

type of organization set up, provincially at least, through which Métis concerns could be given due consideration. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 30A:11) At present, Mr. Armstrong noted that CMHC on-reserve programs are not available on Métis settlements, because the settlements are constituted under provincial legislation, and therefore, do not qualify for those particular programs. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 30A:1)

Mr. Ray Hamilton, from Gabriel Housing, Saskatchewan, expressed similar concerns and suggested that a Métis housing commission would help Métis people access programs.

While there are several housing programs which aboriginal communities can access, there appears to be little co-ordination between governments. Although the provinces were invited to share their views, not all responded. However, one witness said that one of the ways in which the organization to which he belongs has been able to help aboriginal communities is by helping them to stack federal and provincial programs together in order to access enough money to complete housing projects. (Mr. Udo Staschik, Member, Frontiers Foundations Inc. (Ontario), *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 25:12)

Greater co-ordination of effort is needed in the North, in order to solve housing shortages. In Yellowknife, the Committee was told it cost \$60,000 to develop one lot. The city's annual Operations and Maintenance Budget is \$26 million, yet the tax base is only 8,000 people. In order to keep housing affordable, help is needed to provide the required infrastructure. While each level of government has a particular area of jurisdiction, they are all interrelated. As the Mayor noted "there's no sense having a house sitting there if you can't provide it with water and sewer because you can't live in it". (Her Worship Mayor Pat McMahan, City of Yellowknife, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 29A:102)

A town planner based in Rankin Inlet noted that:

There are mechanisms in place for discussion and coordination between various bodies. Despite these mechanisms, I still find there is not always the full extent of coordination required to deliver a developed site to somebody who wants to construct a housing unit. One of the real problems is there tends to be last minute program cutbacks or decisions to change funding by one agency or body, without consideration of the impact of that funding decision on another body. (Ms. April Taylor, Planner, Keewatin District, GNWT, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 28A:132)

In the NWT, witnesses suggested that a more co-ordinated effort between governments would ensure that vacant government housing is utilized to meet community needs. In Iqaluit, there is an 8% vacancy rate, 6% of which is vacant federal housing. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 28A:78) Mr. Scott similarly commented that in Arviat there is always two or three empty government units. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 28A:118) In Norman Wells, empty federal units have been offered for rent at prohibitively high rates. (*Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, Issue No. 29A:37) In fact, in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet, some witnesses supported the idea of one housing authority with authority over all housing units.

PROGRAMS

The housing needs of Aboriginal people vary from province to province, Region to Region, and community to community. Some First Nations have an inadequate land base to accommodate a growing population. Others, in remote areas find the cost of housing-related infrastructure beyond their budgets. All are hampered by restrictions in the *Indian Act* which effectively curtail borrowing by councils or individuals to finance housing construction. Some individuals find that this, along with