



Housing

2014–2017

Strategic Plan



Message from the Chair



As Chairman of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) Board of Directors, I am very happy to present the Strategic Plan for 2014-2017. This plan provides an overview of NLHC and identifies key goals and objectives to be accomplished over the planning period. The strategic directions of government have been carefully considered in the preparation of this plan.

Housing stability is a significant determinant of an individual's health, promoting social and economic participation in the community. The Provincial Social Housing Plan, *Secure Foundations*, released in 2009, addresses the needs of households with low income. It outlined goals and strategic action priorities to demonstrate the Provincial Government's commitment to provide safe, adequate and affordable housing options to residents with low and moderate income; these are priority areas identified by our stakeholders.

Secure Foundations has strongly supported housing needs through increased investments in the social housing stock and home repair programs for homeowners with low and moderate income. Activities stemming from *Secure Foundations* are supported by extensive and valuable ongoing input from many stakeholder groups. These groups work diligently to ensure housing and support services contribute to housing stability and prevent homelessness. Strategic Plan 2014-2017 continues to support the strategic priorities of *Secure Foundations* and build on its successes.

This strategic plan was developed under the direction of NLHC's Board of Directors in accordance with the requirement of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* that Category 1 entities table a Strategic Plan. My signature is indicative of the Board's accountability for preparing and achieving the goals and objectives of Strategic Plan 2014-2017 as well as reporting on accomplishments over the planning period.

We are encouraged by the improvements that we have achieved to date, and we look forward to building on these initiatives in future years, by working with our many partners to provide a better quality of life for clients who require housing assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Len Simms". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Len Simms
Chair of the Board of Directors
Chief Executive Officer

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Introduction

The *Transparency and Accountability Act* (the *Act*) provides the legislative framework for the conduct of fiscal planning and reporting, and accountability for Government entities. The *Act* requires that Government entities complete three-year performance-based strategic plans.

Overview

Newfoundland Labrador Housing is a provincial Crown corporation which operates under the authority of the *Housing Corporation Act*. It is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The Board represents different geographic areas and interest groups and reports to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador through the Minister of Advanced Education and Skills, Minister Responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation.

NLHC maintains a presence across the province with seven regional offices. There is a complement of 377 positions located at the seven regional offices and at head office in St. John's. NLHC's head office and Avalon Regional Office staff account for 247 employees or 66 percent of our workforce. There are regional offices in Marystown, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Stephenville and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The 130 employees at these locations (34 percent of NLHC's workforce) deliver programs and services to clients, a high percentage of whom live in rural communities. The gender breakdown for staff is approximately 41 percent female and 59 percent male.

See Appendix A for NLHC Organizational Chart.

The members of the Board as of April 1, 2014 were:

<i>Len Simms</i> Chairman, St. John's	<i>Barbara Cull</i> Stephenville	<i>Rhonda Neary</i> St. John's
<i>William Hanlon</i> Grand Falls - Windsor	<i>Gerald F. Kennedy</i> Mobile	<i>Selma Pike</i> St. Anthony
<i>Glenda J. Belbin</i> Corner Brook	<i>Daniel J. McCann</i> Port au Port West	<i>Pauline Winter</i> Lewisporte
<i>Olive Blake</i> Goose Bay	<i>Sheena McCrate</i> Torbay	

Current account expenditures for 2013-2014 were \$118,700,000. For fiscal 2014-2015, NLHC has a gross budget of \$123 million. This is comprised of \$42 million in provincial funding and \$51 million of federal funding. Rental and other revenue sources account for the balance of \$30 million. Cost shared provincial/federal funding for social housing programs is provided under the following agreements:

Agreement	Time Frame
Social Housing Agreement, 1997	1997-2037
Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement	2014-2019

NLHC Mandate

NLHC is the social housing arm of the provincial government. We offer a range of housing programs and services for the residents of the province. The suite of programs and services provided represent Government's commitment to improve overall housing quality and affordability for those who need it most.

Mandate:

To develop and administer housing and homelessness policy and programs for the benefit of low-to-moderate income persons and households throughout the province.

