

Real Property and Capital Plan Working Group

Origin: National Indigenous Council

Approved: June 13, 2019

For transmission to the 2019 National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering.

Terms of Reference

Background

In 2016, the Real Property and Capital Plan Task Group was created to administer the Real Property fund of The United Church Canada and provide oversight to renovation and repair projects for nationally owned Indigenous churches, manses, and buildings.

The Aboriginal Ministries Council brought together a countrywide system to administer these properties by one single working group. Presbyteries and conferences had previously administered this task.

The Real Property and Capital Fund Working Group (Working Group) is guided by this background and the following principles and documents to make fair and equitable decisions:

1. The Calls to the Church
2. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
3. The Seven Sacred Teachings
4. Real Property and Capital Plan Strategy

Purpose

The members of the Working Group recognize and hold that this work is a ministry of stewardship. The contributions of volunteers build up the Body of Christ. In this caring for the Body we care for our communities and for each other. We hold dear the Seven Sacred Teachings of love, wisdom, honesty, respect, courage, humility, and truth, and scripture:

For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. 1 Corinthians 3:9

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28

The Working Group will use the Real Property and Capital Plan Strategy and the Real Property and Capital Plan Fund to improve Indigenous real property projects. The approved real property projects are initiatives of the National Indigenous Organization in partnership with the stakeholders and partners where the real property facilities are located. Individuals, groups, and organizations can be both partners and stakeholders and will vary according to the context of each community of faith. The scope and duration of the project will be determined in the context of any Indigenous ministry strategy and resourcing of same, as well as local needs analysis. The Working Group responds to urgent requests from Indigenous communities of faith based on individual needs.

Jurisdiction, Scope, and Authority

The Real Property and Capital Plan Working Group's purpose is to receive and review applications for real property renovations from the Indigenous communities of faith with nationally owned properties.

The Working Group will:

- Ensure property is deemed structurally sound;
- Ensure that the proposal is in line with the community of faith's vision of vital and sustainable ministry;
- Practice stewardship by monitoring and administering the financial constraints of the Real Property Fund, and work closely with the General Council Office Finance unit;
- Commit to building a financial plan that sustains capacity and has the ability to respond to urgent requests for real property requests/funding;
- Advocate for the gathering and review of information about cemeteries.

With respect to non-nationally owned buildings: Properties owned by communities are not financially supported by the Real Property and Capital Plan. However, the National Indigenous Organization can provide assistance to communities to find alternative funding, information, program delivery, and capacity building. Urgent community requests will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Governance

The National Indigenous Organization has responsibility for the oversight of the Real Property and Capital Plan Working Group.

The Real Property and Capital Plan Working Group reports to the National Indigenous Organization by providing financial information on how the Real Property Fund is managed and dispensed within the bounds of nationally owned properties, and provide information on successfully completed projects.

Decisions of the working group are made by consensus. A quorum of four (4) members can make decisions on behalf of the Working Group so long as there is consensus. An email poll will be initiated when a collective conference call is not possible.

A rotating chairperson will be named for the Working Group. The chairperson will set the meeting agenda with support of the lead Community Capacity Development Coordinator.

Membership and Terms of Service

The Working Group will be made up of seven (7) appointed members. The National Indigenous Organization will appoint one (1) member as portfolio liaison to the Working Group. Membership will include lay and order of ministry representatives, with broad national representation, and knowledge of Indigenous property contexts and skillsets.

Considerations for membership will include knowledge of Indigenous contexts such as land areas, band relationships, and winter road access and transportation. Important areas of

knowledge include building and construction, costs, labour, electrical, maintenance, plumbing, contracts, contracting, and project management.

The Working Group members will serve a term of three (3) years with the possibility of serving a second term of three (3) years. Terms will begin at each National Indigenous Spiritual Gathering. Appointments will be staggered to ensure continuity of current membership and that the National Indigenous Organization have one (1) seat on the Working Group. A member who is absent for three consecutive meetings and does not respond to emails will be replaced.

Members must declare a conflict of interest should they be a member of a community of faith's application for funding.

Resources and Budget

The Real Property and Capital Plan Working Group has oversight, stewardship, and administrative responsibility over the Real Property and Capital Plan Fund. Annual resources will be in place for insurance and projects; one face-to-face meeting of the Working Group; and special travel for property-related community visits. The budget will be secured annually for the Working Group to review.

The Working Group will seek new sources of income for the Real Property and Capital Plan Fund. This is outlined in Call to the Church 8 b. The Working Group continues to support that a policy be developed that ensures a percentage of proceeds from a sale of property be allocated to Indigenous Ministries and Justice work.

Roles

Staff Roles: One Community Capacity Development Coordinator will be assigned as staff lead to the Working Group. The additional Community Capacity Development Coordinators will provide support where necessary. This role includes support and resources to articulate projects and maintain correspondence, as well as occasional travel to communities prior to the approval of major projects.

Working Group Roles: The Working Group members will be the decision makers for Indigenous real property projects. They will provide decisions to communities of faith, with the support of the Community Capacity Development Coordinators, in the form of a letter.

Meetings

There will be one annual face-to-face meeting of the Working Group, with preference for meeting in a community of faith. When possible, they will meet in the presence of a local Elder and local protocol will be followed. There will also be monthly conference calls for project review and approval. Meeting minutes will be taken by a program support staff, or designate, and reviewed by the Community Capacity Development Coordinator staff lead before distribution.

Process

The Community Capacity Development Coordinator will confirm receipt of a project application with the community of faith and will consult with them for any incomplete

applications prior to distribution to the Working Group. The applications and any subsequent correspondence will be filed accordingly.

The Community Capacity Development Coordinator will communicate with the community of faith when

- The project application is approved, or
- The project application requires further clarification to the Working Group to arrive at a decision, or
- The project application is denied in accordance with these terms of reference.

The Community Capacity Development Coordinator coordinate and track the disbursement of payments in accordance with the agreed to terms of payment, which may include a progress payment schedule.

All projects approved by the Working Group will require communities of faith to communicate regularly with the Community Capacity Development Coordinator on the progress of the project, as well as to provide a summary report to the Working Group. These reports will be added to the correspondence files. It is the responsibility of the Community Capacity Development Coordinator to manage all aspects of coordination and execution of this process.

Communications

With support from the Community Capacity Development Coordinator and in consort with the National Indigenous Organization liaison, the Working Group will provide a minimum of one (1) interim report and one (1) annual report to the National Indigenous Organization, which will include a financial report, an anecdotal report on approvals and feedback from communities of faith, learnings which may be of interest and/or impact other working groups, and recommendations for amendments to governance.