



Aboriginal Housing Management Association

April 3, 2018
CEO COMMUNIQUE
A Year in Review

There is much to celebrate as we look back on the events and accomplishments of 2017. AHMA currently has over 4000 housing projects in addition to the new upcoming projects that have more than 1000 new units on the way. An even more encouraging update was the 2018 Provincial Budget announcing that the province will be investing \$550 million over the next 10 years into the construction of 1,750 units of social housing for indigenous people in BC in partnership with AHMA.

The impact of the budget puts us in a positive position and equips us with more resources to better serve our communities. Although we face a variety of transitions ahead, by working together and creating a stronger network we can gain insight to addressing all obstacles. When I stepped into this role as CEO I set three priorities to advance AHMA's leadership in urban, rural and northern region housing across BC. Though challenges have risen throughout our progression forward my founding principles still remain the same.

- 1) Review and strengthen governance
- 2) Conduct an operational review and strategic planning
- 3) Strengthen AHMA membership

My 3 original objectives have almost come to completion, recognizing that with any growth and evolution there will always be bumps and bruises. Looking to the future, we are avidly anticipating the upcoming projects and opportunities that 2018 will bring.

Before we go any further it is important that I address the new ASHMA agreement, it is almost complete, and we are very close to signing. Our original timeline was extended longer than initially forecasted but I assure you, we are simply doing our diligence to ensure we do it right. Looking at the housing landscape we have all been impacted. More so in certain areas where real estate is unaffordable. So unaffordable that housing seekers and low-income tenants were and are competing and it's a domino effect. It is still destabilizing our most vulnerable populations. For AHMA we are actively negotiating to guarantee that the agreement will effectively impact low income people across the province but especially our Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous homelessness used to sit at 30% it has now escalated to 65% in some regions. As this crisis continues, we vigorously lobby for our communities to the province and federal government to recognize the needs of our people.



Aboriginal Housing Management Association

Review and strengthen governance

Our aim has always been to create an opportunity for every provider to have a voice and increase AHMA's transparency and accountability. Our Special General Meeting on May 1-2nd will finalize through careful nomination the fully independent Board of seven directors. There we will also discuss the process of transition that best meets the intention of you the members. BC Housing as a valued partner in working with AHMA will appoint one of the 7 Independent board seats. They have worked diligently and closely with our process and protocol to ensure their appointed seat is a good fit for AHMA's purposes. At the SGM we will also be addressing the expansion of our Corporate Membership base (all other 3 categories remain the same).

- **Corporate Members** can attend and vote at meetings: Indigenous housing providers funded by AHMA automatically become Corporate Members, should they choose to accept and exercise that vote. We believe AHMA will be more effective with our members input, so our intent was to remove previous barriers to membership (i.e., the need to apply and obtain board approval) and give members a voice and the ability to hold AHMA accountable for meeting your best interests. Nevertheless, participation is optional.

We will also be establishing a three-person Governance Committee to act as our members' representatives:

- Three elected Corporate Members with staggered three-year terms
- Corporate Members elect the committee members at the Annual General Meeting
- The committee will help identify best practices in governance and bring forward resolutions on behalf of AHMA members to the Board of Directors' meetings.

These steps will solidify our efforts to give each of our members an effective voice as well as make sure the intentions and best interests of our organization are aligned.

Though we had set a timeline to make the below changes in our governance it has taken longer than expected. The time was used to comprehensively evaluate and establish the best route for us to take. As we approach the SGM in May, together we will be fully prepared to present the strongest form of governance for the needs of all of our members and communities.

Stabilize AHMA membership

All of the developments we have made and are working towards in strengthening AHMA membership including amending our constitution and bylaws are to create an opportunity for every provider to have a voice. It will overall increase AHMA's transparency and accountability. In the past year I made it a top priority to visit with all of our members, to learn about the challenges our communities face and how AHMA can provide effective support.



Aboriginal Housing Management Association

Over the first six months I toured most regions, and those I have not been able to get to, I will visit later this spring and summer. The goal, to get a grassroots perspective on all the great work you as providers are doing. As well, to understand regional challenges for your perspective, and to get a better understanding of how AHMA can focus our energies on being more responsive to your needs.

Some of the key, but not exhaustive highlights were:

- Regional supply and service disparities that effect operational costs such as maintenance, unit turn overs, and emergency response times.
- Regional construction and development challenges impacting development costing and competitive bidding.
- Lack of support services for single men.
- Accessibility for women fleeing violence.
- Municipal lack of awareness of importance of Indigenous Housing programs.
- Meeting the needs between local First Nations and Urban Housing Providers.

The need for more full spectrum and integrated housing.

