Aboriginal Seniors' Housing in Edmonton

FINAL Report

A Research Project by:

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Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

Statistics show that urban Aboriginal seniors face disproportionately negative housing situations and vulnerability in the city. They are significantly more likely to be raising children and to be new to Edmonton, with much less experience in things like home ownership.

This project poses the questions: what housing issues do Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton face? What interrelated effects do age and race have on this population? How can we overcome and address these systemic, and often overlooked, issues in the context of the housing sector? In answering these questions, the goal of this work is three-fold. First, this paper demonstrates that there is a real housing need for Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton. Second, it demonstrates that this is not simply an issue of seniors' housing or Aboriginal housing, but relates intrinsically to the particular needs and circumstances of Edmonton's *elderly Aboriginal* population. Third, by hearing directly from Aboriginal seniors, this paper gives space to provide their insights into recommendations that will help prevent Aboriginal people from risking homelessness in Edmonton.

To hear from Aboriginal seniors about their housing past, present, and hopes for the future, those who worked on this project conducted talking groups at the Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors' Centre and at the Operation Friendship Seniors Society. Participants shared their stories about the problems they, as Aboriginal seniors, have had and what they would like to see. Some of these stories can be viewed in the video that accompanies this project.

The most common housing dilemmas faced by Aboriginal seniors were: racist discrimination by landlords and neighbours in seniors' buildings; not knowing where to find housing services and having difficulties accessing them; and the systemic discrimination they constantly face in not being able to have family members stay with them (most Aboriginal seniors indicated that they came from cultures where, when a family member needs a place to stay, they have to provide them with that shelter). As stated, a very high percentage of Aboriginal seniors – both in this study and across Canada – are also raising (grand)children and this is something that needs to be taken into account when developing housing strategies for Aboriginal families. Because homelessness, like poverty and the trauma of residential school experiences, is intergenerational, addressing Aboriginal seniors' housing must be undertaken as part of broader strategies to tackle Aboriginal underhousing in the city.

Working to end homelessness is an important part of making sure that Aboriginal people, of all ages, are afforded the basic necessities to make Edmonton a liveable city. To this end, this report recommends, in summary, that:

- There be more Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing and the resources to support it; Aboriginal communities must play a role in developing and managing Aboriginal housing and related services.
- *All segments* of the diverse Aboriginal communities in Edmonton, including seniors, must have some say in the shaping of holistic Aboriginal housing programs and services so that their unique needs, perspectives, experiences, and goals can be heard and included.
- Aboriginal seniors need a variety of housing options, including cooperative models of housing.
- Seniors' housing must be culturally appropriate – this includes the recognition of particular familial needs of Aboriginal people and also calls for housing units where seniors can live with children.
- Efforts must be made to eliminate both systemic and overt forms of racist discrimination from housing.
- At a minimum, housing must be affordable, safe, and suitably located, based on Aboriginal seniors' needs.
- There be more information sharing so that knowledge about housing resources reaches those who need it, and service providers need to pay close attention to how accessible their services are.
- Service providers and designers need to acknowledge the intersecting nature of age and race – that is, to recognize the unique positions and needs of Aboriginal seniors.

Understanding the intersecting nature of age and forms of oppression and barriers that Aboriginal people face will provide useful direction to those who shape and carry out Edmonton's housing-related programming that is aimed at addressing *all* of the causes of homelessness. We hope that the urban Aboriginal initiatives that make Edmonton an inclusive and dynamic city will continue, with both government and civil society support. To this end, an inclusive approach to understanding the importance of addressing our city's shared past, present, and future, and the diverse – and too often substantively unequal – experiences of the people who live within it, can make adequate housing in Edmonton a reality for Aboriginal seniors, families, and communities.

Introduction

The 2011 census showed that 25,920 private households in Edmonton were deemed "not suitable,"[1] and 109,860 households were spending 30% or more of their total household income on shelter costs (Government of Canada 2011a), meaning that they were inadequately housed. The 2012 homeless count in Edmonton identified 2,174 people in the city had nowhere to live (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a, 7). Study after study indicated that Aboriginal[2] people living in Canada's cities experience homelessness, housing inadequacy, and other housing issues at significantly higher rates than non-Aboriginal people (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a; Yale Belanger, Weasel Head, and Awosoga 2012; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2005; Government of Canada 2011a; Andersen 2009; Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010). Yet few studies have examined the effects that aging has on the Aboriginal population and housing (Lange 2010; Bilsbarrow et al. 2005; Frideres 1994; Labillois 1994; Durocher et al. 2013). None of said studies focus on Edmonton as a case study, despite the city's significant and growing Aboriginal population.

While it is common to note how *young* Aboriginal populations are, in comparison to the non-Aboriginal population (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010; Government of Canada 2011a; Andersen 2009), more detailed attention is needed on the important housing issues of Aboriginal seniors[3] in a dynamic urban area such as Edmonton. The housing needs of elderly Aboriginal people – "among the most neglected social class[es]" (Beatty and Berdahl 2011, 1) – are unique, significant, and inadequately addressed by housing strategies that focus on the mainstream elderly population. Nor have they been appropriately addressed by those Aboriginal-focussed housing strategies that deal with Aboriginal communities at large (Yale Belanger, Weasel Head, and Awosoga 2012, 14, 22; Lange 2010; Durocher et al. 2013; Durst 2000, 76–78). Focussing on how young the urban Aboriginal population is, and by extension, focussing primarily on youth issues, only obscures the housing situations of seniors (Durocher et al. 2013, 283).

As in other big cities, Edmonton's Aboriginal population is, on the whole, proportionately much younger than that of the non-Aboriginal population (Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division 2010), however,

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[1] The Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation bases "suitability" guidelines on whether "housing has enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements" (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2011).

[2] The term 'Aboriginal' is used to refer to the First Nations (status or non-status), Métis, and Inuit peoples in Canada. This is with acknowledgement that the word itself is perceived by many as a foreign, government-given term that was not traditionally used by Aboriginal people themselves. It is used in place of the increasingly common 'Indigenous' as the former is used by the Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors' Centre, Homeward Trust, and all three orders of state government. It is noted here that many of the seniors who participated in this project refer to themselves as Native.

[3] The Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors' Centre defines seniors as 55 years and over. This definition is used throughout, unless otherwise indicated when sources using a different age range are cited.

frontline work done by service agencies such as the Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors' Centre (EASC)[4] indicates that there is a significant number of Aboriginal seniors who, while housed, face serious housing issues, including being "at-risk of homelessness" (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2011, 3), or "near-homeless" (Wilder Research 2006). As the Aboriginal population in Edmonton ages, the population of Aboriginal seniors is expected to grow rapidly (National Advisory Council on Aging 1999, 16; Wister and Moore 1998, 107) and thus the necessity for appropriate housing services for Aboriginal seniors will grow. Addressing their issues *now*, before they develop into an even more serious housing crisis, will prepare governments and service providers to deal with a shortage of adequate spaces and appropriate housing supports down the road. This project complements the *Edmonton and Area Community Plan on Housing and Supports: 2011-2015* (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012b), which identifies the need to work with Aboriginal people and the elderly as a priority in order to address homelessness and housing inadequacy in Edmonton. It also contributes to the body of literature informing policy-makers on how to implement the community plan, as well as the city and province's plans to end homelessness (Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness 2009; Alberta Secretariat for Action on Homelessness 2008).