Lines of Business

NLHC's lines of business summarize our main areas of responsibility and the types of programs and services we provide. Our work focuses on the following four lines of business:

Subsidized Rental Housing

- Provides social housing rental accommodation to low-income households on a rent-gear-to-income basis. Additionally, NLHC's Rent Supplement Program assists individuals and families on low incomes, and individuals with complex needs, by paying the portion of their rent that exceeds 25 percent of their net household income up to \$800 monthly.

Capital Assistance

- Provides forgivable grants for critical repairs, accessibility modifications or energy efficiency improvements to protect existing housing options for low-income households.
 - NLHC's Provincial Home Repair Program assists homeowners with low income who require repairs to their homes to bring dwellings up to minimum fire and life safety standards, with improvements in basic heating, electrical and plumbing services.
 - The Home Modification Program provides financial assistance to homeowners with disabilities and seniors with low-to-moderate incomes that require accessibility changes to their residences.
 - The Residential Energy Efficiency Program assists households with low income in making energy efficient retrofits to their homes. The program assists clients with retrofits that will make their homes more affordable and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.
- Provides forgivable capital grants to public, private and non-profit organizations to develop affordable rental housing for low-income households.

- Partners with the Government of Canada to implement an agreement to invest in affordable housing to create new affordable housing units.

Partner Managed Housing

- Provides financial, technical and administrative support to housing partners in the non-profit, co-operative, and health sector, which provide rental housing to low-to-moderate income households. NLHC continues to support Partner Managed Housing group operations at \$4.3M/year.

Property Stewardship

- Manages land and property holdings in a manner that is cost effective and sensitive to social housing and related government policy direction.

Values

NLHC's core values focus on providing the best possible service to clients and collaborating with our partners to achieve positive housing outcomes. The work of the Corporation is guided by the following core values and related action statements:

Client Service

- Each employee seeks solutions based on individual needs and abilities of clients and shows initiative in finding new ways to improve service delivery.

Respect

- Each employee treats clients and colleagues with courtesy and tolerance.
- Each employee strives to make the workplace an inclusive, productive and healthy environment.

Teamwork

- Each employee identifies opportunities to work with others to achieve goals, work to improve housing conditions and adapt to changing priorities.

Communication

- Each employee shares information, cooperates with one another, listens to others' views and communicates with respect.

Leadership

- Each employee motivates others to perform to their maximum potential.

Accountability

- Each employee answers for the obligations of job assignments, accepts responsibility for their actions, and follows through on requests and commitments.

Who We Serve

NLHC offers a **range of housing programs and services** for residents of the province. The needs presented are often changing and the Corporation strives to stay connected and adjust programming such that the changing needs of the Province's most vulnerable populations are being met. NLHC works collaboratively with many partners in its effort to achieve better housing outcomes for people and communities.

Our primary partners are:

- Provincial Departments of Advanced Education and Skills, Health and Community Services, Child, Youth and Family Services and Justice;
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation;
- Private-sector landlords and affordable housing developers;
- Housing advocates and researchers;
- Partner Managed Housing and support service providers;
- Municipalities.

Our Clients are individuals and families who require assistance to access secure and affordable housing. The table below provides a breakdown for the types of programs offered by NLHC and households served under those programs in 2013-2014.

Program	Households Served
Public Affordable Rental Housing	5,584
Rent Supplement Assistance	1,724
Home Repair Grants	1,650
Accessibility Modification Grants	300
Subsidized Mortgages	36
Partner Managed Housing	4,249
Affordable Housing	995
Residential Energy Efficiency Grants	494
Total	15,098

Vision and Mission

Vision

That Newfoundlanders and Labradorians with the greatest need have access to secure and affordable housing.

NLHC continues to work to achieve the overarching goals of the Province's ten-year Social Housing Plan – *Secure Foundations*. The Plan, released in 2009 outlines the strategic action priorities in addressing the housing needs of lower-income households across the province.

The goals of the Social Housing Plan are:

- Increased emphasis on individual well-being and strengthened communities;
- Strengthened partnerships and management practices; and
- Improved housing assistance.

The strategic issues, goals and objectives identified in this Strategic Plan revolve around supporting outcomes envisioned in the Social Housing Plan.

Mission

By March 31, 2017, to address changing housing needs, Newfoundland Labrador Housing will have improved housing conditions for low-to-moderate income households and persons in Newfoundland and Labrador.

