

**YKDFN Gonè Gokò Housing Society**  
**Governance Engagement: Part 1 Workbook**  
**Guiding Principles & Values**  
**November 2021**



# YKDFN Housing Strategy: Overview

Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) have identified the availability of adequate, affordable and appropriate housing for their membership as an ongoing major concern. The uniqueness of YKDFN– its climatic, geographic and cultural factors– have meant one-size-fits-all solutions created nationally or by the territorial government have failed to appropriately house members. The YKDFN Housing Strategy aims to put community members in control of their housing system through the following four pillars: data & advocacy, design, community planning and governance.

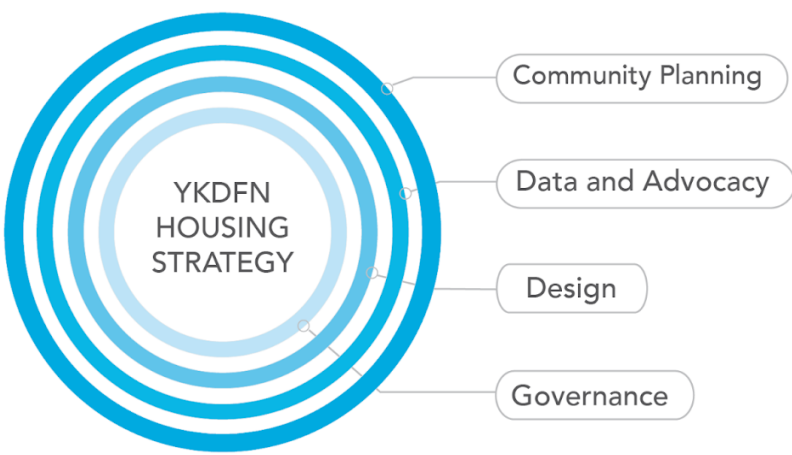
## Partnership

Assisting YKDFN in the development of their Housing Strategy are Together Design Lab at Ryerson University (TDL). TDL is made up of planners, designers and architects with experience working in the north and in partnership with First Nations. The partnership guides all elements of the Housing Strategy and will rely on the strengths of both partners; ensuring a trusting, reciprocal, long-term relationship.

## Project Deliverables

The YKDFN Housing Strategy consists of four main themes which provide the framework for the project’s activities and deliverables:

- **Community Planning**
- **Data and Advocacy** (formerly Social Implications of Housing)
- **Design** (formerly Physical Characteristics of Home)
- **Governance** (formerly Housing Administration)



## YKDFN Housing Governance: Overview

As part of ongoing work on the YKDFN Housing Strategy, a variety of housing governance models were reviewed. Based on a number of considerations – including future community involvement, financial and legal risk and levels of accountability– creating a new housing society for YKDFN was recommended as the pathway forward. In June, 2021 a Band Council Resolution was passed approving the creation of the Gonè Gokò (Our Dene Land, Our Dene Home) Housing Society which has since been incorporated.

Now that a model of governance has been selected we need to begin working towards bylaws and policies that reflect the specific goals and needs of YKDFN. Engagement around the governance of the Society will take place at every stage from this workbook's focus on Part 1: Guiding Principles and Values; to future consultation on policies for housing occupants, the Society's membership and decision-making.

### Activities

- Identify appropriate governance model
- Develop policies, programs and implementation procedures
- Identify opportunities for capacity development and host training
- Identify disjunctures in existing housing programs, policies and funding mechanisms

### Deliverables

- Housing society by-law
- Housing policy
- Advocacy materials

### What has been done so far?

- Housing Strategy Working Group reviewed potential governance models and recommended to council the formation of Gonè Gokò Housing Society.
- Council approved the formation of the Society, drafted placeholder by-law and appointed original members.
- Gonè Gokò Housing Society incorporated in July 2021.

## YKDFN Housing Governance: Engagement Plan

To ensure that Gonè Gokò Housing Society represents YKDFN members, a strategy has been developed that synthesizes these voices across all Society by-laws and policies. This four-part process, detailed below, will look to breakdown the series of complex decisions undertaken by a Housing Society into a series of questions, scenarios and workshops that allow for all members to participate. Through this community-based process of governance development we hope that members will have the opportunity to better understand how the Society will function, recognize alternative views and opinions on how policies should be created and feel that the Society represents their interests and concerns.