Outreach work at the EASC has gathered anecdotal evidence that Edmonton's Aboriginal senior population comes from, mixed but predominantly rural backgrounds, and there is a large number who are new to Edmonton and do not know what housing services to access or where to live. EASC workers have seen that people are falling through the cracks; many Aboriginal seniors have exhausted their resources, lack the resources to secure a home, are unable to attain gainful employment, and do not possess all the life skills needed to prevent homelessness. Although many EASC service users are housed, the staff regularly see elderly Aboriginal people whose futures are uncertain, making them at risk of being homeless,. In addition, compared to other non-Aboriginal populations in Canada, Aboriginal seniors are more often raising children (Environics Institute 2011; Andersen 2009). The urgent need to find housing for seniors with options that accommodate their families is very important among those who use EASC services.

The housing situations described by many that this paper seeks to corroborate, illustrate, and explore with this project highlight a number of important issues facing Aboriginal seniors in this city. In this study, we will examine which trends have the greatest impact on Aboriginal seniors' housing in Edmonton - lending voice to those who are often marginalized in academic study, in government, and in society in general. In order to end the cycle of intergenerational trauma born of residential schooling, chronic poverty, and violence and to prevent at-risk populations from entering homelessness, we must ask: What housing issues do Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton face? What interrelated effects do age and race have

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[4] Established in 1986, the EASC acts as a gathering place for Aboriginal seniors and provides programs and services, including a housing registry, in order to improve Aboriginal seniors' quality of life in Edmonton.

on this population? How can we address and overcome these under-examined, systemic issues in the context of the housing sector?

By answering these questions, the goals of this work are three-fold. First, this paper will demonstrate that there is a real housing need for Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton. Second, it will demonstrate that this is not simply an issue of seniors' housing or Aboriginal housing, but that it is intrinsically related to the particular needs and circumstances of Edmonton's *elderly Aboriginal* population. Third, by hearing directly from Aboriginal seniors, this paper will afford them space to present their insights with a view to creating recommendations that will help prevent Aboriginal people from risking homelessness in Edmonton.

The paper proceeds as follows. It begins by examining some of literature in the area, highlighting the reasons why addressing the housing issues of Aboriginal seniors is vitally important for cities such as Edmonton, and providing a theoretical context for further discussion and analysis. Next, the paper will briefly explain the research methods used to listen to and document the stories of Aboriginal seniors. Finally, the paper will look at relevant statistics to provide background on the issues faced by research participants (and by extension, other Aboriginal seniors in Edmonton). Having established a broad picture of the situation, this paper will discuss highlights from the housing experiences shared by participants shared, while situating them in an analytic narrative, looking for trends and commonalities, and raising persistent issues. Finally, the report concludes with some recommendations based on what was heard from participants.

Research Approach and Methods: Talking Groups for Listening

Since a significant part of this project involved the collection and expression of Aboriginal seniors' own stories and points of view, people working on this project conducted 'talking groups', elsewhere described as "research-sharing circles" (Kovach 2009, 99, 124). These created a space for more traditional speaking narratives, unstructured by researcher intervention and questioning, so that participants' speaking time was not fragmented. This type of process also allowed us to hear from a larger number of participants. Group participation allowed speakers to hear others, building their responses on what they heard from others, either in agreement or in contrast. A similar approach for talking with Aboriginal seniors about housing has been utilized in other studies (Lange 2010; Bilsbarrow et al. 2005).

Participants were sought through postering at the EASC, and through the EASC's housing outreach worker. Information about the talking groups was provided to a number of Aboriginal and housing-related agencies in Edmonton so that they could spread the word through their email listserves, word-of-mouth, or contact with frontline workers. All talking groups (save one, described below) were held at the EASC and each varied from three to five people, allowing for participants to have ample time to speak during the flexible hour-and-a-half time frame. At each group, we provided snacks and drinks. All participants received a cash honourarium for attending. We also provided bus tickets to help with the costs of participating. Child-minding was offered so that there were fewer barriers for participants with children. The groups were held over a period of about six weeks in the summer and fall of 2013. In total, twenty-one participants attended.

An application for ethics approval[5] was granted by the University of Alberta's Research Ethics Office. Research methods met with the EASC's code of conduct, as expressed in their Operations, Policy, and Procedures guidelines, and appropriate cultural protocols, as guided by the project consultant – himself an Aboriginal senior – were used. All participants signed consent waivers explaining that they had the right not to participate. Participants were also informed of their right to have their information removed from the report at any point, although no one has chosen to do so.

At each sitting, participants discussed the housing barriers they have experienced, as well as their concerns about their present and future. They also spoke about what has worked for them, and what developments they would like to see in the future. Direct questioning was not necessary - given the relaxed, conversational setting - though an 'aide-memoire' was used to keep participants on topic or

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[5] At the time research began, the principal investigator was working for the University of Alberta and ethics approval was required by the funding agency.

probe new areas of discussion when necessary (Silver et al. 2006, 9). After each meeting, participants completed an anonymous questionnaire collecting some basic demographic data in order to gauge the diversity of participants and backgrounds.

In an effort to ensure greater diversity and inclusion, one talking group was conducted with a group of unsheltered homeless men (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a, iv) participants at the Operation Friendship Seniors Society (OFSS).[6] The OFSS was approached regarding the project and they generously consented to let us use their space for the discussion. One frontline worker at the centre spread information about participation through word of mouth and postering. On the day of the talking group, an Aboriginal social worker helped recruit participants and co-facilitated the group. In all other respects, this talking group was carried out in an identical manner to those held at the EASC.

Finally, all participants who their provided contact information (or could be contacted by OFSS workers if they had no contact information) were invited to a gathering and feast once the talking groups were completed and the report writing had begun. There, the EASC provided a meal and some ceremony to thank the participants for their contributions, and we updated them on the progress and direction of this project, addressing any questions and comments.

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[6] Operation Friendship Seniors Society is "a non-profit society that provides community-based preventative social services to the seniors of Edmonton's inner city" that provides "safe, affordable non-institutional housing options" (Operation Friendship Seniors Society 2014).

Background and Context: Edmonton as a Place for Aboriginal Seniors

Before proceeding with the description and analysis of participants' responses, we must provide some more background on Edmonton specifically, Aboriginal seniors living there, and the local housing sector. Whenever possible, the latest statistics (from 2011) are used, but occasionally we are forced to rely on more dated (though more detailed) 2006 census information. In this section, we will also describe some of the participants' demographical information, as collected from the survey.

