



Alison Butler
Emma Crane
Sam Hogg
Teresa Maddison
Twyla Smith

Making a House a Home: Indigenous Engagement and Housing Design in BC

Outline

- ◉ Background – importance of housing design and engagement
- ◉ Research questions and methodology
- ◉ Best practices for engaging Indigenous communities in housing design initiatives





“We have to talk about where First Nations people came from, before we talk about what they want.”

-Housing Manager of a First Nation



Housing Conditions in Indigenous Communities

30% of on-reserve households and 28% of off-reserve households are in core housing need, compared to 15.8% for all non-Indigenous households

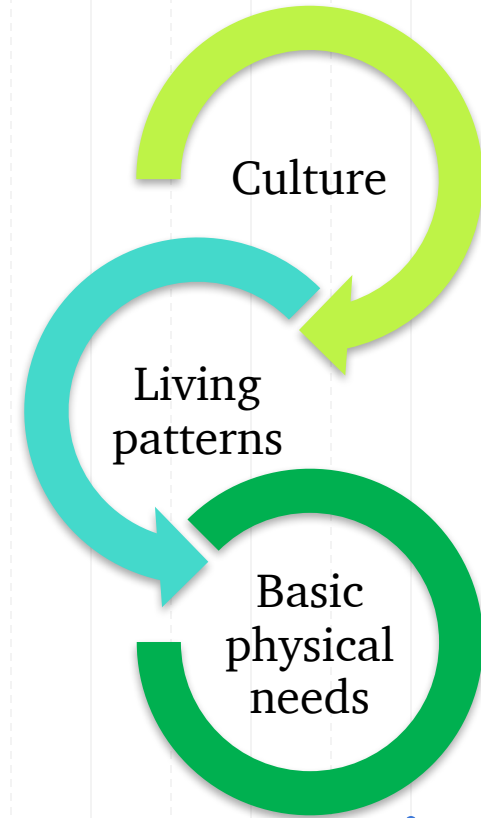
Key issues:

- Overcrowding
- Mold
- Affordability
- Housing in need of repair
- Lack of protection from the elements
- Housing shortages



The Role of Design in Housing Adequacy

Housing design has not historically considered the cultural and social needs of Indigenous peoples.



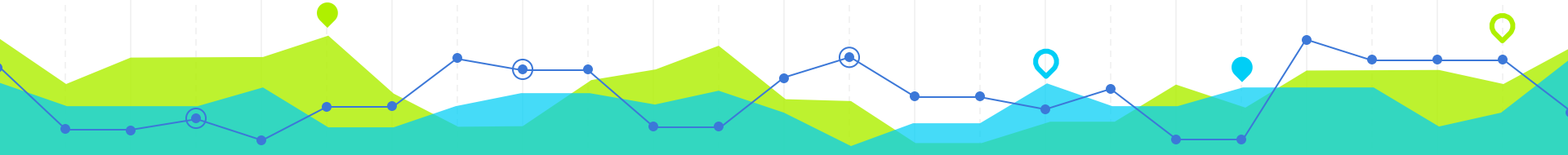
Research Questions

1. What are the distinct housing needs and desires in Indigenous communities ?
2. What are effective ways to engage with Indigenous peoples to learn more about housing needs and desires?



