



Portraits

QUEBEC'S NON-PROFIT HOUSING

Presentation

It is with great pride that I invite you to leaf through these portraits. You will get to experience a sample of the diversity, creativity and generosity that characterizes housing non-profits in Quebec. Some 50,000 homes in our network are the result of the commitment of tens of thousands of people who act to bring the right to housing to life.



Community housing is first and foremost a human story of solidarity and of respect. Our homes are places where these values find refuge, where they grow and thrive. Together, housing non-profits, their federations and the RQOH participate in building a more just world.

In a few words and with a few photos, this collection of portraits shows us the faces and the achievements of these ambitious and determined builders. This is our way to introduce the men and women who have developed the non-profit network and share their uniqueness with all of our partners and the entire population.

All regions of Quebec are represented here by the projects that have often transformed the heart of a neighbourhood, village or town. Many other non-profits have illustrated this as well; the time and space we had available did not allow us to show you more. Indeed, 1,200 organizations own and operate 2,300 projects represented in eight regional federations in Quebec. Grouped within the RQOH, the network now has a major profile.

The RQOH wants to tell all of these builders they did "a beautiful job!" We want to thank them for the tremendous work they have done over the decades. All these housing projects saw the light of day thanks to the commitment of many actors in all the communities where they bloomed.

Also, thank you to the RQOH team and to the federations that support the daily work of a network of generous, ambitious and willing partners to do more, and better, to improve the living conditions of those who are most in need.

The unfulfilled needs are still immense: Quebec has 227,870 private rental households where tenants spend more than 50 per cent of their income on rent. The state has the responsibility to guarantee the right to housing for all, but the community housing movement can and should play a role as a partner and facilitator, including financially. The compendium in your hands demonstrates that we have the capacity.

We remain convinced that the development of community housing is a high quality investment for all spheres of personal, social, economic, urban and environmental life

A glance at these tableaux have eloquently proved that once more.

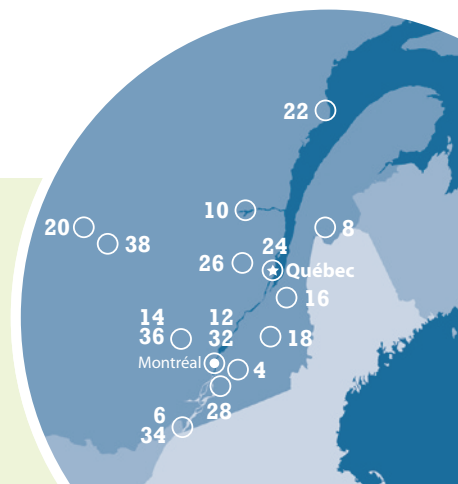
Stéphan Corriveau

General manager

Réseau québécois des OSBL d'habitation

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Message from the chairperson

These portraits lift the veil on a little known segment of social housing in Quebec.

The action of the founders of the NPO are still a well kept secret. These pioneers have invested in the community housing field to allow their elders to remain in their towns and villages, to get people off the street, to support single-parent families and abused women, or to improve the living conditions of immigrants, veterans or Indigenous peoples — in short, to hand the keys to a stable home to people who were in great need.

We want to show you the progress of some of these builders who have been so actively engaged in their communities by presenting 18 portraits from all the regions of Quebec. Each non-profit included here agreed to tell a little of their history, as much for their resemblance to other projects as for their originality.

These citizens have many faces. These are young people and seniors, singles, couples or families; they are people in good physical and mental health, or who have lost their independence, they are victims of violence or emerging from homelessness. They have travelled varied paths but sought the same destination: to have a decent home where security and peace reign.

Here you will discover social housing projects that were won after long struggles, finally became realities in their communities.

The whole network of Quebec's non-profit housing now has more than 10,000 volunteers and 6,000 employees working to ensure sound financial and real-estate property management, provide community support to tenants and to offer a range of activities focused on their civic participation and their well-being.