In 2011, there were 61,770 Aboriginal people in Edmonton, accounting for 5.4% of the total urban population (Government of Canada 2011b). Edmonton's Aboriginal population was approximately 44% First Nations (26,950 people), 51% Métis (31,780 people) and 2% Inuit (1115 people). A small population of 3% of respondents listed more than one identity, or an Indigenous identity that did not fit the First Nations/Métis/Inuit rubric (Government of Canada 2011b). These numbers account for the population within the city limits and do not take into account the nearby First Nation reserve that may shift the proportions.

In 2011, roughly 48% of the Aboriginal population was male, and 52% female. When looking at age, we see that there were 6,285 Aboriginal people aged 55 and older in the city - women account for about 60% of these seniors. Interestingly, of the total Aboriginal seniors population, First Nations people made up only 31%, while Métis accounted for 62% (Government of Canada 2011b). Finally, Aboriginal seniors accounted for just over 10% of Aboriginal people in Edmonton, but non-Aboriginal seniors accounted for 23% of the non-Aboriginal population (Government of Canada 2011b).

As previously stated, in light of the fact that Aboriginal populations are disproportionately younger than the non-Aboriginal population, research tends to focus on younger people. For example, Statistics Canada's Aboriginal-focussed analysis of the *2011 National Household Survey* included extensive details on Aboriginal children in Canada, but not on seniors' living conditions (Government of Canada 2011a). However, one useful result of this study, was that it served to highlight the number of Aboriginal children living with grandparents. In 2011, across Canada, 2.7% of Aboriginal children age 14 and under were living without their parents and with one or more grandparents. For non-Aboriginal children, this number was only 0.4% (Government of Canada 2011a, 19). Further, 9.1% of Aboriginal children lived with their grandparents *and* their parents. Only 3.9% of non-Aboriginal children in Canada lived in such multi-generational situations. The poverty experienced by Aboriginal seniors – and their housing conditions – therefore truly matters because that poverty is experienced by their children as well; if we are to break the vicious circle of intergenerational poverty, we must address the housing needs of Aboriginal seniors.

Housing conditions in Edmonton are disproportionately worse for Aboriginal people than for non-Aboriginal people. In 2012, Aboriginal people accounted for 46% of Edmonton's homeless population – representing 58% of the unsheltered homeless population and only 35% of the sheltered homeless population (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a, 14). The Aboriginal homeless population is generally younger than the non-Aboriginal homeless population, but the Homeless Count still identified 89 Aboriginal homeless seniors. These seniors accounted for just over 10% of the homeless Aboriginal population, however 25% of all the homeless seniors in Edmonton identified as Aboriginal (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a, 16). Significantly, though, Aboriginal people accounted for 61% of the homeless population acting as caregivers to children (Homeward Trust Edmonton 2012a, 19) – a large over-representation.

As for those who are housed, even if temporarily or insecurely housed, housing experiences of Aboriginal people are still disproportionately negative. In 2011, 12% of Aboriginal people in Edmonton lived in homes that needed major repairs, while only 6% of non-Aboriginal people's homes were in need of such repair. Of the 7,560 Aboriginal people whose homes needed major repairs, 730 were inhabited by people 55 years of age and over. In Edmonton, 570 Aboriginal seniors were living in housing deemed "not suitable" (Government of Canada 2011c).

Based on the demographic data collected from participant questionnaires, the breakdown of research participants represented a diverse range of experiences and, in some key areas, mirrored local statistics. For example, 60% of participants were women. The age breakdown was evenly distributed and was as follows:
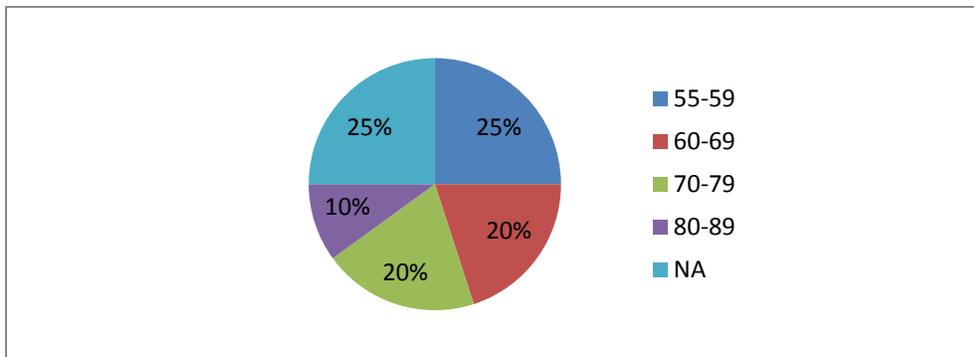
Some had lived in Edmonton for a long time, and some not very long, but none had lived their whole lives here. We asked participants: "How many years have you lived in Edmonton?" and their answers[7] were as follows:

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[7] Note that several did not answer this question as each survey question was optional.
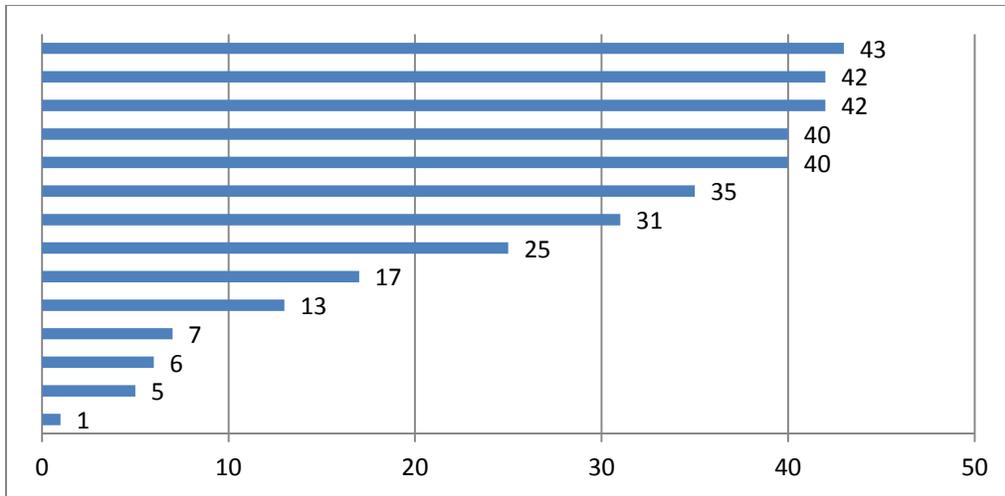
Housing situations also varied, but were dominated by renters. We asked participants to provide their current housing situation: [8]
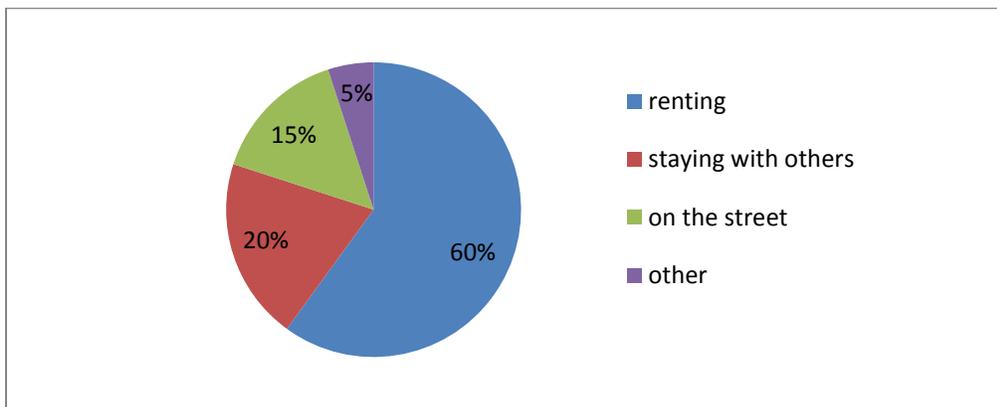
In contrast, according to the City of Edmonton, "70% of people 55+ in Edmonton live in a house, with most owning their own homes" (City of Edmonton 2010, 8).

