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Collaborative Housing Inc.

Logement Coopératif
National Autochtone Inc.



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2025 NICHI Membership Engagement Session

April 28th, 2025

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM (CST)





Opening

Elder, Norman Fleury

and Honour song by:

Prince Albert Indian Metis Friendship
Centre, Youth Drum Group



Update

John Gordon

Chief Executive Officer

CEO Update



- NICHl: A movement built *by* Indigenous Housing Providers, not government policy

CEO Update



NICHI Signatories at the signing of the Declaration
November 25, 2022

CEO Update



- In 2018, when the government left us out again, Indigenous housing providers united and said: *This time, it must be For Indigenous, By Indigenous*



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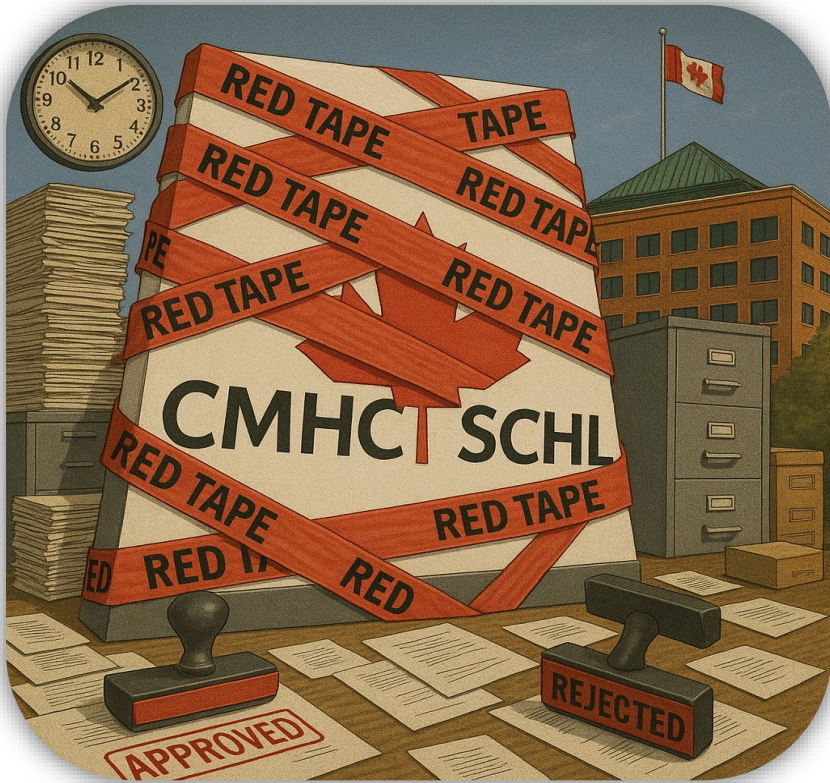
CEO Update



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- We cut through **red tape**—because our communities need housing, not hurdles.

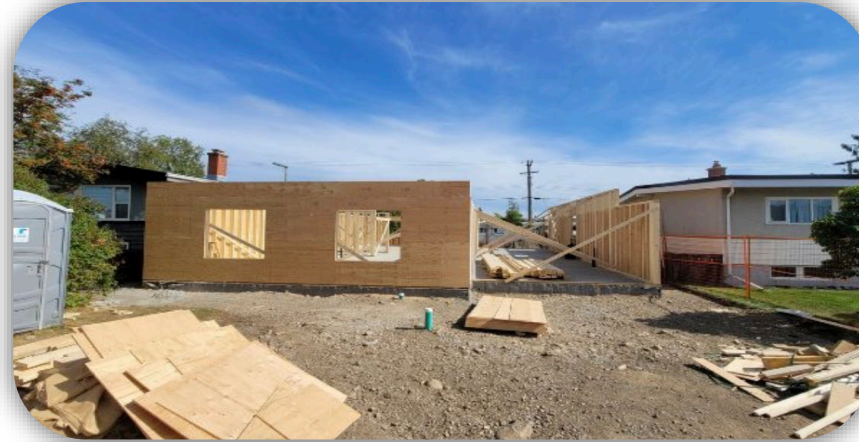


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- By December 2024, families moved into new homes—thanks to local Indigenous housing providers who led the way.