Conducting an Operation Review and Strategic Planning

We have spent the last year committed to creating and maintaining a lasting transparent autonomy that tells each of our members and communities that throughout our evolution, their needs are always our main priority. AHMA's resilience is built on the self-determination derived from each of our valued members and communities.

I know in the past there are those who felt disenfranchised by AHMA, but I strongly feel we are doing all we can to show our gratitude, honor and respect. Our internal analysis of AHMA's Operation structure has also triggered a catalyst of positive changes. Our internal structure has already undergone immense transitions of positions to better serve all of our communities. We have also welcomed two new full-time staff members to help facilitate our growth.

Sue Lee is our new Financial Service Specialist who will be completing our financial reviews.

Laurie Brownrigg is our new Communications Specialist who will be managing our communications strategy and plan moving forward.

In addition, we are still currently experiencing transition in positions, duties and portfolios as we completed an analysis of AHMA's operational structure. We are actively addressing the best restructuring options to ensure they are in line with our communities to be the best operation



Aboriginal Housing Management Association

team for our communities. Carol Endrizzi our Director of Operations has been managing all the new projects on top of her portfolio, Sarah Silva has been moved into a management position and overseeing staff, Debra Webber has become a portfolio advisor and Sandra Eatmon has also now taken on new duties as our Programs and Cultural Advisor. Nizar has moved into Director of Public Affairs to assist our organization in all partnerships and political work! And David Silva has moved into Director of Asset Strategies to focus on supporting our providers from an asset management and development perspective.

Additional Opportunities

AHMA's Special General Meeting on May 1-2nd 2018 in Vancouver, BC at the [Fairmont Waterfront Hotel](#). We will be developing a succession plan as we move to an Independent Board, as well as planning our AGM in the fall. There will be many topics to discuss and it will be a great opportunity to get a deeper understanding of all the upcoming transitions.

Congress 2018: Canadian Housing and Renewal Conference. Ottawa, ON

Canadian Housing and Renewal Association's 50th Anniversary in Ottawa from April 24 – April 27, 2018. The CHRA Congress on Housing and Homelessness provides an exceptional opportunity to meet collectively and exchange learnings and ideas from a growing Canadian body of practitioners, policy makers, front-line workers, government officials and key stakeholders within our sector.

Sydney, Australia 2018: Everybody's Home – Affordable Housing Conference

The 2018 conference theme – **Everybody's Home** – highlights the current and growing shortfall of accessible and affordable housing in Australia across the entire housing continuum. Over two days, housing professionals from the private, not for profit, and government sectors will come together to share expertise and find out about the latest news in the industry. The Congress was so interested in how and what we are doing, they generously sponsored me to attend as one of four international keynote speakers. Due to current medical challenges, however, I can not attend, Rosanna will be attending on my behalf, to talk about the Evolution of AHMA. She will be spreading awareness in Australia on how AHMA is the first of its kind and how our experience has paved the way for the future of world-wide indigenous housing.

Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada. Victoria, BC

Celebrating a big co-op housing milestone: CHF Canada's 50th anniversary. Through a wide assortment of workshops, plenaries and exhibits, we'll discuss and learn more about our movement's proud history of working together. I will be on a panel discussing the housing crisis



Aboriginal Housing Management Association

and needs of our Indigenous Peoples. Particularly speaking about challenges including migration and remigration back to communities and trying to establish themselves. As well as why some of our Indigenous Peoples have gone coop route. Home ownership has been on the agenda for

decade. How do we increase? Our ownership is extremely low, and we have been approached before, this is 7 years in the making. This will be an important conversation on how we can work together in the sector. A lot of our AHP's are branching out. 3 of our AHP have branched out to fair market analysis. We would like to take a look at what AHMA can do in regard to home ownership.

[2018 Housing Central- BC's Non-Profit Housing Conference](#) AHMA is a Conference Presenting Partner. Housing Central is western Canada's largest affordable housing conference with more than 1,100 delegates from Across BC and Canada. I will be participating on behalf as a Board Member for the CHRA's Indigenous Housing Advisory Caucus as well as an Ambassador for AHMA.

Closing Words

I am confident that we will achieve many of our goals and ambitions in 2018. Moving toward an Independent Board of Directors will overall strengthen our governance. The timeline of which the succession plan will be developed may take time but, in the end, our solid foundations of resilience and self-determined spirit will prevail. I would like to take the time to thank each of our members for their continuous loyalty and ongoing support. We have always been for indigenous by indigenous and that wouldn't be possible without the relationships we have built, maintained and cherished over the years. I would also like to thank the staff at AHMA who work ceaselessly to make our vision of a better tomorrow come to life.

All my relations,

Margaret Pfoh
Chief Executive Officer