50% of participants lived alone. Of the half that lived with others, 40% had children living with them, meaning that 20% of all participants were living with children. Finally, although we would prefer to problematize the labelling of people, we asked participants the open question of "with which Aboriginal group do you identify?" Not everyone answered and not all answers fit into the government-determined

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[8] "Other" includes living in a vehicle.

rubric of First Nation/Métis/Inuit. For those who chose to answer the question, the breakdown was as follows: [9]
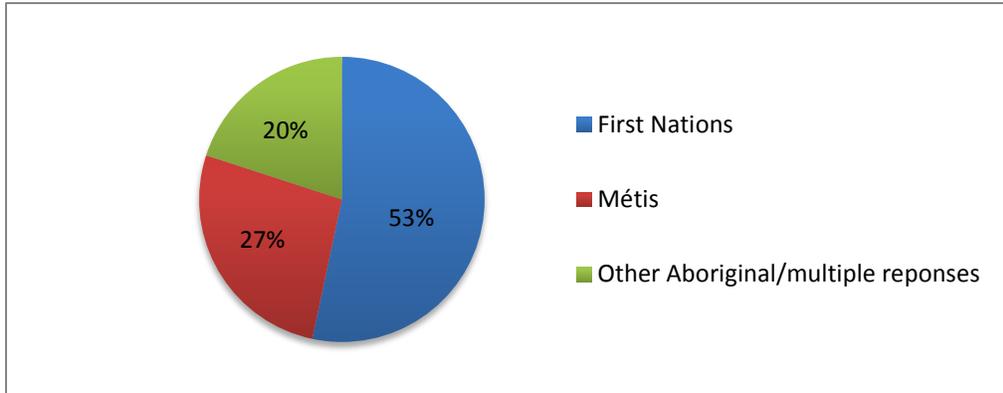
Although these results may differ from Edmonton's actual Aboriginal population breakdown (if statistics are indeed accurate and if we are to invest so much in these labels), the data gathered from the focus groups does indicate a useful level of diversity among research participants. When housing trends are examined across Aboriginal groups, age groups, different living conditions, and number of years spent in the city, the high incidence of common experiences, despite differences, adds weight to the significance of these trends.

[9] "Other" terms included Non Treaty, and people who identified as both First Nations and Métis. For statistical purposes, participants who gave the name of a particular First Nation have been included in the First Nation category.

Results: Voices, Experiences, and What We Heard

Many important trends emerged from the six talking groups, and there were many common problems faced by Aboriginal seniors. For example, the issue of culture – which came up in all groups – and (a lack of) understanding were key in many instances of difficulty in housing – both in finding it and keeping it. One person summarized: "Culture is important. People don't want to isolate themselves. We want to live in a Native setting." In another group, one person said that culture matters "big time. We all have to have our culture instilled in us. Family is important. First Nations have the right to be like immigrant communities [that have culturally appropriate seniors' housing] and practice our culture."

Culture can have a big impact on housing (Durocher et al. 2013; Labillois 1994) and difference-blindness here can lead to systemic problems. This becomes especially apparent when Aboriginal seniors rent homes from people whose cultures, histories, and experiences are so different from their own. The most common dilemma Aboriginal seniors faced (which is corroborated by other studies (Lange 2010; Durocher et al. 2013; Bilsbarrow et al. 2005)) was not being able to house extended family in their homes – a vitally important factor for many participants, and something Frideres identified as more common among Aboriginal seniors than other groups (1994, 19). This reality, whether a cultural desire or due to financial need, is an essential part of practicing their culture and passing it on (Durocher et al. 2013, 284, 290; Labillois 1994), but it proves to be at odds with the ideas and rules guiding the mainstream housing sector.

One woman said that she had had her grandchildren over for a couple hours in the afternoon and her landlord subsequently put a shaming note on her door that read "this is not a daycare." Another woman explained that when her son lost his job, he moved in with her, along with his partner and children. Her landlord tried to evict them saying, "I don't accept your kind of people here."

Given (urban) Aboriginal people's very high mobility – frequently moving both within, and in and out of urban spaces – (Norris and Clatworthy 2003; Skelton 2002; Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2002) the need to temporarily house family is high. As the same woman explained: "We don't know what's going to happen with our kids or grandkids. As Native and Métis people, we're very close knit and want to stay together." In agreement, another woman added: "We have a culture where you don't send our family away. . . . You can sleep on the floor, but people get evicted for that." One homeless man said: "One of the problems Native people have is, if a relative asks if they can stay the night, you can't say no. Your caretaker or landlord asks if extra people are staying over; you have to pay more. Nobody wants to see people staying on the street." Housing family is part of many Aboriginal cultures, but the stated (housing regulations) and unstated (other people's assumptions about what is good or right) rules

governing the housing sector forbids cohabitation that deviates from mainstream notions of what that should look like. Aboriginal people who violate these conscious and unconscious standards are punished with shaming and/or eviction. Discrimination against Aboriginal seniors can be overt and affects urban Aboriginal well-being. One woman explained:

> I could not find a place when I moved to the city. One landlord asked "Do you drink?" She thought I couldn't speak English, and she wanted a huge deposit. I had five kids and I wasn't on welfare. . . You have to become a liar. You feel like a criminal but it's what you're made to do.

Another woman said: "Landlords require so much personal information you get frustrated. There is a race issue too. One lady had no problem renting to us, but when we got there, said 'oh sorry it's rented'. It's not my problem, I'm not going to address it." The woman explained that although she knew it was wrong to discriminate, she was not going to do anything about it because changing other people's minds was not her responsibility. Other participants shared stories about being charged more when the landlord saw that they were Aboriginal.

But cultural conflict and discrimination – when cultures are at odds with the (home/housing-owning) majority – is not always so blatant; it can be so subtle or hidden that it is overlooked. Racism and discrimination can be so systemic that many people are in denial about the role it plays. For example, one senior said that culture is,

> not an issue because I think I've never been discriminated against. I don't see Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal differences, but I've heard about it lots. There is housing discrimination. I'm raising one boy and one girl. I was told that I couldn't rent a place because I needed three bedrooms to keep a boy and girl separated, but we don't do that [where I'm from].