NLHC's mission statement reflects the strategic direction of Government to provide effective housing and homelessness responses for persons with the greatest need. The measure and indicators which will be used to identify the achievement of NLHC's mission are:

Measure:

- Improved housing conditions to address changing housing needs.

Indicators:

- Number of public affordable rental housing homes upgraded;
- Renewal of older public affordable housing neighbourhoods;
- Number of new private rental accommodations constructed under the Affordable Housing Program;
- Number of lower-income households whose circumstances were improved in terms of housing affordability and/or adequacy.

This mission statement reconfirms the areas of priority for NLHC that were in place for the prior planning cycle and are continued over the next planning cycle of 2014-2017.

As evidenced by the “Measure” and “Indicators” referenced above, NLHC, in carrying out this mission, will focus on prioritizing the allocation of social housing resources toward social housing options that assist those with the greatest need. The response to housing need in Newfoundland and Labrador is influenced by many factors, including:

- The aging of the public and private housing stock;
- Housing market trends including increasing cost of homes, limited construction of rentals, low vacancy rates and increasing rental rates;
- Impact of oil and gas industry and mega projects on the provincial economy;
- Changing demographics leading to continued strong demand for smaller homes by lower-income households; and
- An aging population.



Artist's Rendering – Affordable Housing Project (Pleasantville, St. John's)

Strategic Issues, Goals and Objectives

The key priorities for the Board of Directors during the 2014-2017 planning cycle are:

- Sustaining the public affordable housing stock
- Responding to changing housing needs

These key priorities were identified taking into consideration the mandate and financial resources of the Corporation and the overall strategic directions of Government.

The direction related to the Corporation is comprised of a number of components or focus areas that will be addressed through this strategic plan or through operational or work planning processes (see Appendix B).

For each of the strategic issues listed above, NLHC has developed an associated goal indicating the results expected over the three-year time frame of the plan as well as specific objectives to indicate what is expected to be achieved during each year of the plan.

For monitoring and evaluation of progress, measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and first year's objective. These will be updated annually in subsequent annual reports on the results achieved.

Strategic Issue 1

Sustaining the public affordable housing stock

Safe and affordable housing is fundamental to the well being of Newfoundland and Labrador residents. It provides a foundation for strong people, strong families, strong communities and a strong province. The public affordable rental housing portfolio, owned and operated by NLHC, is an essential component of affordable housing in the province, particularly for those households with lower incomes. Currently the portfolio is comprised of more than 5,500 homes that vary in size. More than half of the properties were developed between 30 and 50 years ago, making it one of the oldest public affordable housing portfolios in the country. These housing assets require significant capital investment to ensure they are not lost. Current day construction standards, increasing need for energy efficiency measures, and deferred maintenance from years past are all contributing factors that clearly substantiate the need to continue to invest and protect our existing affordable rental housing infrastructure.

Efforts to improve the condition of the public housing portfolio should not be confused with the routine maintenance and repair of units that is ongoing and forms a separate line of business for NLHC. Modernization and improvement is conducted through a multi-

pronged process of protection and renewal. Over a five-year planning cycle, NLHC identifies units requiring upgrading of building envelope (exterior) to ensure the stock is sustained, as well as interior upgrades to improve living conditions. This planning process also addresses neighbourhood design and layout as well as environmental issues to ensure stronger and safer communities. Tracking and reporting of this process is done primarily through condition rating and reporting.

The goal and objectives outlined for addressing this strategic issue supports Government’s strategic direction for effective housing and homelessness responses for persons with the greatest need.

Issue 1:	Sustaining the public affordable housing stock
Goal:	By March 31, 2017, NLHC will have improved the condition of the public affordable rental housing stock.
Measure:	Improved condition of the public affordable rental housing portfolio.
Indicators:	<p>Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive exterior upgrades.</p> <p>Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive interior upgrades.</p> <p>Average condition rating of public housing rental homes identified for upgrades from year to year.</p> <p>Overall percentage completion of revitalization of select older public affordable housing neighbourhoods.</p>
Objective 2015	By March 31, 2015, NLHC will have upgraded public affordable housing homes and continued the revitalization plans in older public affordable housing neighbourhoods.
Measure:	Upgraded public affordable rental housing homes and continued renewal in older public affordable housing neighbourhoods.
Indicators:	<p>Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive exterior upgrades.</p> <p>Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive interior upgrades.</p> <p>Average condition rating of public housing rental homes identified for upgrades from year to year.</p> <p>Overall percentage of completed select older public affordable housing neighbourhoods, through revitalization.</p>

Objective 2016

By March 31, 2016, NLHC will have continued with scheduled modernization and improvement of the public affordable rental housing stock and neighbourhood revitalization plan.

