

Training programs attended by housing managers

The housing managers surveyed use relatively few training programs. Most say they are willing to take more training, but said there is limited information available about courses. A possible solution is a database or other material saying what training is available and listing funding programs and sources.

Another concern the managers have is the time needed for training. In many First Nations communities the housing manager is the only housing staff. There isn't time for full-time, multi-week programs. Many suggested that two- or three-day seminars would be preferable.

Cost is also an issue. Budgets are limited and there is often not enough money for training courses.

Managers had attended several CMHC workshops on managing housing repairs and new unit construction. Some had attended Real Estate Institute of Canada courses. OTHERS had received some basic training from their Tribal Councils. Some had attended the pilot program that had been offered by INAC in conjunction with the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation

Most managers said they are interested in additional training both for themselves and members of their staff.

Needs and gaps

There are few "First Nations specific" training programs for housing managers. Due to a massive housing and infrastructure shortage, and an increasing under-35 population, building capacity in housing is a priority. As CMHC funding and INAC budgets are limited, each First Nation will have to become informed and innovative in order to meet these challenges.

Based on survey results, training is needed in the four skill areas (housing construction knowledge, housing administration knowledge, financial skills, interpersonal skills) everywhere except southern Ontario.

Training is needed, but is not available, in the following key areas:

- Interpersonal skills
- Construction knowledge
- Introductory construction programs
- Financial courses dealing with First Nations funding and budgeting
- Internships in First Nations communities.

Nationally, there are courses for housing managers, but they are infrequent, irregular and limited in funding.

Needs

Interpersonal training

The largest gap is in interpersonal skills. There are very few training programs that deal with the softer issues, such as communication skills, cultural and community awareness, stress management and organizational procedures.

Those responding to the survey suggested more one-on-one training, such as job shadowing or mentoring, might be an effective training method as it is practical and also involves personal growth.

Housing construction knowledge

Many of the housing managers did not come from a housing background when they were appointed and learned about housing construction on the job.

To provide training, experienced housing managers could mentor less-experienced managers, either in a centralized training environment or in the community.

Mentoring would be of particular interest to smaller communities, where the housing manager usually has a broader range of duties than in larger communities.

There are construction techniques training programs, but they are usually longer than practical for most managers. Shorter seminars are not readily available for introductory housing construction procedures, which are more beneficial to housing managers.

There is a long list of construction courses that target fundamental housing construction theory and techniques, but courses need to be directed more to the needs of housing managers.

Financial skills training

Survey respondents have a common problem: they don't have the training needed to keep up with day-to-day financial reporting, monitoring of existing housing stock, overseeing arrears management and maintaining a positive cash flow for rental units.

There are accounting courses offered by several training programs, but few designed for First Nation housing managers. The Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOA) offers national courses, but there is an enormous need for financial training in Northern, rural and remote communities.

Organization skills

Few of the many courses in financial management, computerization, policy development and time management are directed to First Nation housing managers.

Summary

Factors contributing to training needs and gaps are:

- Geographic location—accessibility to training institutions and affordable transportation
- Availability or unavailability of funding
- Level of institutional education that is accessible to a First Nation community
- Insufficient First Nations-specific training
- Little or no information about course and program availability.

CHAPTER 5—OBSTACLES AND OBSERVATIONS

Obstacles

Effective training addresses the needs of those being trained. An initial step in identifying those needs would be the development of an assessment tool (preferably web-based) profiling each community housing manager and showing the level of expertise available in each community. This would help determine the training needed for housing managers and housing staff.

Some of the obstacles to delivering training programs are:

- Geographic location
- Funding availability
- Motivation from trainee
- Travel time
- Cultural differences
- Level of formal education
- Accessibility.

Training program types

After reviewing training modules, it appears that the variety of training and evaluation methods vary as much as the courses themselves. Development of standardized training based on regional differences can enhance the participation and graduation rates. For example, a housing manager living in a remote community can be mentored from another location.

The standard practice of course accreditation combined with practical, on-the-job training is very useful. It is ideal when done with certified trainers. Options for training methods are:

1. Courses

- class
- workshop
- correspondence
- online
- video conference
- tutor

2. Internship

- job shadow

3. Mentoring:

- partial intern
- resource

4. Practical on-the-job with trainer

Regional differences should be taken into account. A general course should be offered to all First Nations.