Like most people who are conditioned only to identify overt discrimination – especially prevalent when we are encouraged to be blind to difference in the colonial order - the participant made a distinction between the blatant discrimination of landlords not renting to Aboriginal people, from the systemic discrimination of having a Eurocentric gender binary imposed on her family by guidelines that say how she should house and raise her children. She recognized that the housing guidelines are inconsistent with the culture in which she was raised, and this example highlights the dilemmas faced by Aboriginal people who come to the city and find themselves in a world whose rules, regulations, and ideas of citizenship are at odds with who they are and what they know (Labillois 1994; Walker 2006a; Crookshanks 2013). Since so many Aboriginal seniors live with their grandchildren, housing provision and policy-making must take into account how family structures and needs may differ and that the nuclear family model may not be a universal norm.

Being able to practice one's culture is vital component of self-government and self-determination. The importance of practicing their culture and having Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing (meaning designed, owned, and managed by Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people) was therefore prevalent

throughout discussions, even if they were rarely expressed by participants as 'high' political concepts. One person said: "you need a Native person to help a Native. People are racist. I have my own prejudice against people because of residential school abuse. So many of us out there need help, but don't feel good talking to someone who's never walked in their moccasins." One senior agreed: "I want my grandkids to be able to visit me. Once we start doing things for ourselves, we'll prove we can do it. All these communities have their own seniors' housing." Another woman explained:

> All these different people [immigrants] that come to North America look after housing their people. If other nations look after their seniors, why can't we look after our own? People want to keep living with their children; that's the Native way. We had a hard time getting into our place. We can't afford to get kicked out because our kids and grandkids visit.

There was, in the talking groups, some frustration that decision-makers and Edmonton's Aboriginal community were unable or unwilling to address seniors' housing. Living with or near family, being able to visit, and being able to live within a community whose members participate in shared cultures proved important to all participants.[10] And while Edmonton is home to various community or culture-based seniors' residences, there are very limited housing options specifically oriented towards Aboriginal seniors. The exceptions to this are addressed in the discussion of Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing.

Talking groups were not altogether pessimistic in nature. One woman said: "Housing as a joint venture can happen if we all get together." Another person said that "if everybody got on board then the voice would be stronger. . . Wouldn't it be nice to have a big voice; that's what you need." But seniors are such a minority within the urban Aboriginal population that they need support of younger generations who may not be in positions to help. The "double alienation" that places Aboriginal seniors outside mainstream or colonial power structures also places them outside Aboriginal power systems, as they find themselves marginalized by younger Aboriginal people within their own communities. This dislocation results in a breakdown of Aboriginal communities and organizations and it weakens seniors' voices (Frideres 1994, 28). Having grown up in a different world (a different physical space and different era), Aboriginal seniors can find their roles in the urban community diminished or unappreciated by people who have had very different life experiences (Frideres 1994, 30; Labillois 1994, 15).

One of the barriers to establishing a "voice" of a united and organized urban Aboriginal movement, as most talking groups indicated, is this generational gap that seems to exist between many seniors and the large younger generation. Many participants in this project had strong words about the disappointments they have experienced with some of the younger people in their communities. This gap, of course, has been exacerbated by residential schools, the 60s scoop, and a disproportionately large number of

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[10] Ducrocher et al.'s study of Métis seniors and housing in Saskatoon found that many seniors needs to live near schools for their grandchildren living with them (2013, 291).

Aboriginal children in government care – all examples of colonial projects that recognized early on that the best way to break Aboriginal communities was by systemically separating children from their elders (K. Anderson and Ball 2011).

As a result of these intergenerational traumas, many seniors indicated that they were the ones doing a great deal of the caregiving for family members, rather than being cared for by their children or grandchildren, and often extending them beyond their economic means. A related issue that many people brought up was that of elder abuse – physical, emotional, and economic. There are instances where family members take their (grand)parents' income support. One woman said: "I saw a woman who was beaten. I spoke to her since I could speak Cree. I asked 'Who did this?' [She replied:] 'My grandson.' He wanted her money." Another senior said: "I want Aboriginal housing, but I want to be protected from the children we're supposed to be caring for." Lateral violence from younger family members who are also affected by the intergenerational trauma of residential school abuse and colonialism was cited by some participants, but only in passing and by referencing others' experiences – there were no firsthand accounts. Further work on addressing this hidden but serious form of abuse is vitally important (Beatty and Berdahl 2011, 9).

Aboriginal seniors, because they are less likely than younger or non-Aboriginal people to own their own homes, and are more likely to rent, can also face increased pressures from living in close proximity to non-Aboriginal people. When this factor is compounded by living with non-Aboriginal seniors – people less likely to have been exposed to Aboriginal people or cultures – the ignorance and racism is often magnified. Said one woman:

> They're always mentioning you're Native. I like the [seniors'] apartment I'm living in, but people with nothing to do nit-pick. They gossip. My Native neighbours got evicted for a loud TV. And I get racist comments from the neighbours. We're people and we like to have as clean a place as the next. Living in a seniors apartment, I'm living with farm people not used to Natives. One person said to me, "I knew a native once, she was so clean." What does that mean? . . . I don't have problems now, except the people in my building. . . But it's hard to be nice when you get all these remarks about drunken Indians. Why do we have to tolerate that? We have feelings. Always getting put down gets you down.

Others stated that they would feel more comfortable being around other people who had similar life experiences – that is to say, live in a space more focussed on Aboriginal communities and cultures.

Some Aboriginal seniors also face the compounded crisis of economic need – an intersection of the common financial pressures faced by many non-Aboriginal seniors *and* the economic barriers faced by Aboriginal people of all ages (Frideres 1994). One senior spoke about how they got into a housing program but failed a credit check because of missed credit card payments, and were dropped from the program despite good landlord references. Another explained how she was living on CPP with a disability, but attempts to get a housing subsidy were turned down because she was not on the correct

form of social supports. Coming from a setting like a reserve where the *Indian Act* governs so many financial aspects of people's lives, some things – getting a mortgage, maintaining good credit history, the importance of insurance, wills and property transfer, or building up a private pension – can feel like foreign concepts in the complex transition to urban life. The city can be a "culturally unfamiliar, distant environment" to Aboriginal seniors (National Advisory Council on Aging 1999, 15). As one woman explained, "there's lots of things that we are very ignorant about until they hit you right on." Lack of resources in the form of knowledge proved common.

Problems related lack of knowledge are often exacerbated by age and poor health in later life. One woman explained that she was currently living in a trailer because her husband had passed away. She had lost her home and lacked the resources to find a new one: "It's not suitable for winter, but I haven't been looking because I've been so depressed. I lost my son last year too." Further, as people age, the supports that they will need grow. Deaths in the family will affect them more, especially if they were financially dependent on the deceased. Homelessness is also harder later in life, as the group of homeless men all attested. Said one about being older: "there's no place to go at 6:00 AM when they [the shelter] kick you out. . . [Age] affects your health. Your bones are aching. If you get up in the morning you can't move. " Others agreed, saying: "You stand in line two to three hours. Some of them can't, you know," and "winter multiplies problems. People steal your stuff. It's not like being twenty-five."