<b>Part 1: Guiding Principles &amp; Values</b> August-December 2021	<b>Part 2: (Future) Current Occupants</b> January-April 2022
History Purpose Principles Values	Identification of Relevant Tenures Tenancy Agreements Roles and Responsibilities Inspections Eviction
<b>Part 3: Prospective Occupants</b> March-September 2022	<b>Part 4: Decision-Making</b> August-December 2022
New Home Applicants Selection & Allocation Process Housing Development	Decision-Making Structure Roles and Participation Reviews and Evaluation Community Participation

## YKDFN Housing Governance Part 1: Guiding Principles & Values

The first part of housing governance development is the establishment of guiding principles and values. This section of governance development is critical in ensuring that all following decisions— tenancy agreements, roles and responsibilities, enforcement policies, development goals— are made using the values that community members feel are most appropriate. As the process of developing the Society's governance continues, and challenges are faced, we will return to the values selected now to ask how they can help guide decision-making. It is important to recognize that many people will have different values they want represented and learning from this diversity will make the Society stronger and allow it to better represent YKDFN.

Through identifying potential guiding principles and values we will look to establish the foundation of governance development and accomplish the following objectives:

- Describe why a community-run society is necessary;
- Outline what will make a YKDFN community-run housing society unique and set goals that it will strive to achieve;
- Establish agreed upon principles and values that can be revisited when challenging decisions are faced later on in the process;
- Present YKDFN's unique vision and priorities for housing; and
- Provide community member an opportunity to provide feedback at this first stage of the process so that people can see their views reflected in the Society's policies and operations.

This workbook and both virtual and in person engagements will help YKDFN understand what members want to see as the foundation for the policies, day-to-day operations and decision-making of the Gonè Gokò Housing Society.

**Join us in person** with community members on **Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup> @ 1-3 pm** at:

- Ndilo Gym, or
- Dettah Chief Drygeese Centre, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Space is limited to COVID restrictions, so please call **873-4307** to save your spot!

**Join us for virtual engagement sessions** with community members on Microsoft Teams, you can join [here](#) or call **873-4307** to receive an email with the link to join:

- Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup> @ 6-8 pm
- Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> @ 1-3 pm
- Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup> @ 1-3 pm
- Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> @ 6-8 pm
- Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup> @ 1-3 pm



## Activity 1: Reviewing Case Studies

Each of the following pages shows an example of the guiding principles and values being used by a different Housing Society from across Canada. In developing the goals, principles and values for the Gonè Gokò Society we are interested to know what you think about these examples that are being used elsewhere.

### What to do:

Mark up the examples on the following pages, indicating what you like and what you do not like.

You can write comments in the margins for any ideas you have or things that you think would be helpful when forming the guiding principles and values for the Gonè Gokò Society.

## *Housing Society Example #1*

Here at the Society, we are champions for home. We are committed to a community where all people have an appropriate, affordable place to live.

### VALUES:

- **Our People:** We provide a flexible, service-oriented and productive workplace that promotes respect, accountability and connection to our cause. We support and challenge our people to make a positive, measurable impact.
- **Our Residents:** We deliver a consistent, high standard of service to ensure our residents feel safe, secure, valued, and ultimately respect and value our buildings as their home.
- **Our Quality Homes:** Our buildings are our trademark of care, competency and property management experience. Our high standards of safety and security, as well as maintenance and property reinvestment reflect our commitment to providing a quality home and being a welcome neighbour in our community.
- **Our Partnerships:** We engage with a collaborative network of organizations and people committed to serving the community. By embracing solution-oriented partnerships, we work together to ensure all people are supported, integrated and welcomed in our city.
- **Our Sustainability:** By focusing on fiscal responsibility and wise use of resources, we establish a foundation for long-term sustainability and ensure our ideas and solutions are relevant now, and in the future.



## Housing Society Example #2

Add any  
comments to the  
boxes below:

### MISSION:

The Society commits to provide accommodation services for the region's residents who struggle to secure and maintain appropriate housing.

### VISION:

The Society aspires to collaborate with relevant entities to ensure that suitable programming that will mitigate the housing needs of our client base is available. We will:

- Make decisions and recommendations using relevant and valid data regarding community trends and housing needs.
- Obtain funding to develop infrastructure that meets identified needs for affordable housing programs.
- Embrace operating principles that incorporate innovation, service excellence and best practices.
- Attract and retain highly qualified and caring staff.

### VALUES:

- Service: client focus, empathy, caring, commitment to quality and a guiding philosophy of serving our clients in their homes.
- Integrity and accountability: high ethics, professionalism, transparency, accountability and inclusiveness.
- Efficacy: sustainability, innovation, versatility, collaboration, communication, vision and resourcefulness





## Housing Society Example #3

Add any  
comments to the  
boxes below:

### OUR VISION:

With stable housing as a foundation, everyone belongs and has a bridge to a better life.

### OUR MISSION:

- Operate high quality housing: High quality housing is both the condition of our buildings and the quality of the tenant experience in the Society's housing. It's what we do from heating/ventilation/ air conditioning (HVAC) improvements to improved security and regular upkeep. It's also how we plan, measure and report our success through the Society's Quality Improvement Strategy. It's how we put tenants at the centre including through the Tenant Member Advisory Committee and the role of tenants on the board. All of this work helps to improve housing quality.
- Support housing stability: Providing stable housing is at the core of what the Society does. Together with community partners, the Society supports tenants to identify and achieve their goals, build life skills and address tenancy issues. We offer permanent, quality housing with programs to ensure our tenants have a voice, have what they need to keep their homes, and have a sense of community and belonging.
- Create inclusive communities: One of the Society's most critical roles is creating a sense of cohesion in our communities while also supporting the integration of new people. We work toward building strong, inclusive communities by providing access to resources and activities both within our buildings and in the broader community.



## Activity 2: Part 1 Selecting Values

Now that you have seen some examples of the guiding principles and values of existing housing societies, it is time to reflect on what goals, principles and values you feel should be chosen to form the policies and day-to-day operations of the Gonè Gokò Society.

### What to do:

Carefully read through the list of examples below, and check off the **3 values you feel are the most important** in guiding the governance of the Gonè Gokò Society. Please add any additional values that you feel are important that are not included on this list.

- |                                         |                                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Respect        | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity      | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability | <input type="checkbox"/> Kindness       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration  | <input type="checkbox"/> Trust          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innovation     | <input type="checkbox"/> Dignity        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedication     | <input type="checkbox"/> Autonomy       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honesty        | <input type="checkbox"/> Community      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equity         | <input type="checkbox"/> Service        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Growth         | <input type="checkbox"/> Quality        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency   | <input type="checkbox"/> Compassion     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion      | <input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team Work      | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fairness       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability |

Additional values:

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Activity 2: Part 2 Defining Values

It is important to ensure that the values of the Gonè Gokò Society are not just empty words, but can be applied directly to actions that guide the Society's decision-making, policies and actions.

This activity will allow you to think more about the values you selected in the last activity, define what these values mean, and how they might be applied in the day-to-day operations of the society.

### What to do:

Answer questions about the 3 values you chose in Part 1 to fill in the tables on the following pages. Here is an example of what this might look like:

Value 1: <i>Inclusion</i>		
How would you describe this value? What does this value mean to you?	What actions could the Society take to show that they are committed to this value?	How could commitment to this value be evaluated? What would you want to see in 5 years to know this value was being adhered to?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-everyone gets the chance to participate</li> <li>-sharing ideas and being listened to</li> <li>-not being left out</li> <li>-feeling welcome and invited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-good communication with tenants</li> <li>-policies that ensure everyone is eligible for the housing they need</li> <li>-look for opportunities and funding for housing to fit individual needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-more types of housing available</li> <li>-ykdfrn members receive updates about the Society</li> <li>-opportunities exist for members to work and volunteer with the Society</li> </ul>



**Value 1:**

How would you describe this value?  
What does this value mean to you?

What actions could the Society take to  
show that they are committed to this  
value?

How could commitment to this  
value be evaluated? What would  
you want to see in 5 years to know  
this value was being adhered to?



**Value 2:**

How would you describe this value?  
What does this value mean to you?

What actions could the Society take to  
show that they are committed to this  
value?

How could commitment to this  
value be evaluated? What would  
you want to see in 5 years to know  
this value was being adhered to?



**Value 3:**

How would you describe this value?  
What does this value mean to you?

What actions could the Society take to  
show that they are committed to this  
value?

How could commitment to this  
value be evaluated? What would  
you want to see in 5 years to know  
this value was being adhered to?



## YKDFN Housing Governance: Next Steps

Mahsi Cho for participating in Part 1 of governance development and sharing your thoughts on the values that should guide the policies, actions and decision-making of the Gonè Gokò Housing Society!

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED WORKBOOK  
BY DECEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>:**

1. By email to [hello@togetherdesignlab.com](mailto:hello@togetherdesignlab.com)
2. In person to the dropboxes at both Dettah and Ndilo band offices.

Feedback from participants in the engagement events and completed physical workbooks will be compiled. What we heard from community members now will be summarized and published so community members can see the results, and will also guide the next part of the project on Future Housing Occupants, beginning in 2022. We hope that you will join us for this next round of governance development in the new year.

Would you like to add an email to the mailing list to be contacted about the results from this workbook or about future Housing Strategy engagement? If so please write it here:

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**Contact Us:**

Dettah Administration -  
873-4307

Together Design Lab -  
[hello@togetherdesignlab.com](mailto:hello@togetherdesignlab.com)  
[www.togetherdesignlab.com](http://www.togetherdesignlab.com)