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- In March 2025, we proved that Indigenous-led solutions work—efficient, accountable, and built 'For Indigenous, By Indigenous'.

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- **A call to action:**
what we've built
must be protected,
and what we've
achieved must be
sustained.

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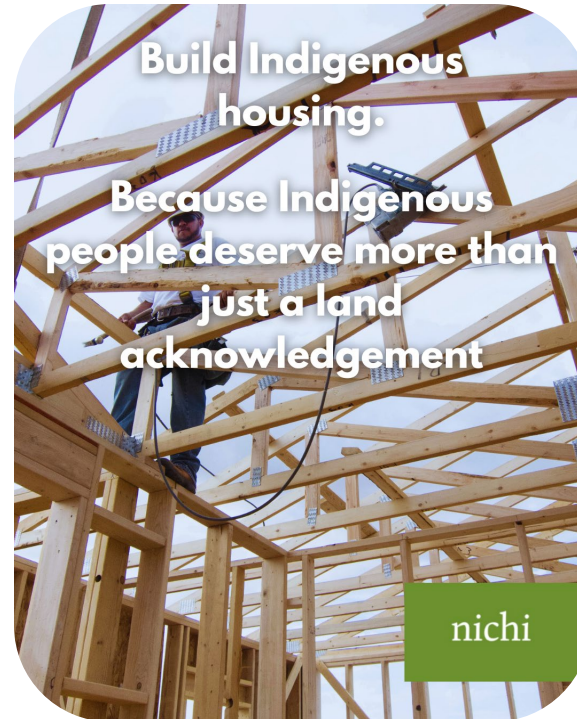
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NICHI isn't a building in Ottawa—NICHI is you.

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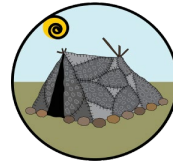
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NICHI MEMBERSHIP



Aboriginal Housing
Management Association
Over 25 years of Indigenous
housing expertise.



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NICHI MEMBERSHIP



Manitoba
Keewatinowik
Okimakanak Inc.



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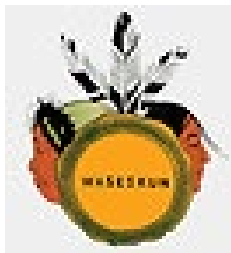
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NICHI MEMBERSHIP



Métis Nation
of Ontario ∞



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We're asking you to write a letter—so your voice is heard and Indigenous-led housing is recognized.



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Bring others into the circle—NICHl's strength is its members, and the more we grow, the stronger our voice.

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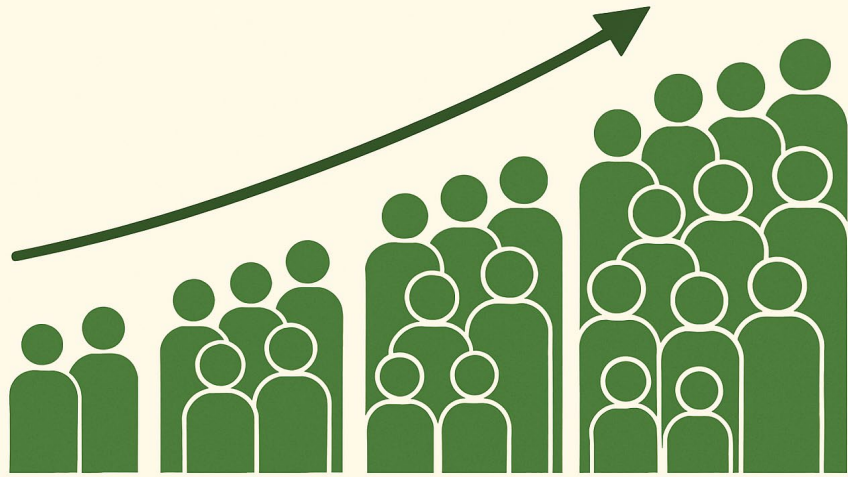
*Membership Engagement Session, Fredericton,
April 2024*

- Today's engagement session isn't just symbolic—it's strategic. We need your ideas, questions, criticisms, and visions.



CEO Update

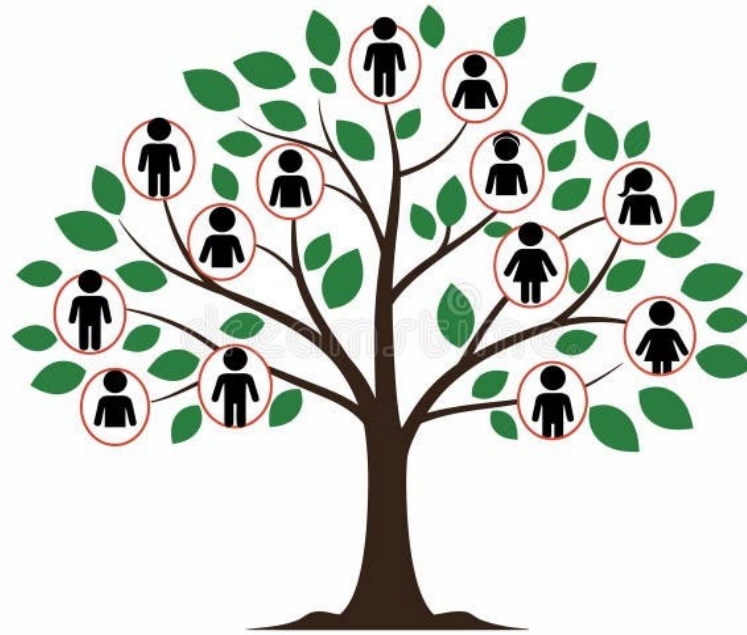
MEMBERSHIP GROWTH



- For NICHl to grow, it *must grow with you and because of you.* This is a moment for reflection and ambition.



CEO Update



This is about the next *seven generations*—if we stay united and lead together, we can build lasting, Indigenous-led solutions for all.



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Board of Directors



Jocelyn Formsma
Chair
National Association of
Friendship Centres
(ON)



Gary Wilson
Vice Chair
Aboriginal Housing
Management Association
(BC)



Georgina Brass
Secretary
Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council
Housing Authority Inc.
(MB)



Laurent Odjick
Treasurer
Société immobilière du
Regroupement des centres
d'amitié autochtones du Québec
(QC)



Robert Byers
Director
Namerind Housing Corporation
(SK)



Chief, Sidney Peters
Director
Tawaak Housing
(NS)



Holly Hughes
Director
Ontario Aboriginal Housing
Services (ON)



Angela Bishop
Director
Camponi Housing Corporation
(SK)



Juanie Pudluk
Director
Nunavut Construction
Corporation (NT)



David Seymour
Director
M'akola Housing
(BC)



Marvin Aubichon
Director
Gabriel Housing
(SK)



Jennifer Houle-Famakinde
Director
Metis Calgary Family Services
Society (AB)