Health was thus a significant issue as it is for all seniors. But health issues compounded with family issues make the situation worse, especially when many Aboriginal seniors shoulder the load for their families. One woman explained how she lives with her daughter and her daughter's family, and she is sharing a basement with her son. Both she, her son, her daughter, and her granddaughter are experiencing health issues:

> Our rent is $1800 and it's under my name so I'm the one that has to carry the load. My son works but it's not high income. Utilities are high, five to six hundred dollars plus the cellphone, and my daughter's medication is high.

She explained that they had tried to get into subsidized housing, but the embarrassment and difficulty of filling out applications made her son stop trying. One married couple who attended a talking group together said that they had moved to Edmonton because of a fire in their reserve home. They were, at the time of the talking groups, living with their daughter and looking for a place of their own. However, they found that landlords want them to be employed. While the wife is working, her husband is unable to work because of medical issues:

> Because of the loss [from the fire], no one understand unless you go through it too. We lost everything. We're in shock and grieving. Moving forward is not as easy as we thought.. . . . We can't always live with our daughter. She needs to rent out her space.

A number of people also stated how hard it is to get an apartment while living on social supports and/or living with disabilities. While no survey of disability was done, studies have demonstrated the disability rate to be much higher amongst elderly Aboriginal people (Wister and Moore 1998, 111; CBC 2013; Novak and Campbell 2006, 144).

As mentioned, the experiences described in the talking groups were not all negative. Even people who had problems in the past highlighted the ways they had overcome them and many with current housing dilemmas felt optimistic for the future. A small minority said that they had no housing issues themselves, though they knew of other people who did. The talking groups themselves proved helpful to some people, they said, because discussing issues with others in similar positions gave them ideas on how to fix their problems, and created a sense of solidarity, and even hope.

One man explained he had had housing issues, but after treating his alcoholism his life turned around, though he felt that chance had played a role: "I got out because I got lucky; I stayed with a friend. That would have been pretty tough today and can't see it happening again." Others shared stories of having helped, or been helped, by others in the Aboriginal community. One woman told of how she had dealt with the bed bugs in her building:

> People brought in bed bugs, but nobody would listen to us. They wouldn't spray. I went to the Métis association I belong to. Alberta Health had a meeting with them. We had to ask for help. It took a lot of talking. It took the right people, because I knew who to reach. We struggled. They [the building manager] wouldn't listen to us, but now they do. We organized with others in the building. Before, I had to hide my hair, not let them know I'm Native. [When first moving in,] I went to the building, and had to make sure not to sound Native. I gave them a deposit and was told: "no parties, no children, no Natives." But I stayed. I made friends with the manager. If I'd looked Native, I wouldn't have gotten in. I got kicked out of one place because I was smudging. Well, that's the way we pray. . . . By pushing with people who know about rights, I could get a place. But without them it's not easy. I can't lie; it was never easy.

Again, she was sceptical as to whether her positive experience, in the end, would prove common. Her uncertainty may come from being aware of how difficult it was to marshal social capital in order to address her housing issues. As the City of Edmonton's *Your City, Your Voice* report stated, Aboriginal seniors have found that there are "barriers to the access of services, including a lack of awareness – 'What Happens to someone who can't advocate for themselves and has no connections?'" (Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Dialogue Process 2006, 15).

The woman's experiences also speak to how dealing with housing problems with the help of other Aboriginal people with valuable resources – in the forms of political and community connections – also helped her overcome some of the racism she had earlier experienced in housing. The story highlights not just the recurrent theme of the difficulties Aboriginal seniors have in finding suitable accommodation (having to hide who they are, being kicked out for practicing their culture, and racist comments from

landlords), but also the importance of knowing people who can help – a resource that many newcomers do not have.

In another example of how important it is to know where to go for help, one senior described how he had been able to leave the streets:

> I'm staying in a seniors' place. I still have to get furniture and groceries, but it takes a third of my monthly income. I feel comfortable there. Security is good and I've been there five months. It took me six months to find it. I went to SAGE;[11] they're the ones that got me in . . . Before, I was living in the Salvation Army. I had a hard time getting information; I didn't know where to go. I went to Boyle [Street Community Services], and was sent to another place. I did lots of running around; I can't afford that. I had no bus pass. I did all this on foot. The only way I got info is from another homeless person. I chose this place. I interviewed there after three weeks. I went to buy clothes for the interview.

The participant was able to improve his housing situation, though it was not easy. But again, he said he had succeeded because of who he knew and the valuable information that they gave him. It highlights the importance of not only the existence of housing services, but of ensuring that people know what is out there and are able to access it – this is decidedly more difficult for Aboriginal seniors.

As for which housing services were most useful to Aboriginal seniors, assisted living homes did not prove popular among talking group participants: "It's part of the government" said one woman, "I would hate to end up in a nursing home. Seniors in homes that don't speak English get put away, so homes are scary for Natives." Another participant said that one complex she had considered reminded her "of a residential school dorm. They treat the people in there like kids; supervising the door."

The talking groups discussed long-term housing solutions, including whether they thought a housing complex under the control of Aboriginal community members would work. Though the idea proved favourable, they were pessimistic about its likelihood. Some participants noted similar strategies that they had heard of in other cities, but surprisingly – perhaps an indication of a lack of knowledge transmission – none mentioned either of Edmonton's Aboriginal seniors housing complexes, although one has just opened its doors.

> The Métis Capital Housing Corporation (MCHC) which runs both,

> is a nonprofit corporation providing affordable, adequate and appropriate rental housing for low and moderate income Métis (and other Aboriginal) families in the urban centres of Alberta. Using fair, equitable and innovative practices in the delivery of quality services, they seek to improve the housing conditions of Métis and Aboriginal communities by offering an alternative to mainstream housing (Métis Capital Housing Corporation 2013).

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[11] The Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE) works to "enhance the quality of life of older persons and their families" by providing services for socialization and skills development, research and advocacy, strategies to increase safety and end isolation, and information to seniors, including housing information (SAGE 2014).

Four years ago, the MCHC was spun off the Métis Urban Housing Corporation (MUHC). The MUHC had been created in the twilight of the federal government's activities to support the creation of affordable housing projects. It is a non-profit, subsidized, and affordable housing provider established through an agreement between the Métis Nation of Alberta (which owns MUHC) and the Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation (CMHC), (Crookshanks 2013, 278). Like all CMHC rent subsidy agreements established in the 1980s, the subsidies on MUHC's affordable housing units are now starting to expire.