Research Questions

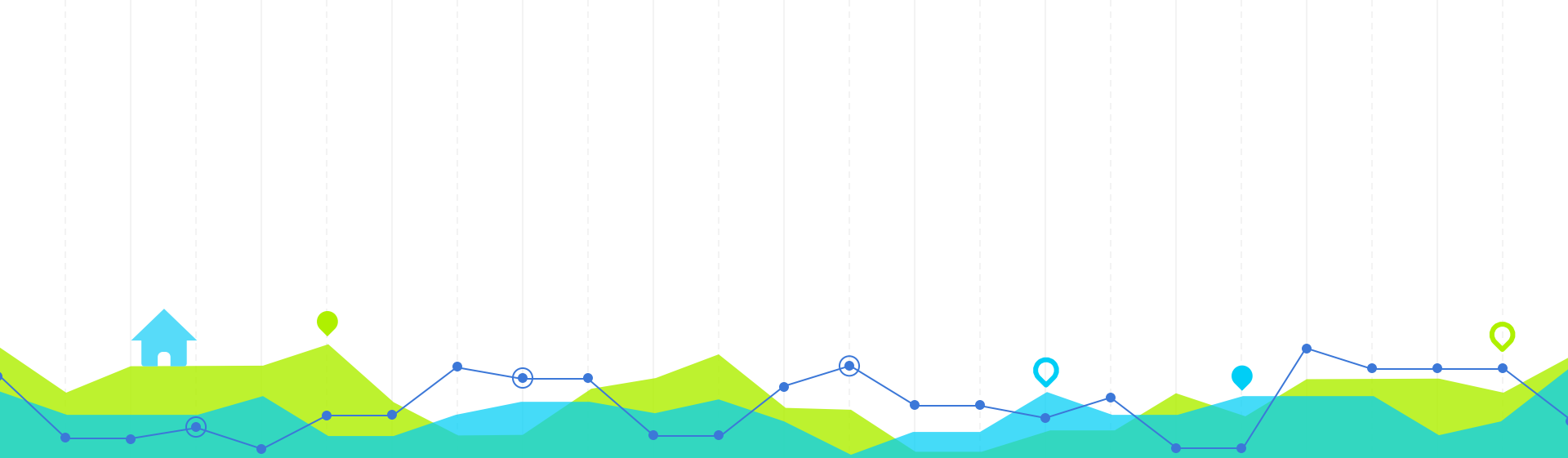
1. What are the distinct housing needs and desires in Indigenous communities?
2. **What are effective ways to engage with Indigenous peoples to learn more about housing needs and desires?**



Methodology

- **Literature review** on housing policy and engagement methods
- **Interviews** with experts in Indigenous engagement, housing management, and housing design
- **Case studies** or in-depth review of 3 housing and engagement initiatives in Indigenous communities