Staff



John Gordon
Chief Executive Officer



Danielle Cognigni
Director, Business Operations



Robert Maguire
Senior Advisor



Jennifer Simpson
Executive Assistant



Kim Caldbick
Administrative Assistant



Billie Metz
Manager, Regional
Funding



Christina Gervais
Communications and Public Relations
Coordinator



Danielle Ducharme
Financial Officer



Shannon Michaud
Jr. Policy Analyst



Georgette Nicolas
Regional Funding Advisor
BC/Yukon



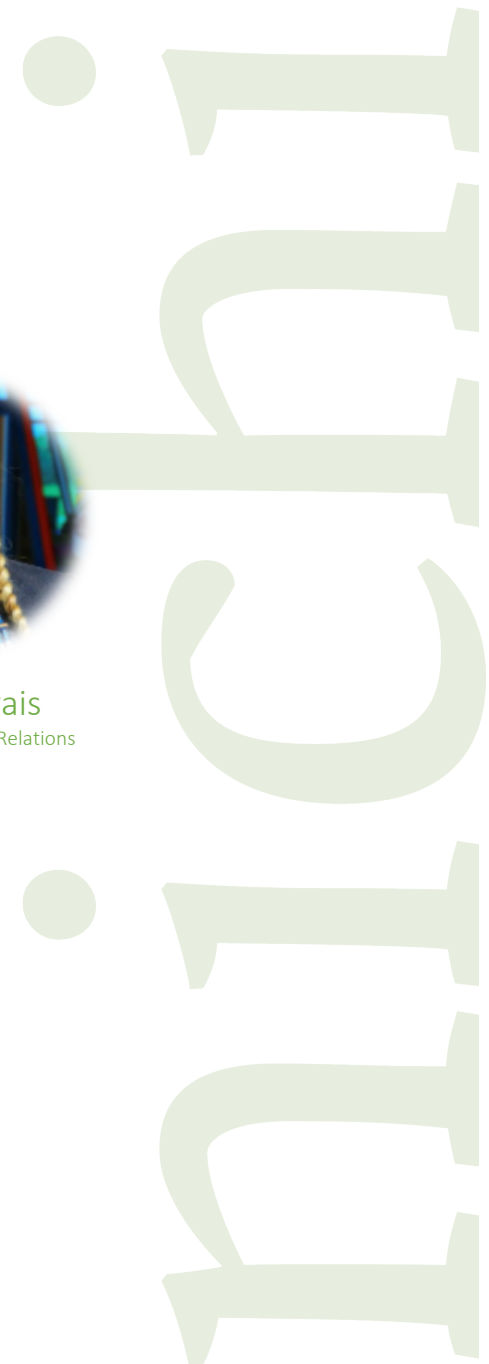
Tara Watson
Regional Funding Advisor
Prairies/NWT



Heidi Bungay
Regional Funding Advisor
ON/QC



Olive Williams
Regional Funding Advisor
Atlantic/Nunavut



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Welcome to our Facilitators

John Lagimodiere &
Winston McLean

*Aboriginal Consulting Services
Iron Wolf Consulting*

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What We Heard Report

*Insights from the Membership Meeting:
Fredericton, NB, April 2024*



Introduction

- On April 8th, 2024, the National Indigenous Collaborative Housing Inc. (NICHI) brought together its members in Fredericton, New Brunswick, for an important gathering focused on the pressing housing challenges faced by Indigenous communities across Canada.
- This meeting served as a platform for open dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collective problem-solving.



Online Engagement and Members Plenary

- Members engaged in both online activities and an in-person plenary session to explore key themes surrounding Indigenous-led housing solutions, governance, and policy priorities.
- Discussions highlighted the importance of 'For Indigenous, By Indigenous' (FIBI) governance, the roles of NICHl members and allies, Board representation, and the need for strong advocacy and capacity-building.



For Indigenous, By Indigenous

- Indigenous communities know what's best—they should lead their own housing programs from start to finish, without outside restrictions.
- Flexible, community-driven funding and decision-making are key—grounded in Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and values.



For Indigenous, By Indigenous



“We are the best ones that know our own people; therefore, we should be able to run our own programs such as housing.”



“I like to first say what it's not—it's not a colonial paradigm where Indigenous people wait on government to dictate terms. Indigenous people have inherent rights and therefore are in the inherent position to dictate terms for our own benefit and worldview.”



Member versus Supporter

- Emphasized NICHl's Indigenous-led governance while encouraging collaboration with allies, without compromising autonomy.
- Stressed NICHl membership for Indigenous-led organizations with strong community ties.
- Recognized the role of supporters in providing resources, while ensuring no mission drift or loss of focus.



Member versus Supporter



“The whole point of this is to give voice to our peoples across Turtle Island... much of the standard language now is the definition of an Indigenous organization—at least 50% of the leadership has roots within our Nations and that at least 50% of the staff are also Indigenous.”



“I would say NICHl members are Indigenous peoples of Canada predominantly, or Indigenous groups or those invited to be members by Indigenous communities with long term lived experience with Indigenous communities. NICHl supporters could be non-Indigenous or Indigenous individuals or groups working with Indigenous communities across Canada.”



Board of Directors

- NICHl Board is key to guiding the organization, advocating for Indigenous housing priorities, and being responsive to member needs.
- Emphasized the need for diverse representation, necessary skills, and cultural knowledge on the Board, ensuring fair regional representation and inclusivity.