The newer MCHC has two seniors' buildings in Edmonton. It has managed the Nihgi Métis Seniors' Lodge since 2010, a forty-unit, fully-serviced, staffed, and assisted living facility where meals, laundry, and cleaning are provided. Shortly after the talking groups completed, the MCHC opened a new ninety-unit independent living complex, Renaissance Tower, in an area of downtown Edmonton the city is attempting to revitalize. This non-subsidized residential building has been funded by all three orders of government. Units are allocated with a "preference for Alberta Aboriginals, seniors and people with disabilities[12]" and the building includes a "spiritual gathering room" with a "distinctive Aboriginal identity" (Métis Capital Housing Corporation 2013). While this is a positive development, it puts only a small dent in the need for units for Aboriginal seniors. Future research into the impact of Renaissance Tower – a possible first step in self-determination within the housing sector – is needed.[13]

As part of the broader move toward self-determination, we argue that just as Aboriginal people have sought control over other service and program areas, that there needs to be greater Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing (Walker 2006a; Lange 2010; Crookshanks 2012; Durocher et al. 2013). This can be achieved by Aboriginal people setting the housing agenda and delivering housing services to their people. But given (urban) Aboriginal people's colonial dislocation from their own traditional economies, it must be complemented with sufficient resources from state governments, to enable them to be economically self-determining.

Self-determination also means that Aboriginal people – of all ages – must have a voice in how they will be housed and share collective control over housing goals. Thus, Aboriginal control over housing must be meaningful and *inclusive*; Aboriginal seniors, like all segments of the diverse urban Aboriginal population in Edmonton, must be included in decision-making and not be relegated to the side by youth-focussed leadership (Durocher et al. 2013; Labillois 1994). In that way, inclusive[14] self-determination can shape Aboriginal housing so that seniors' unique needs, perspectives, experiences, and goals are addressed.

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[12] One of the Renaissance Tower partners is the Canadian Paraplegic Association.

[13] A robust comparison with Winnipeg, where the Kekinan Seniors home has been running since 1990 would also provide more insight into what is possible in Edmonton (Lange 2010, 52–56).

[14] In a similar fashion, there is a significant body of literature that discusses the importance of actively including women in Indigenous self-determination movements (Smith 2005; Fiske 1996; Stasiulis and Jhappan 1995; Lawrence and Anderson 2005; Napoleon 2009).

This intergenerational approach will allow for more holistic understandings of the housing sector. By shaping housing to meet Aboriginal people's diverse spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental needs, housing models and programs can address the particular goals that the research participants identified.

Based on what we were told, Aboriginal seniors want a variety of options for housing. Renting appears to be the most popular option, if only because it is the only one available – although some participants were home owners in the past. The desire to rent may be related to Aboriginal people's high residential mobility or financial barriers to home ownership. Also, the appeal of individual home ownership is not universal (Bourdieu 2005; Taylor 2010), especially amongst Aboriginal seniors who, to a large extent, did not grow up with this kind of housing. Further, many Aboriginal people in Canadian cities do not possess the necessary economic resources to buy a home; statistics illustrate how Aboriginal seniors are "often without private pensions" and rely on social supports (Gyimah, White, and Maxim 2004, 78). Although only a minority of research participants indicated that they lived on social support, none indicated that they were interested in getting a mortgage at their age, knowing that they are apt to have to move again later on for health or family reasons. Time will tell if the growing "urban Aboriginal middle class" (Cannon and Sunseri 2011, 98; Wotherspoon and Satzewich 2000; Graham and Peters 2002; Wotherspoon 2003) will transform this trend and make home ownership more popular with the younger generations of Aboriginal people born in the city and/or with more economic capital. At any rate, it is important to remember that not all Aboriginal seniors want the same thing as non-Aboriginal seniors, or as each other.

Other forms of housing that proved popular with participants, and which would allow for Aboriginal people to have some control over housing, were cooperative or shared-ownership models. This would not only be more consistent with the collectivist aspects of many Aboriginal cultures, but would also allow for easier transitions for people moving to the city (Cole 2008; Payuk Inter-Tribal Co-operative Ltd.). Community-based housing models also allow people to build and maintain the social capital necessary to deal with the other hardships of urban life. A new government initiative for creating cooperative housing (the previous having been eliminated in the early 1990s), would greatly assist (Layton 2008). However, the 2014 termination of cooperative housing subsidies does not bode well, especially for seniors (Tucker and Kapelos 2014).

In relation to collective housing, it is also very important that housing be culturally appropriate; almost all participants noted this in the talking groups. This means developing non-institutional models[15] that allow for people to maintain widespread family connections across many generations. The National Advisory Council on Aging concurs that "Aboriginal seniors need the same services as all Canadians, as well as

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[15] Institutionalized housing, such as nursing homes, were seen as too isolated from the community and too similar to the colonial styles of control expressed through residential schools.

services appropriate to their unique cultural situation that require a particular approach" (National Advisory Council on Aging 1999, 15).

Culturally appropriate housing should be free from power systems that allow building managers or landlords to persecute tenants for allowing their grandchildren to visit or having a relative stay with them. Housing, it is argued, is "more than a shelter. It is a place to share with family and friends" (Durocher et al. 2013, 284). In order for healing from the intergenerational trauma of colonization and residential schooling to occur, we must address the need for healthy families (Ing 2006; Kim Anderson 2000), and this can only be accomplished, in part, with culturally appropriate housing models. At a very minimum, the overt and systemic forms of discrimination must be addressed. We need better education for all Canadians about Aboriginal people, their rights, and the effects of our colonial past and present.

Further, participants consistently noted that housing needs to be affordable, safe, and suitably located. Affordability is self-explanatory and safety and location go together. For the seniors we spoke with, location meant more than just being in a 'nice' neighbourhood. Location proved important for the number of Aboriginal seniors who need regular and easy access to social and health services, public transit, food, family, and an Aboriginal community. A high number of Aboriginal people in Edmonton, like in other cities, live in the innermost, and least safe, areas of the city (Andersen 2009; Peters 2005; Chisholm 2003, 41). The catch-22 for Aboriginal seniors, then, is that if they want to live near other Aboriginal people – with the benefit of proximity to their family, community, cultural events, and Aboriginal-focussed services –they must live in neighbourhoods where they do not necessarily feel safe as seniors. Some talking group participants discussed the idea of an Aboriginal neighbourhood – an Aboriginal 'village' or hub – that is not arbitrarily created by, and centred on, poverty, but rather, is based on ideals of community-based cooperation and support.

The concept of a "Native hub" has been used to describe a space where Aboriginal cultural, social, and political activities can happen in an urban setting (Ramirez 2007). Spaces where urban Aboriginal people gather are represented as a the centre of a wheel while its spokes represent the social networks that radiate outward and connect people to other communities, including reserves. Social activities are then carried out "through participation in cultural circuits and maintenance of social networks" (Ramirez 2007, 3). Hubs therefore have the potential to "increase the political power of Native peoples" because they open space for community members to engage in the struggle for self-determination (Ramirez 2007, 3, 81). Concepts for such Aboriginal community-based initiatives have been more heavily studied in Winnipeg (Loxley 2000; Silver et al. 2004; Silver 2007) and merit further future study in Edmonton, especially where the community appears more engaged. We note the various valuable community initiatives that Edmonton has engaged in in the past (Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Dialogue Process 2006; Four Winds and Associates 2012; City of Edmonton 2012; City of Edmonton 2011), and hope that further

developments can be as inclusive.