The development of the non-profit network would never have been possible without the determination of the leaders of the different communities who have challenged public and private leaders, to persuade them to grant the funding and support needed to bring their projects to fruition.

We pay tribute to the contribution of the citizens who are engaged in their communities, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Société d'habitation du Québec, the cities and municipalities, financial institutions, the health and social services network. We also wish to acknowledge the work of technical resource groups, architectural firms, voluntary and charitable associations and the social clubs of cities and villages.

Without the commitment of all these actors, nothing would have been possible

The Réseau québécois des OSBL d'habitation and its member federations salute the work of these builders who have paved the way in their communities. Faced with ever-growing demand, we remain concerned, however, about the need to develop new units and ensure the sustainability of existing buildings whose agreements are expiring. In short, much work remains to be done.

For now, it is with a sense of pride and accomplishment that we invite you to browse through these portraits.



Isabelle Leduc
Chairperson
Réseau québécois des OSBL d'habitation

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VILLA DES MONTS DE SUTTON

A DECADE OF GROWTH



Based in Sutton, the La Villa des Monts retirement home will celebrate its 10th anniversary this summer.

"It's not too big, it's just right," said Marie-Jeanne Lefebvre, when asked about her assessment of the Villa des Monts, where she has lived for almost 10 years. The dean of the residence added that *"it's community-minded and personalized. The atmosphere is good with neighbours and in the dining room."*

Marie-Jeanne toured the establishment with us and Villa des Monts chairperson Alexandrine Poissant. Both are former teachers from Sutton. Although Marie-Jeanne mourns the recent loss of her friends Suzanne and Rolande, who also lived here, she laughs easily with Alexandrine.

Donald Davidson, is a 91-year-old sculptor from Waterloo, in the Eastern Townships. With a sparkle in his eye, he likes to joke around and to create. Donald came here two years ago with his wife, Dorothy Harrington, after a career in the United States, because of its close links with the Sutton artistic community.

Even more importantly, "we have the right to have our cat (Desmond Tutu, 16)"

Alice O'Brien Bidwell will be marking her 8th year at the Villa des Monts in October. She lived her entire life on Western Road, where the Villa is also located. *"I just had to change the number,"* she joked. She said she loves the fact that residents here speak French. As in Sutton itself, the anglophone and francophone communities are well represented at the Villa des Monts. Discussions take place in both languages, says the president of the institution, ensuring everyone gets along. The occupancy priority here goes to the citizens of Sutton and Abercorn or their parents.




"It's very pleasant here"

- Donald Davidson, tenant


The atmosphere

People are relaxed, cheerful and caring. One of the cooks, Robert Ménard, remembered a former resident, Father

 **Location**
Sutton
3,900 inhabitants

 **Founded**
Incorporated in 2003
Opened in 2006

 **Number of units**
40 apartments

 **Clientele**
Autonomous individuals 75
years and older

 **Employees**
7

Lapalme, who, when asked about his health, replied: *"It's great, but I'm falling apart!"*

Robert himself has a good sense of humour. He made a little amateur film where the guests come in one-by-one to tell him that his food is horrible — which is fortunately a lie. Donald and Alice praise the quality of the fare. At lunch or dinner, residents have a choice between two appetizing main courses.

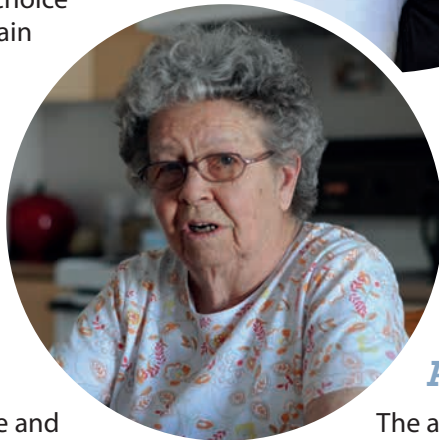


Donald and Alice also stressed the beauty of the surroundings.

