

Newfoundland Labrador Housing Corporation

STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2020





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NL Housing), I am pleased to present the Corporation's strategic plan for the period April 1, 2017–March 31, 2020. In the development of this plan, NL Housing considered the strategic directions of Government, including those outlined in *The Way Forward*, the Corporation's mandate and budget, the current and future housing needs of the people of the province, including changing demographics, and feedback from consultations with community partners, clients and employees.

The goals and priorities within this plan reflect the evolving housing challenges of our province. Economic and social shifts within our population have resulted in a range of housing needs across the province, from those facing homelessness, to low-income households needing assistance to pay rent, and those who struggle with the challenges of achieving homeownership. Residents with distinct needs, including seniors, youth, persons with disabilities and those with complex needs will continue to require access to stable housing options that they can afford. This wide range of housing needs requires a collaborative and coordinated approach anchored by partnerships between governments, communities, and the private and not-for-profit sectors. To this end, this strategic plan includes as a primary goal the development of a comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan. The plan will be closely linked with the National Housing Strategy expected to be released in late 2017.

The strategic plan also includes goals of modernizing and improving the utilization of our public rental housing stock to ensure its long-term sustainability and building an organizational culture that strives for continuous process improvements.

NL Housing, as a Category 1 entity, is required under the *Transparency and Accountability Act* to table a strategic plan every three years and to annually report on its performance. This plan was prepared in accordance with the *Act* and my signature indicates the Board's accountability for the preparation of the plan and for achieving the specific goals and objectives of the plan.

JULIA MULLALEY, CPA, CA
Chair and
Chief Executive Officer (Interim)

Corporate Overview

NL 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 Children, Seniors and Social Development and Minister Responsible for NL Housing.

The members of the Board as of March 31, 2017:

Julia Mullaley, Chair St. John's	Sheena McCrate Torbay	Olive Blake Goose Bay	Barbara Cull Stephenville
Glenda Belbin Corner Brook	Rhonda Neary St. John's	Selma Pike St. Anthony	

Staff and Budget

NL Housing maintains a presence across the province with seven regional offices. There is a complement of 343 positions located at head office in St. John's and the seven regional offices throughout the province: Avalon, Marystown, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, Corner Brook, Stephenville and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. The gender breakdown for staff is approximately 43 per cent female and 57 per cent male.

NL Housing's gross budget for fiscal 2017/18 is \$126.3 million. This is comprised of \$40.1 million in provincial funding, \$56.3 million of federal funding and rental and other revenue sources of \$29.9 million.

Issue One – Responding to Diverse and Evolving Housing Needs

Housing is a basic necessity of life. Stable, affordable and good quality housing is among the most critical factors in enhancing individual health and well-being, fostering social inclusion and community development and growth.

Consequently, those who face health and social challenges in their lives, and who lack access to a safe and affordable place to call home, see those challenges compounded.

Housing needs in Newfoundland and Labrador continue to change as the province evolves. These needs span the continuum of housing, from individuals who experience or risk experiencing homelessness, to low-income households, and through to those struggling to achieve homeownership. Across these needs are many diverse and distinct populations whose housing needs are particularly acute, including seniors, youth, persons with disabilities, residents with mental and physical health challenges, the Indigenous population, and those who require access to supports and services.

Finding solutions to the diverse housing needs of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will rely on strong partnerships. Participation in the National Housing Strategy will enable Newfoundland and Labrador to benefit from Federal funding directed towards shared housing objectives. Locally, partnerships between all orders of government, non-profit groups, the private sector and other housing stakeholders will be critical to effectively address our housing challenges. To achieve this, NL Housing will take measures to ensure a cooperative and coordinated approach is implemented to help address the broad spectrum of housing needs across the province through the development and implementation of a comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan.

GOAL:

By March 31, 2020, NL Housing will have developed and partially implemented a comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan.

Indicators:

- Comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan developed.
- Priority initiatives implemented each year.
- Annual reporting of results of implementation of the comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan.

Objective 1:

By March 31, 2018, NL Housing will have developed a comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan, in consultation with community partners, clients and employees.

Indicators:

- Stakeholder consultations completed.
- Comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan developed.

Objective 2:

By March 31, 2019, NL Housing will have implemented priority initiatives identified in the Plan.

Objective 3:

By March 31, 2020, the NL Housing will have implemented further initiatives from the Plan.

Issue Two – Maintaining and Optimizing the Use of Public Rental Housing Stock

Maintaining the provincial public rental housing portfolio is essential in ensuring that NL Housing is able to provide access to safe, quality and affordable housing for low income residents of this province. The current portfolio is comprised of 5,599 units across the province that vary in size and bedroom count. The public housing stock in this province is aging, with over half of the portfolio built 30-50 years ago.

An effective asset management program can improve asset utilization and performance, reduce capital costs and asset-related operating costs and extend asset life. Maintenance is a key element of an effective asset management program. Deferred maintenance in past years has contributed to a greater than average need for capital upgrades in the units at present. Such upgrades are needed to improve the overall condition of our units as well as the energy efficiency and the longevity of the stock. Providing safe, quality and affordable housing options in turn contributes positively to the quality of life and the overall wellbeing of tenants.