Job stability

The research revealed other factors that affect the quality of expertise in housing departments, which in turn affects the quality of housing.

Common issues are:

- Burnout—high stress and limited job satisfaction
- Very high attrition—nobody to train the new manager
- Pay level—similar to other jobs
- No job security—sink or swim
- Long hours—no recognition
- Lack of efficient project managers - need training
- Financial problems—cash flow management
- Lack of confidence - unable to make decision - unaware of processes.
- No policies being enforced

From the number of housing managers on stress leave, it appears that the job is very stressful. Most managers want information about workshops that would help them do their jobs effectively with less stress.

Certification for housing managers could improve job security, self-confidence and even pay. A certification program should be created.

CHAPTER 6—DEVELOPING TRAINING AND COURSES

There was a general feeling that there should be more training concerning First Nation housing management tailored specifically for First Nation communities.

Some respondents suggested improved co-ordination between CMHC and INAC in educating the housing managers about applying for funds for new housing, renovations and general training. Some communities may not be taking advantage of all existing programs

It was a challenge to identify the needs of each housing manager who responded to survey was a challenge. Each manager had a different opinion. Some of the opinions follow.

- Smaller communities said that many training programs are not aimed toward smaller First Nations, but larger urban centres.
- Some managers thought it was a good idea to have the training at a central location with other regional managers, as this would allow them to network and exchange information.
- Other managers thought that it would be better to have one-on-one training in their community. They felt that this would allow more focus on questions and concerns specific to their community. They also said they would feel more comfortable in a small setting.

The suggestions about improvements in training, length of training sessions and housing manager's training are similar. Respondents from small, large, rural and urban centres agreed that courses should last from two days to one week to avoid prolonged periods away from the office and family. The survey respondents said they would like to have training in:

- Management skills
- Proposal writing
- Real estate

- Property appraisals
- Housing policy development
- Construction
- Cost projecting
- Finance and funding.

There is often more emphasis on technical skills than social skills. Many respondents felt that there should be more opportunities for training concerning social interaction, as it is a very large part of their jobs. Possible training areas could involve improving communication skills, conflict resolution techniques, stress management and general organizational skills.

Maintaining cultural sensitivity throughout training was identified as being very important.

In view of cultural, regional and demographic differences, the researchers developed a sample curriculum. The following is the sample curriculum, which is for discussion purposes only. Note that the course outline does not specify practical, on-the-job training or distinguish between student and adult learners.

Sample curriculum

Course title	
I—Computers	
Subject	Hours
Introduction	5
Basic Keyboarding	30
Intro to Windows operating system	12
Internet usage	15
Word Processing	30
Spreadsheets	30
Introduction to Digital Cameras	3
Total	125
2—Interpersonal skills	
Subject	Hours
Cultural History and Ethics	30
Communication Skills	30
Personal Conflict Resolution	15
Leadership Skills	15
Staff Supervision	15
Stress Management	30
Total	135
3—Project management	
Subject	Hours
Introduction	5
Time Management	15
Project Management Software	5
Project Budgeting	15
Principles of Quality Management	10
Conflict Resolution	15
Project Communication	15
Team Building	10
Sample Project Exercises	30
Total	120

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4—Financial management	
Subject	Hours
Introduction	5
Basic Accounting Principles	15
Introduction to Accounting Software	15
Budgeting	15
Financial Planning	15
Life Cycle Costing	15
Financial Ethics	15
Total	95
5—Housing technology	
Subject	Hours
Overview	5
General Construction Fundamentals	15
Foundations	15
Framing	15
Plumbing	15
Electrical	15
Infrasrtucture	10
Mechanical	15
Finishes	15
Maintenance and Repairs	30
Site Planning	15
Innovative Housing Technology	20
Energy Efficiency	15
Building Code	20
Subdivision design	15
Total	235

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6—Government relations (external)	
Subject	Hours
Overview	5
CMHC (Section 95 and Section 10)	15
INAC Funding Programs and Procedures	15
Related Government Regulations/Building Code Overview	30
Occupational Health and Safety Standards Overview	30
Total	95
7. First Nation housing manager overview	
Subject	Hours
What makes a good housing manager	5
Administrative Training	30
Guest Speakers	15
Community Housing Plan Development	15
Housing Policy—Development and Implementation	20
Proposal Writing	15
First Nation Government (internal)	25
Total	125

Table 9—Sample First Nation housing manager training curriculum

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