Objective 2017

By March 31, 2017, NLHC will have completed a new three-year modernization and improvement plan for the public affordable rental housing portfolio and continued the revitalization of select older public affordable housing neighbourhoods.

The quality and safety of the public housing provided by NLHC contributes to our tenant's quality of life and overall well-being. NLHC has been and will continue to be committed to extending the life of public affordable rental housing homes for the benefit of current and future clients who have the greatest need for secure and affordable housing solutions.

Strategic Issue 2

Responding to changing housing needs

Data across the province and country consistently show that affordability is the primary reason that individuals and families find themselves in housing need. Single-person households and households with government transfer as their primary income source tend to experience a particularly high incidence of housing need. This has been reflected in recent years in the NLHC waiting pool of applicants, as the vast majority of requests have been for single or two-bedroom homes.

Housing need is also prevalent when the housing stock requires significant repairs. This means that not just lower-income renters find themselves in housing need, but lower-income homeowners can also face significant housing difficulty despite the advantage of owning a home. NLHC's programming offers rental and repair options depending on client need.

Effective housing and homelessness responses are a strategic direction of the Provincial Government. Initiatives stemming from the strategic issue support that direction significantly. NLHC is pleased to provide funding and partner with non-profit community agencies and Community Advisory Boards to help address homelessness and provide support to our province's most vulnerable citizens.

The Supportive Living Program supports a 'housing first' approach, recognizing that housing stability is critical to enhancing wellness, inclusion and self-sufficiency. Provincial Government funding has significantly increased for this program, from \$1.2 million in 2009 to \$5.3 million in 2014.

Furthermore, Budget 2014 committed additional funding for rent supplements which are instrumental in addressing the increasing needs of smaller households and persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

Market factors also significantly impact housing need. Mega projects and periods of economic boom tend to put increased pressures on the housing market in general as well as on the rental housing market specifically. This can have a major impact on those with lower incomes, particularly when affordable rental housing is in short supply relative to demand.

Four existing program areas will continue to be utilized in 2014-2017 to achieve outcomes related to the strategic goal of improving housing options within the stock of privately owned homes and rental homes in response to changing housing needs.

Home Repair Assistance

One of the most important programs offered by NLHC has been and continues to be the Provincial Home Repair Program (PHRP). This program assists lower-income homeowners by providing them with forgivable grants and loans to make critical repairs that allow them to stay in their own homes. This program has proven very valuable in responding to both housing adequacy and housing affordability challenges at the same time. For PHRP, the average client assisted is 68 years old living in a home that is 48 years old with an average income of \$18,750. Further to PHRP, NLHC also offers the Home Modification Program (HMP) for persons with disabilities and seniors who specifically require accessibility modifications in order to safely and comfortably remain in their homes. The Residential Energy Efficiency Program (REEP) provides grants to make energy efficiency improvements to homes which have proven to lower energy costs significantly and improve overall housing affordability as a result.

This line of programming continues to provide a strategic housing response that improves the quality of the existing private housing stock and enables individuals and families to continue to live in their own homes while improving their overall affordability challenges. These programs have benefits for both individual well-being and quality of life while helping to sustain rural communities by contributing millions of dollars annually to local businesses and contractors. Budget 2014 solidified another five-year commitment to PHRP funding as well as three-year commitments to HMP and REEP.

Rent Supplement Assistance

NLHC partners with landlords in the private market to access additional rental accommodations beyond its public affordable rental stock and also to meet the needs of applicants whose housing requirements do not match available public affordable housing resources. Through Rent Supplement Agreements with landlords, NLHC selects applicants for suitable rental accommodation and pays a portion of the monthly rent to the landlord. The average household income of rent supplement clients is \$12,600.

NLHC has increased the number of rent supplements in its programming by over 70 percent since 2009. This is in response to increasing rental rates in the private market as well the increasing demand for smaller, one- and two-bedroom units that are more prevalent in the private market. Over the three years of this Strategic Plan 2014-2017 there will be some additional rent supplement funding to help further address the applicants on file with NLHC.

Affordable housing options in the private market have been increased once again by the expansion of NLHC's Rent Supplement Program. In Budget 2014, the annual allocation will be increased to \$9 million and provide an additional 150 rent supplement units. The program assists individuals and families on low incomes, and individuals with complex needs, by paying the portion of their rent that exceeds 25 percent of their net household income up to \$800 monthly.

Rent supplements in recent years have proven to benefit persons with complex needs who are referred for housing assistance through partnerships with community-based supportive living providers. Over the three years of this strategic plan, it is anticipated that rent supplements will continue to be an important avenue in assisting persons with multiple and complex needs.

New Rental Supply

In Budget 2014 the Province announced the new five-year Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement which will support NLHC's Affordable Housing Program. This announcement highlights the continued priority for the creation of new affordable rental housing for households who are challenged in accessing suitable and affordable housing.

Over the course of this strategic plan, the Affordable Housing Program will lead to the generation of new affordable living options along two main areas:

1. Private affordable market rentals for specifically challenged clientele; and
2. Supportive living options for persons who are homeless, at risk of homeless and/or experience multiple and complex needs.

Supportive Living Options

Developing new supportive living options for persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless is not just a capital investment. This priority also requires collaboration, community engagement and involvement and the development of appropriate supports for persons who are experiencing multiple and complex needs.

In April 2012, the Supportive Living Program was transferred to NLHC. This program provides grants to non-profit organizations that help individuals with complex needs to attain and maintain appropriate housing.

In keeping with the provincial goal to reduce poverty and promote self-reliance, and in advance of the results of the Homelessness study, an additional \$500,000 will be allocated through NLHC's Supportive Living Program in 2014 for a total annual investment of \$5.3 million to further advance the work of community partners and stakeholders and to address homelessness.

Issue 2:	Responding to changing housing needs
Goal:	By March 31, 2017, NLHC will have improved housing options within the stock of privately owned homes and rental homes in response to changing housing needs.
Measure:	Improved housing options within the stock of privately owned homes and rental homes in response to changing housing needs.
Indicators:	Addressed select affordable housing challenges. Addressed housing adequacy challenges. Increased affordable housing supply. Increased supply of supportive living options. Worked with community, government and private sector partners.
Objective 2015	By March 31, 2015, NLHC will have undertaken measures to respond to changing housing needs.
Measure:	Initiatives undertaken to respond to changing housing needs.
Indicators:	Number of repair and modification grants provided. Number of repair and modification grants provided to target groups. Number of energy efficiency grants provided. Number of households assisted with Rent Supplements.

Number of new private affordable housing units approved for development.

Number of new private affordable housing units constructed.

Number of new supportive living units approved for development.

Number of new supportive living units constructed.

Number of new private affordable housing and supportive living units developed for specific target groups.

Number of individuals assisted by community groups funded through the supportive living program.