In addition to the ongoing maintenance and renewal of the housing stock, the effective utilization of stock is an important goal for NL Housing. The current public rental housing stock composition does not match the needs of applicants. The portfolio, mostly built 30-50 years ago, consists primarily of homes with three or more bedrooms while over 90 per cent of applicants require one and two-bedroom homes. In addition, a portion of tenants are currently “over housed” meaning that they are occupying units that have more bedrooms than required. To ensure stock is being used as effectively as possible, it will be necessary for NL Housing to look at current uses, demand, changing demographics, and

regional differences and needs and identify potential opportunities for repurposing and redevelopment of existing underutilized stock.

GOAL:

By March 31, 2020, NL Housing will have improved the condition and utilization of its public rental housing stock.

Indicators:

- Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive interior upgrades.
- Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive exterior upgrades.
- Number of underutilized units redeveloped or repurposed.

Objective 1:

By March 31, 2018, NL Housing will have completed Year 1 of the Modernization and Improvement Plan to upgrade its public rental housing stock and completed a comprehensive assessment of options for redevelopment and repurposing of underutilized housing units.

Indicators:

- Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive interior upgrades.
- Number of public affordable rental housing homes that receive exterior upgrades.
- Completion of a comprehensive assessment of options for redevelopment and repurposing of underutilized housing units.

Objective 2:

By March 31, 2019, NL Housing will have completed Year 2 of the Modernization and Improvement Plan to further improve the condition of its public rental housing stock and implemented priority actions to improve utilization of the stock.

Objective 3:

By March 31, 2020, NL Housing will have improved the condition and utilization of its public rental housing stock.

Issue Three – Building a Culture of Continuous Improvement

Included in the initiatives in Government's *The Way Forward*, was a commitment to conduct a review of NL Housing's Programs to: ensure the mandate of the organization reflects current priorities; optimize the use of federal and provincial funding in the delivery of programs and services; and realize efficiencies, improve services and streamline the organization with no negative impact on clients. The review was completed by March 31, 2017 with a number of recommendations to improve efficiency and client service. While such reviews provide an opportunity to examine our programs at a point in time, it is important that we also build a culture of continuous improvement – a culture that strives to continually transform to meet the diverse needs of our clients. This aligns with the focus areas in *The Way Forward* to achieve "A More Efficient Public Sector" and "Better Services".

To commence work towards this goal, NL Housing initiated the introduction of "Lean" in our organization during 2016/17. "Lean" principles are derived from the

Japanese manufacturing industry. The core idea of Lean is relentlessly working on eliminating waste from any process by eliminating activities that do not add value from the perspective of the customer. Another way to look at Lean is as a collection of tips, tools, and techniques (i.e. best practices) that have been proven effective for driving waste out of a process.

NL Housing's greatest resources are our employees who work to deliver programs and services to our clients across the province. These employees have a wealth of experience and knowledge of our programs to help inform and drive the program, service and process changes required to ensure that NL Housing is meeting its mandate to our full potential.

Making Continuous Improvement a key strategic issue ensures there will be a formalized and focused emphasis placed on providing a framework, training and tools to build a culture of continuous improvement – always seeking to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Corporation's programs and services.

GOAL:

By March 31, 2020, NL Housing will have improved its capacity in implementing continued process improvements.

Indicators:

- Number of staff qualified in Lean certification.
- Number of Lean reviews completed.
- Number of process improvements implemented.
- Program delivery service standards developed and published for all areas reviewed.

Objective 1:

By March 31, 2018, NL Housing will have formalized a Lean implementation framework for the organization; completed Lean reviews of priority areas identified for process improvement; and implemented associated recommendations.

Indicators:

- Development of a formalized Lean implementation framework.
- Completion of Lean reviews of priority areas identified for process improvement.
- Development and publication of service standards for program delivery in areas of Lean reviews.
- Commenced implementation of recommendations from the areas reviewed.

Objective 2:

By March 31, 2019, NL Housing will have further implemented Lean initiatives, supported staff in achieving Lean certification and developed and published service standards for programs and services.

Objective 3:

By March 31, 2020, NL Housing will have improved its capacity in implementing continued process improvements.

Annex A: 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.

Comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan:

For NL Housing the key strategic direction identified is Government's commitment to the development of a comprehensive Provincial Housing Plan. The plan will address the diverse needs of our residents, paying particular attention to housing needs and support for the most vulnerable and those with distinct needs.

This strategic direction aligns with the commitment to "Better Services" in *The Way Forward* and the plan itself will take into consideration several actions outlined in *The Way Forward* such as: enhancing government-wide service delivery, implementing an individualized funding model for clients availing of social programs, implementing client focused interventions to support individuals with complex needs, expanding housing services for seniors as well as partnering with the community sector to improve services and find overall efficiencies.

More Efficient Public Service:

The Way Forward also commits to actions that support "A More Efficient Public Sector" including Lean initiatives and publishing service standards for major client programs and services.