Board of Directors: Skills and Competencies

- NICHl's Board should include individuals with lived experience in Indigenous housing and technical expertise to stay connected to community realities.
- Emphasized the value of lived experience alongside professional qualifications in understanding Indigenous housing challenges.
 - Identified key technical areas for Board expertise (governance, finance, real estate, advocacy) and recommended a skills matrix to ensure diverse competencies.



Board of Directors: Skills and Competencies



“Board members must be able to speak authentically to our people’s experience—those in most desperate core needs.



“Board members should understand capital and public works, as well as experience in the real estate industry to support the financial sustainability of Indigenous housing initiatives.



Board of Directors: Diverse Representation

Regions and Representatives

- Members emphasized the importance of geographic diversity on the Board, with strong calls for representation from the North, Atlantic Canada, and rural and remote communities.
- Raised concerns that national initiatives often overlook the unique housing challenges faced by remote and non-urban Indigenous communities.



Board of Directors: Diverse Representation



“All the regions must be represented to the best of our ability at all times so that the collective voice is a collective voice.”



Board of Directors: Inclusivity

- **Inclusion:**

- Emphasized the need for a diverse, representative Board, including 2SLGBTQIA+ voices, with strong support for identity verification to ensure authentic Indigenous leadership.
- Advocated for the creation of Elders and Youth Councils to ground decision-making in cultural wisdom and support future leadership development.



Membership Benefits

- Members emphasized the need for NICHl to offer tangible supports like training, funding assistance, advocacy, and peer networking to strengthen Indigenous housing organizations.
- Prioritized access to regional training, mentorship, and capacity-building in housing development, financial management, and policy advocacy.



Membership Benefits

- Called for NICHl to provide technical support and advocate for dedicated funding streams to support Indigenous-led housing initiatives.
- Emphasized NICHl's role as a national advocacy body to amplify Indigenous voices and influence housing policy.
- Supported structured networking opportunities such as conferences, mentorship programs, and a knowledge-sharing platform.



Membership Benefits



“I would feel benefitted being able to represent my communities at a national level. Information & training for members. Also, avenues for other funding pots”



“If we could have some kind of regional seminars where members of NICHl could meet and partake in vital training, information sessions regarding housing, and building capacity for First Nations on and off reserve.”



Conclusion

- NICHl Membership Meeting provided a critical opportunity for members to engage in meaningful discussions on the future of Indigenous-led housing in Canada.
- Emphasis on strong governance, leadership, regional representation, and inclusivity.
- NICHl's role as a hub for education, training, funding support, policy advocacy, data sharing, and networking opportunities.



Table 1

What We Heard & How We Responded

<i>What We Heard</i>	<i>How We Responded</i>
Membership vs. Supporter	• Developed clear eligibility criteria for Members and Supporters, requiring proof and verification • Created separate application forms with role-specific questions
Membership Benefits	• Held NICHl's first capacity-building event to support knowledge sharing and collaboration in Indigenous housing - Planning future events to continue strengthening member capacity. • Developed the NICHl Membership Portal to enhance access to resources and member engagement. • Ongoing advocacy for increased and sustained Indigenous housing funding. • Launched a NICHl Member Spotlight to feature the work and impact of members • Feature member representatives on panels, in media, and policy discussions
Board of Directors	• NICHl board members are diverse, regionally representative, and bring a range of skills, experiences, and perspectives to guide NICHl's work.
Feedback and Two-Way Communication	• Roll-out member check-in surveys biannually to gather feedback on NICHl's work and services • Hosting biannual webinars to foster connection and knowledge exchange



Table 2

What we Learned and Areas for Further Exploration

<i>What We Heard</i>	<i>Areas for Further Exploration</i>
Elder & Youth Councils	• What role do you think the Elders and Youth Council should play within NICHl? • How should Elders and youth be selected or invited to participate in the Council? • What values or principles should guide the Council's work and relationships? • How would you like to see members engage with or learn from the Elders and Youth Council?
Networking & Peer Support	• Launch an Ask Us Anything and NICHl Members Circle for queries to foster open dialogue among members • What format would you feel most accessible and useful to you for asking questions or getting support (online calls or virtual meetings, discussion forums)
Inclusive Representation	• Host regional member roundtables (virtually or in person) to deepen NICHl's presence in specific areas (Northern regions, Atlantic Provinces, Prairies) • How should the regional roundtables be structured to best meet the needs of members in different areas? • What support or resources would be needed to facilitate effective participation in these roundtables?
Resource Sharing	• Provide access to shared tools and resources to support partner organizations, including template policies, timely funding alerts, grant-writing guidance, and capital planning tools to streamline program development, enhance funding opportunities, and support strategic planning efforts.
Membership Perks	• Host "Welcome to NICHl" info sessions for new members, featuring testimonials from current members to build connection, highlight the value of the network, and foster early engagement. • Develop and distribute membership outreach packages tailored for various organizations and networks to raise awareness of NICHl, encourage membership, and expand the reach of the initiative.