Engagement

Key Principles of Engagement

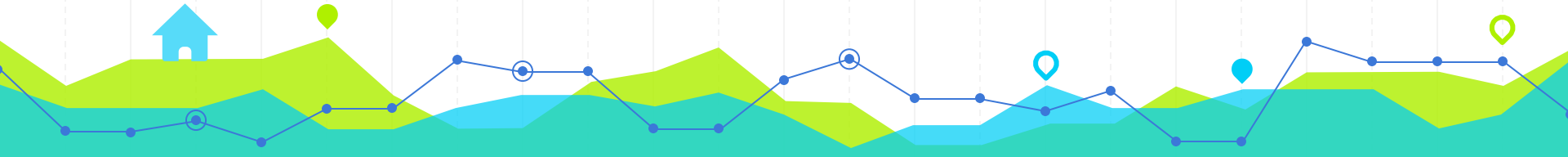
Respect

**Early
Engagement**

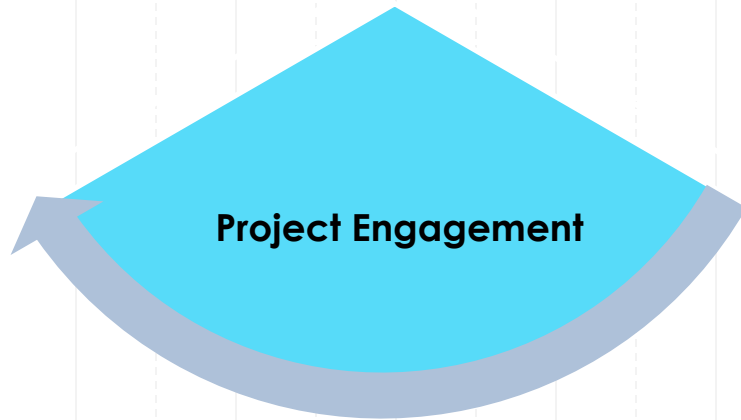
Openness

**Consensus &
Collaboration**

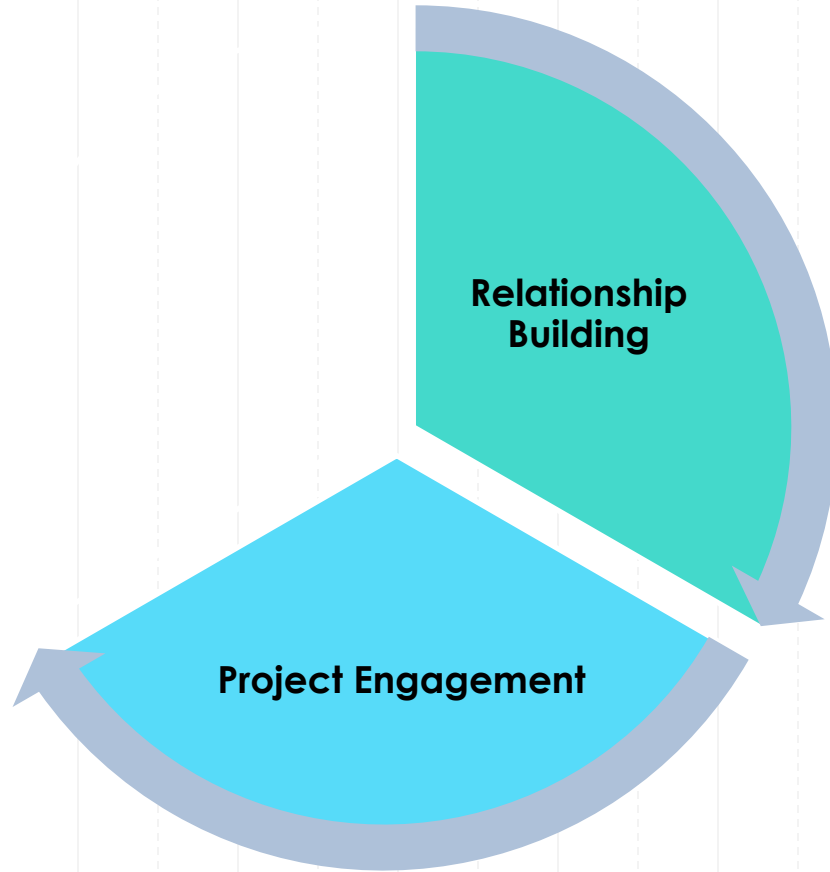
Trust



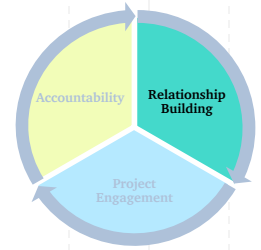




Project Engagement







Before the Project: Foundations for Success

Build and sustain relationships:

- Cultural competency training
- Research the community
- Determine the level of engagement
- Obtain leadership approval
- OCAP Principles

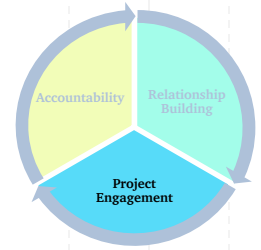
OCAP PRINCIPLES

Ownership

Control

Access

Possession



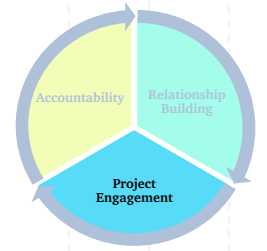
During the Project: Best Practices

Cultural considerations

- Indigenous supervision
- Elders and youth
- Traditional opening
- Native language
- Honour cultural practices
- Respect the pace

Preparation and planning

- Skill and planning
- Make it meaningful
- Mix it up
- Be respectful
- Prepare for children
- Clarity



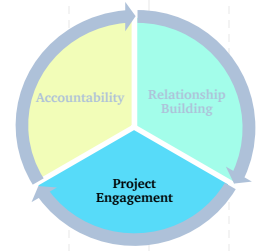
During the Project: Strategy

Sessions

- Qualitative Interviews
- Walking Tour
- Focus Groups
- Surveys
- Design Charrette
- Home Visits