Related to the issue of location, we heard from many how hard it is for seniors to find and access the appropriate housing and seniors' services. Although various orders of government[16] provide helpful services to both Aboriginal people and senior citizens, research participants voiced two common complaints: a lack of knowledge and awareness of services, and their inaccessibility. Many seniors do not know what government or service organization programs exist to help. For Aboriginal people who are new to Edmonton, this is a particularly significant barrier. We recommend that governments, as well as non-profit and arms-length community service organizations, work together with Aboriginal and Aboriginal-frequented resource hubs so that information about housing resources can reach those who need them. Relying on websites for information dissemination is inadequate for reaching most Aboriginal seniors. We also encourage service providers and governments to pay close attention to how physically accessible their services and offices are, examining whether they are accessible to people who face mobility barriers and by public transit, and if they are located near related services so that seniors can minimize their travel time and expenses. These issues again illustrate the benefits afforded by culturally appropriate resource hubs and the benefits of locating key Aboriginal services in locations close to the communities they serve.

In light of the connections between culture and mobility – that is to say, the issues Aboriginal seniors face as a result of colonialism and aging – a final recommendation is that service providers and governments do more to acknowledge the intersecting natures of age and race – that is to recognize the unique positions and needs of Aboriginal seniors. While all orders of government have in place various housing strategies, policies, services, programs to deal with an aging population, there needs to be a concerted effort to identify Aboriginal seniors' uniqueness within that broad category, and to have that reflected in actual policy and programs. The stories shared above demonstrate that Aboriginal seniors face issues *as Aboriginal seniors*, not just as Aboriginal people who happen to be seniors or seniors who happen to be Aboriginal. Failing to address seniors' housing issues in an intersectional and holistic manner – while acknowledging the effects of colonialism and aging – will perpetuate their problems.

As such, we encourage decision-makers and those working to deliver seniors' housing programs to ask "Where are the Aboriginal people," and for those working in Aboriginal housing to ask "How does this affect the elderly?" Renaissance Tower is a first step towards realizing these kinds of initiatives, with the support of governments and Aboriginal service providers. We hope that other plans, which have been shelved, to turn the area into an Aboriginal resource hub can be revisited soon.

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[16] We recognize that in addition to state governments there are Aboriginal orders of government active in and around Edmonton, even in the housing sector.

Recommendations: Time to Act Now

As part of the broader move toward self-determination, we argue that just as Aboriginal people have sought control over other service and program areas, that there needs to be greater Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing (Walker 2006a; Lange 2010; Crookshanks 2012; Durocher et al. 2013). This can be achieved by Aboriginal people setting the housing agenda and delivering housing services to their people. But given (urban) Aboriginal people's colonial dislocation from their own traditional economies, it must be complemented with sufficient resources from state governments, to enable them to be economically self-determining.

Self-determination also means that Aboriginal people – of all ages – must have a voice in how they will be housed and share collective control over housing goals. Thus, Aboriginal control over housing must be meaningful and *inclusive*; Aboriginal seniors, like all segments of the diverse urban Aboriginal population in Edmonton, must be included in decision-making and not be relegated to the side by youth-focussed leadership (Durocher et al. 2013; Labillois 1994). In that way, inclusive[17] self-determination can shape Aboriginal housing so that seniors' unique needs, perspectives, experiences, and goals are addressed.

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Aboriginal people born in the city and/or with more economic capital. At any rate, it is important to remember that not all Aboriginal seniors want the same thing as non-Aboriginal seniors, or as each other.

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In light of the connections between culture and mobility – that is to say, the issues Aboriginal seniors face as a result of colonialism and aging – a final recommendation is that service providers and governments do more to acknowledge the intersecting natures of age and race – that is to recognize the unique positions and needs of Aboriginal seniors. While all orders of government have in place various housing strategies, policies, services, programs to deal with an aging population, there needs to be a concerted effort to identify Aboriginal seniors' uniqueness within that broad category, and to have that reflected in actual policy and programs. The stories shared above demonstrate that Aboriginal seniors face issues *as Aboriginal seniors*, not just as Aboriginal people who happen to be seniors or seniors who happen to be Aboriginal. Failing to address seniors' housing issues in an intersectional and holistic manner – while acknowledging the effects of colonialism and aging – will perpetuate their problems.

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Conclusion

There is still a lot of work to do in order to make urban spaces welcoming and healthy places for all Aboriginal seniors. Addressing underhousing and working to end homelessness are important parts of making sure that Aboriginal people, of all ages, are afforded the basic necessities to create a liveable city. To this end, this report has recommended, in summary, that:

- There be more Aboriginal control over Aboriginal housing and the resources to support it; Aboriginal communities must play a role in developing and managing Aboriginal housing and related services.
- *All segments* of the diverse Aboriginal communities in Edmonton, including seniors, must have some say in the shaping of holistic Aboriginal housing programs and services so that their unique needs, perspectives, experiences, and goals can be heard and included.
- Aboriginal seniors need a variety of housing options, including cooperative models of housing.
- Seniors' housing must be culturally appropriate – this includes the recognition of particular familial needs of Aboriginal people and also calls for housing units where seniors can live with children.
- Efforts must be made to eliminate both systemic and overt forms of racist discrimination from housing.
- At a minimum, housing must be affordable, safe, and suitably located, based on Aboriginal seniors' needs.
- There be more information sharing so that knowledge about housing resources reaches those who need it, and service providers need to pay close attention to how accessible their services are.
- Service providers and designers need to acknowledge the intersecting nature of age and race – that is, to recognize the unique positions and needs of Aboriginal seniors.

There are some areas of research that need further exploration. We recommend further research on new strategies for Aboriginal seniors' housing in Edmonton. This includes but goes beyond calling for more housing units. Cooperative housing models -whether part of an Aboriginal village or hub, or not - have proven helpful elsewhere and should be explored. Renaissance Tower could bring about positive changes that should be followed up on in a few years. Finally, the understudied effects of elder abuse, how it is affecting Aboriginal seniors in particular, and its relationship to homelessness, is something that requires immediate attention. These issues can only be properly addressed in the context of examining the intertwining roles of colonialism and aging.

Understanding that intersection will provide useful direction to those who shape and carry out the housing-related programming in Edmonton that is aimed at addressing *all* of the causes of homelessness.

We hope that the urban Aboriginal initiatives that make Edmonton an inclusive and dynamic city will continue, with both government and civil society support. To this end, an inclusive approach to understanding the importance of addressing our city's shared past, present, and future, and the diverse (though too often substantively unequal) experiences of the people who live in it, can make adequate housing in Edmonton a reality for Aboriginal seniors, families, and communities.

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