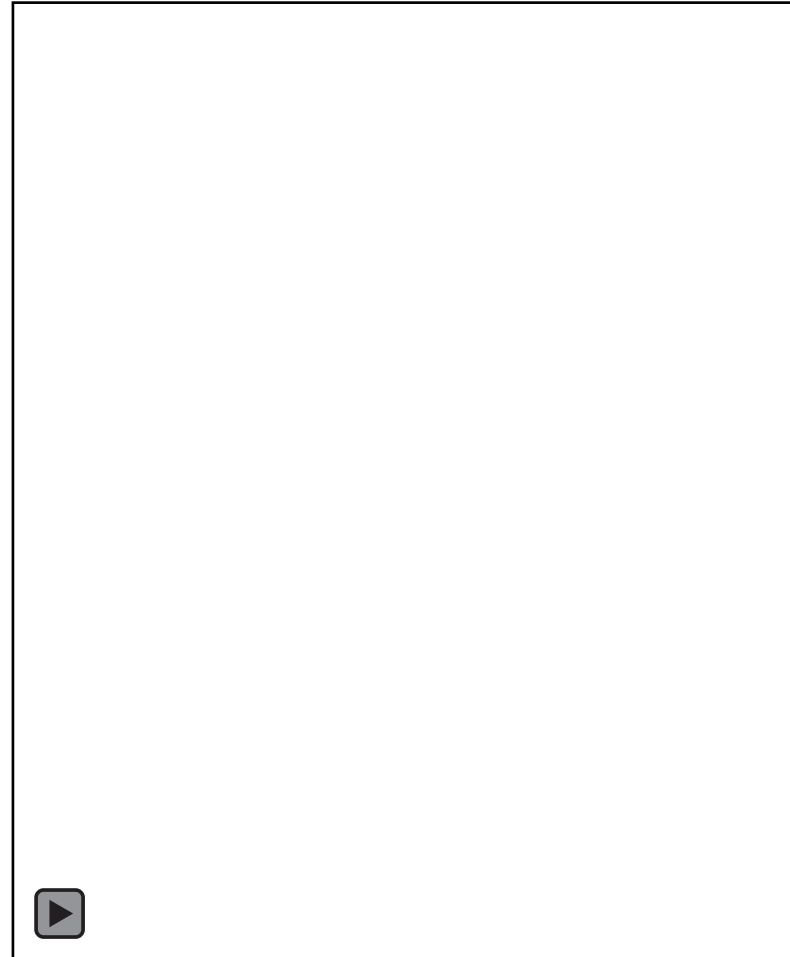
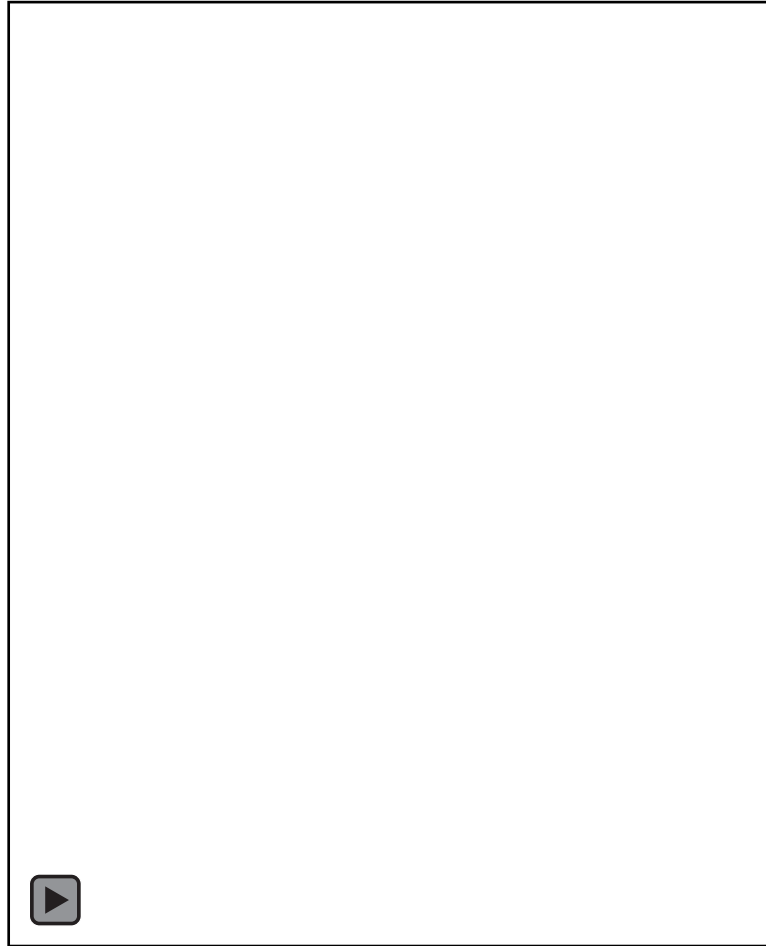
Health Break