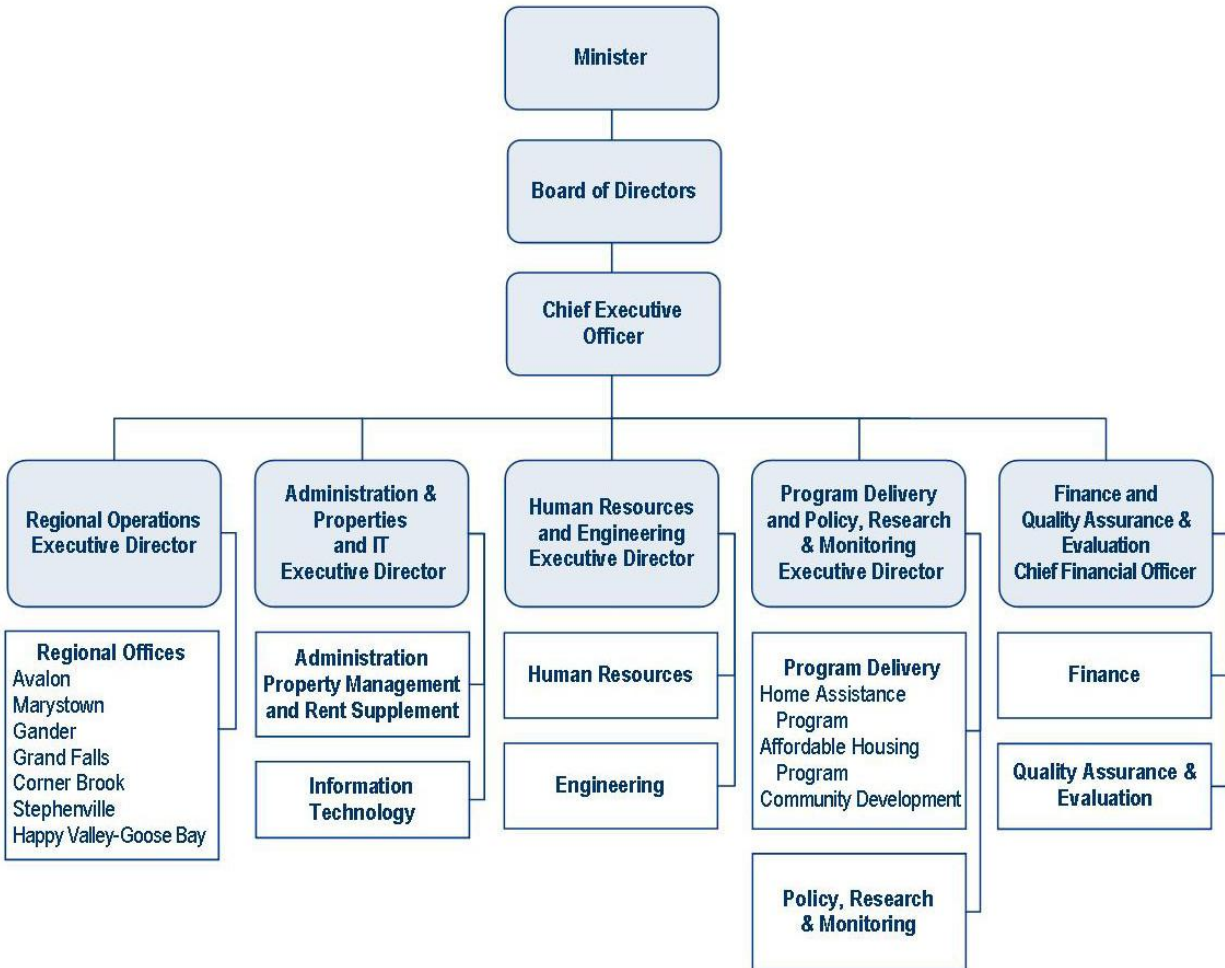
Objective 2016

By March 31, 2016, NLHC will have further implemented measures to respond to changing housing needs.

Objective 2017

By March 31, 2017, NLHC will have further implemented measures to respond to changing housing needs.

Appendix A – NLHC Organizational Chart



Appendix B – Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are statements of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to consider these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This facilitates the integration of planning practices across Government and ensures that all entities are moving forward together on key commitments.

The direction related to Newfoundland Labrador Housing is primarily comprised of a single strategic focus (Affordable Housing) which will be achieved through a variety of focus areas addressed through this strategic plan and other operational processes.

Title: Affordable Housing

Strategic Direction: Effective housing and homelessness responses for persons with the greatest need.

Clarifying Statement: This outcome supports the policy direction of Government. Collaborative response from multiple government departments to housing needs and homelessness will result in improved delivery of sufficient housing supports for those who are most vulnerable.

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to The Minister	Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Work Plans
Affordable Housing: Improved affordable housing infrastructure		√		
Homelessness: Reduced levels of province-wide homelessness		√		
Accessibility: Increased level of accessible affordable housing		√		
Seniors: Increased self-reliance through increased choice			√	
Poverty Reduction: Enhanced self-reliance through the prevention, reduction and alleviation of poverty	√	√		