Exercises

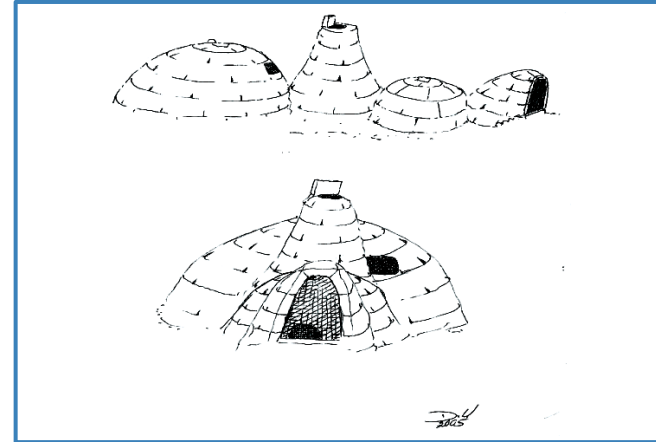
- 3D modeling
- Graphic facilitation
- Poetry
- Backcasting/visioning
- Social media and apps



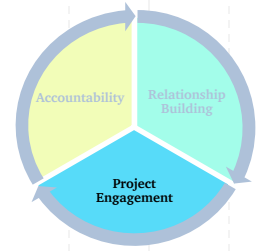
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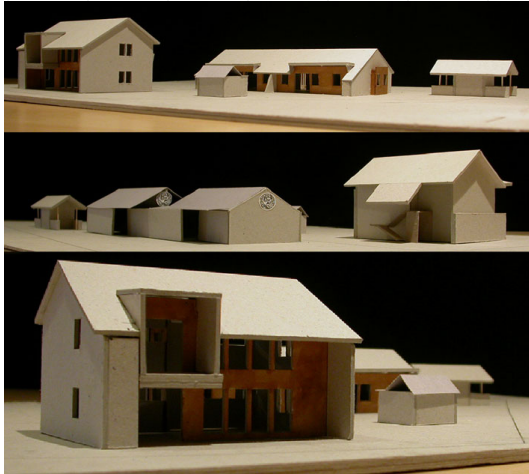
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Sketches of traditional igloos of the Inuit, drawn by an Elder during a housing design charrette in Arviat (CMHC)



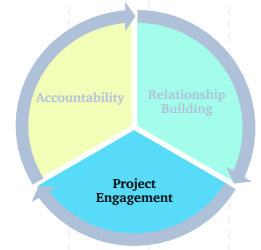
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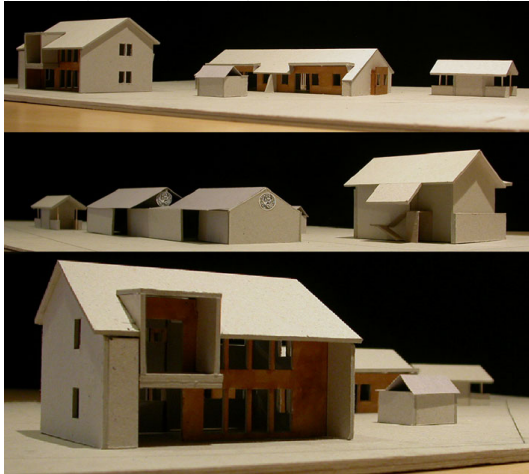
House build produced from a 3-D modeling session in Haisla First Nation (Mactavish et al., 2012)

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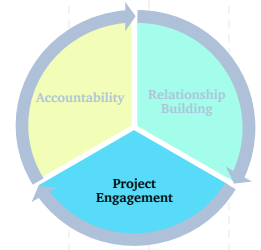
During the Project: Strategy



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During the Project: Strategy



Graphic recording of the 2017 Joint Gathering (Michelle Buchholz)

Exercises

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- Poetry
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- Social media and apps



After the Project: Sustained Engagement

Evaluation

- Meaningful, engaged participation
- Valuable output for project

Accountability

- Keep your promises
- OCAP Principles
- Relationship building
- Representation



If you are an organization, it's not meaningful just to release a report and then say you're doing something. [...] There is this larger issue of Indigenous people not being represented in decision-making positions.

Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Indigenous Relations Manager at City of Vancouver





Thank You!

And thanks to support from:

