



Minutes Meeting of June 9, 2026

In attendance:	Lance Haymond, AFNQL	Isabelle Déry, ISC
	Guy Latouche, AFNQL	Annie Géhin, ISC
	Pierre Bélanger, CMHC	André Dansereau, ISC
	Jean-François Samuel, CMHC	Nathalie Spénard, ISC
	Frédéric Lessard, ISC	Sonia Gavin, ISC
Absent:	Lance Haymond, AFNQL, Éric Bouchard, ISC, Véronique Mercier, ISC, Ina Wielinga, CMHC	

Facilitator: Guy Latouche

1. Word of Welcome and introduction

The agenda is accepted without modification. The minutes of the January 2026 meeting were accepted.

Here are the most recent changes to the Committee's composition:

Sean Somers is replaced by Frédéric Lessard as Director of Infrastructure, Lands and Environment;

Isabelle Déry is replaced by Annie Géhin, who is the new Manager of Housing and Health Infrastructure;

Ina Wielinga is retiring from CMHC and will be replaced by Martine Francoeur.

The history, mandate, and strategic objectives of the RTHC were presented at the beginning of the meeting to allow new participants to gain a better understanding of the framework within which the Committee operates.

2. Actions Follow-Up

The last RTHC meeting, on January 29, 2026, focused primarily on the regional approach to be adopted with respect to Build Canada Homes. A draft regional plan was subsequently developed and discussed with the federal agency. This item is on today's agenda. The meeting minutes were approved.

3. National and Regional Environment

AFNQL

Update for Chiefs

An update on the housing file was presented to the Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador (AFNQL) on May 26. They were briefed on several topics, including the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) Housing Initiative, which is nearing the end of its program; upcoming changes to the national allocation of social housing program funds (Section 95), and the regional approach being developed to take advantage of opportunities offered by the new affordable housing agency, Build Canada Homes. These three topics are on the agenda for the current RTHC meeting.

The update also addressed other topics such as the Urban, Rural and Northern Strategy (URN), the Ten-Year Strategy on First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure and drinking water legislation.

URN Strategy

The AFNQL has partnered with the Société immobilière du Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (SIRCAAQ) to implement the URN Strategy. This strategy focuses on off-community housing. In the first year, \$8M was invested in 10 projects located in various urban centres. Generally, SIRCAAQ projects are much more than simple housing units: they are true living environments created in collaboration with First Nations members.

The AFNQL is continuing its collaboration with SIRCAAQ. The second tranche of funding, for 2026-2027, is approximately \$5M. SIRCAAQ will submit a new proposal of projects to be supported, based on pre-established criteria, for approval by the AFNQL's Reflection Group.

It should be noted that the Government of Canada took advantage of the April 2026 Economic Statement to announce a reprofiling of funds under the URN Strategy. The proportion of funds distributed according to a distinction-based approach will be increased. In other words, the share specifically targeted to address the housing needs of First Nations members in Quebec living outside their communities will be increased—though to what extent remains unclear.

Regarding the recent federal Economic Statement, we note that it contains no specific provisions concerning housing funding in First Nations communities. It offers no concrete solution to address the housing crisis within First Nations communities, which has significant repercussions on other sectors of society, such as health and education.

Indigenous Housing Strategy

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN), with the assistance of regional housing experts, is working on renewing the Ten-Year Strategy on First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure, adopted in 2018. At the same time, Canada is developing a new Indigenous Housing Strategy and has launched a consultation through its website. We are calling for the federal government to jointly develop the strategy regarding First Nations content. This issue will be the subject of a resolution at the next AFN General Assembly in July.

AFN's General Assembly

Five draft resolutions concerning housing and infrastructure will be presented at the AFN Annual General Meeting this July.

Canada's commitment to co-develop the First Nations components of the Federal Aboriginal Housing Strategy.

The right to adequate housing on reserves.

Reaffirming Canada's commitment to addressing the infrastructure gap.

Reintroducing the First Nations Clean Water Act.

Developing a First Nations water security strategy.

The content of these draft resolutions is currently confidential. However, their titles clearly indicate their direct connection to issues of great importance in our region.

ISC

Changes to the Organizational Structure

A new organizational structure for ISC's Regional Delivery Sector (RDS) sector is currently being rolled out. It is now based on seven key functions, rather than program clusters. This model, which is expected to evolve, aims to better integrate activities and adopt a consistent approach to ensure more harmonized interventions with Indigenous communities across the country.

Note:

Senior Assistant Deputy Minister and Chief Operating Officer – RDS: Philippe Thompson.

Director General – RDS, Quebec Region: Katrina Peddle.

Infrastructure, Lands, and Environment Directorate: Frédéric Lessard (replacing Sean Somers). This branch encompasses, among other things, housing, community and health infrastructure, engineering, lands, economic development, and the environment.

Federal Housing Strategy for Indigenous Peoples

The ISC national office is currently holding pan-Canadian [engagement sessions](#) bringing together leaders, community members, and First Nations organizations, such as the AFNQL. The session specific to the Quebec region will be held on June 18. Ultimately, these efforts aim to gather input for the development of a new pan-governmental strategy on Indigenous housing, announced in the 2025 Budget. This strategy will complement existing initiatives, including the ten-year [National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy](#). *Note: In order to encourage more participation from First Nations in Quebec, the APNQL circulated a communication on the subject.*

Management of Targeted Funds

March 31, 2026 marked the end of the flexibility measures related to the Transfer Payment Policy that were implemented during the pandemic. The return to pre-pandemic practices will change the way funds have been carried over in recent years and will require more rigorous annual planning of activities. These changes entail significant adjustments to project management and funding practices for both ISC and recipients.

CMHC

Indigenous Youth for a Housing Internship

The internship application process has now been completed, and we have received applications totalling more than \$3.1M. We were able to support a total of 69 internships for a budget of \$2M. ISC will fund 58 internships with a contribution of \$1.745M. CMHC will support 11 internships with a budget of \$257,000. We would like to thank ISC for its trust and commitment to supporting capacity development. This collaboration between federal partners makes all the difference.

On-Reserve Non-Profit Housing Program (Section 95)

We will be in a position to finalize the Section 95 funding allocation for the 2026–2027 fiscal year within a few weeks. We expect the funding letters to be sent to clients by the end of June or even early July. Based on our estimate earlier this year, we believe we will be able to support the construction of about 32 units.

Regarding the allocation of Section 95 funds over the next few years, the Quebec region could experience a significant budget decrease following the update of the national allocation data based on Census 2021. Although several steps are currently being taken to maintain historical funding levels, RTHC members agreed to explore possible options to update the parameters of the allocation formula in Quebec. The basic principle of allocating funds based on housing needs will be maintained.

Reorganization within CMHC

Significant changes are occurring within CMHC's Indigenous housing team (Quebec and Atlantic) Three specialists will be leaving us for retirement. Karen Marcus, who worked in the Atlantic provinces, and François Lachance have already left us, and Ina Wielinga will be leaving us on June 12. We have made some realignments within our client portfolios and are in the process of hiring. These changes will obviously increase the burden for our team members. We are committed to continuing to support you during this transition period.

4. RHTC 2024-2025 Report

The Annual Report for the year 2025-2026 is reviewed and accepted by RHTC authorities.

5. Action Plan 2025-2027

The update for the second year of the 2025-2027 Action Plan is presented. Two important actions are added to the Plan.

Make the necessary representations to justify the renewal of the ISC Housing Initiative, which expires on March 31, 2027.

Position the region advantageously within the new affordable housing ecosystem (Build Canada Homes).

6. Strategic Discussions – Section 95 Allocation

This discussion arises from major changes that CMHC is preparing to make to the distribution of Section 95 program funds between regions. Again, using updated but unreliable census data will result in a significant increase in funding in some areas, while others lose just as much. Our region will be among the losers. Not so long ago, the Section 95 program budget allowed us to build ± 65 housing units per year. The current target, before the possible budget reduction, is barely half of that. The new drop could be of the order of 50%. This is very worrying. The AFNQL and the AFN are calling for a review that will not result in any losers. This involves increasing the budget for the Section 95 program which has not been increased for a long time.

The resolution adopted by the AFN Chiefs last September, along with advocacy and discussions at the national table of the Joint Working Group (AFN-ISC-CMHC), led CMHC to opt for the status quo in 2025-2026. The current formula for allocating funds was maintained temporarily.

In the event of a revision of the distribution as envisaged, some First Nations in Quebec would no longer have access to the funding of housing units each year. We must prepare for both eventualities: with or without a drop in the share of our region. This means exploring new approaches such as revising minimum contributions and densification. Any avenue that could improve and modernize the regional distribution formula must be examined and compared to ensure that the CMHC regional office uses the best approach in the circumstances. It is also necessary to establish a cycle of revision of the formula, for example based on the update of the AFNQL housing needs report.

7. Strategic Discussions – End of Program, Build Canada Homes and Budget 2026-2027

Management of Targeted Funds

The current year, 2026–2027, marks the conclusion of ISC's final major housing funding, derived from the 2022 Federal Budget's five-year allocation, as well as the end of a long series of funding initiatives characterized by varying durations and budget levels since their inception in 2016. The termination of ISC's Housing Initiative signifies, quite simply, a return to standard short-term budgets. Yet, it is largely through the various components of this initiative that First Nations in Quebec have been able to implement numerous housing projects over the past decade.

The CRTL partners worked together to develop and disseminate advocacy for the renewal of the ISC Housing Initiative beyond March 31, 2027. The document was shared with housing authorities at SAC Headquarters (Gatineau):

Raises awareness and provide information on the local and regional importance of the ISC Housing Initiative;

Reports on the results, achievements, and progress made through the Housing Initiative in the management of housing by indigenous peoples;

Highlights the impacts and unintended consequences of not renewing the Housing Initiative.

In the event of renewal, the ISC budget targeted for housing, therefore beyond regular allocations, would drop from \$70M to \$6M.

Advocacy will continue to try to influence the next federal budget in the fall of 2026.

Build Canada Homes

The Government of Canada (GoC) has adopted a new approach that should lead to unprecedented investments to increase the housing supply in Canada. Bill C-20 does not provide for distinction-based funding or specific guarantees for First Nations. This matter Tripartite Housing Committee RTHC. A multi-year, multi-stakeholder, distinction-based plan is currently being developed by the Committee. The objective is to leverage the opportunities offered by Build Canada Homes to launch the first phase of a catch-up initiative aimed at closing the housing gap in First Nations communities in Quebec.

The multi-year plan currently being developed aims to improve housing conditions for members living in First Nations communities in Quebec by increasing the average annual number of housing units built by 50%. Funding in the form of non-repayable loans is being sought from Build Canada Homes to be combined with other housing funding sources (ISC, CMHC, First Nations) to boost housing starts in the communities over a five-year period. The plan considers each First Nation's capacity to implement housing projects, incorporating distinct planning/design and implementation phases. A preliminary draft of the plan has been discussed with Build Canada Homes, and the reception has been positive. The details of the plan are currently being finalized.

The renewal of the ISC Housing Initiative and the Regional Plan to accelerate the construction of affordable housing are two issues with cross-cutting elements that will be carried out in parallel by the RTHC in the coming months.

8. Next meeting

The next RTHC meeting will be held in October. The exact date is yet to be determined. The Operational Committee will meet beforehand, on September 29, to prepare for the meeting.