Take a 15-minute break
and join us back
at 2:15 PM
for our interactive session!

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Interactive Sessions

- NICHl is seeking your input and feedback to strengthen our work together
 - **Mentimeter:** An interactive web-based tool to gauge engagement, communication and content preferences, opportunities for collaboration, and feedback on NICHl events.
 - **4-Corners Discussion:** Collaborate with your peers to explore challenges facing housing providers, operational pressures, and key priority areas.
 - **Table Talks:** Work with your peers to explore opportunities for expanding NICHl membership and enhancing support through established councils.

Your Voice Matters Let's Explore Together!

- Scan the QR code or go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and enter the code **8900 6302**
- <https://www.menti.com/al4vf7435djg>



4 Corners Discussion

- Break into groups of approx. 30 people
- You'll rotate through the four corners, each featuring a different question
- Spend approx. 10 minutes at each corner discussing, reflecting, or contributing your thoughts
- When time is up, listen for the signal and move to the next corner



Table Talks Discussion

- With your group, each table will work through 2 discussion questions over the next 15 minutes.
- A NICHl staff member will be your note-taker, so you can focus fully on the discussion.
- Please leave your answers on the table for collection.





That's a wrap!

John Lagimodiere &
Winston McLean

*Aboriginal Consulting Services
Iron Wolf Consulting*



What's Next

John Gordon, Chief Executive Officer

Danielle Cognigni, Director, Business Operations



What's Next

1. Direct contact with Members for needs-based Survey (watch for emails from our Policy Analyst beginning May 5th)
2. Survey to Membership regarding 2nd Annual Indigenous Housing Capacity Event (Survey by email May 2025)
3. Next Annual General Meeting – September 2025 *tentative (Notice by email July 2025)
4. 2nd Annual Indigenous Housing Capacity Event – November 2025
5. Toll Free Number Coming Soon!

**All details and final dates will be sent by email*



Reminder

1. The **Indigenous Caucus Annual Members Gathering** is taking place Monday, April 28, 5:15-6:15pm in Gallery A at TCU Place.
2. The **Indigenous Caucus Social & Networking** event takes place on Monday, April 28, 7:00-9:30pm at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Buses will take attendees to the event; please meet in the TCU Place lobby at 6:30pm. Please note that this is a ticketed event.
3. The CHRA **Indigenous Innovation Forum** takes place on Tuesday, April 29, starting at 9:00am. Please note: you must have purchased registration for the courses and the Indigenous Innovation Forum in order to attend - these events are not included in your regular Congress registration.





Closing

Elder, Norman Fleury

Where to find us!

Thank-you for joining us!

Website: <https://nichi.ca/>

Facebook: NICHlhousing

X: nichi_housing

LinkedIn: nichi-housing-logement