The building design is the work of Ste. Julie resident Michelle Descartes. At the request of Ms. Poissant, she opted for an architectural aesthetic common to the Townships, and located the kitchen at the end of the building so that cooking odours would be isolated.

History

Alexandrine said her friend Marie-Jeanne Lefebvre was the inspiration behind the Villa des Monts. *"She told me she was having trouble getting services in Sutton, like snow shovelling or lawn mowing."* At the time, the closest seniors homes were in Cowansville and Knowlton.



An office provided free to the CLSC allows home care aides the opportunity to maximize care to Villa residents. Otherwise, in normal circumstances there is neither an attendant nor a nurse on site. Bathrooms and bedrooms are equipped with an emergency call service.

Activities

The activities at the Villa des Monts are similar to those found in senior residences throughout Quebec.

"The puzzles are very popular," Poissant noted. *"In the games room, people can play indoor pétanque, beanbag toss, or Wii bowling. Outside there's a pétanque court. People go to bingo once a week."*

The Villa social club also does its part for leisure activities.



"We give them a small budget and they run self-financing activities, such as garage sales, which can bring in up to \$600"

Alexandrine then pondered where she herself would go when she got older. And that's where the dream of a retirement home was born. The idea was well received during a consultation with the La Pommeraié CLSC health centre and the Sutton mayor at the time, Winston Bresee.

The Villa project was incorporated in December 2003. *"As is usual in boards of directors,"* Alexandrine joked, *"the person who speaks most was appointed chairperson."* She admitted that, at time, she had no idea how much involvement the adventure would require.

The building

The Villa was built in the middle of the village, on a vacant lot that had once hosted the Darrah factory, which manufactured bowling pins, hockey sticks and ax handles. The site is within easy walking range of all of the shops and services as well as a community garden and a bike path, which is now maintained in winter as well thanks to the efforts of the Villa des Monts directors.

Every year in August the residents invite family, friends and neighbours to a big picnic. As well, a local choir performs for residents three times a year.

"I see beautiful sunsets in my room"

- Marie-Jeanne Lefebvre, tenant



Financial partners

SHQ, CLD and Caisse populaire de Brome-Missisquoi, City of Sutton, municipality of Abercorn



Federation

FROHME

CENTRE INTER-SECTION

AIM THE WELL-BEING AND AUTONOMY OF INDIVIDUALS



The history of the Inter-Section Centre began with sad news: Monique Cormier-Gagnon, a Gatineau resident and mother of a schizophrenic son, learned in the mid-80s that her son ended his life in the Hull detention centre.

During her mourning, she discovered how few emergency and rehabilitation services were available for people with mental health problems. That's when Ms. Cormier-Gagnon decided to set up a service centre whose mission would be the rehabilitation and social reintegration of adults with mental health problems: the Inter-Section Centre opened as a day-centre in 1988.



The centre quickly became too small to serve its growing clientele and moved from one location to another, finally purchasing its current site on St. René West in Gatineau in 1998. At that time, however, it was still just a day-centre and there was a demand for permanent housing. It was difficult at the time for people with mental health problems to find safe and affordable housing in the region.

The rapid transformation of the centre continued and, in November 2014, it inaugurated a new four-storey building with 35 housing units on the top three floors. The spacious three-and-a-half room units each have a large open area, kitchen-living room, bedroom and bathroom.

The apartment includes a stove, refrigerator, cable TV and a balcony. The building also offers five units for residents with mobility problems.


To become a resident, a selection interview is required and several criteria are taken into consideration:


"We have waiting lists. People who come here have been met and all have undergone interviews. We want autonomous individuals. There are 35 people with mental health issues who have to get along and live together; it is not always obvious. People are referred by various institutional stakeholders, community groups or by experts."

- Danny Lyrette, coordinator

 **Location**
Gatineau
274,000 inhabitants

 **Founded**
2014

 **Number of units**
35 permanent apartments
including
5 for people with reduced
mobility

 **Clientele**
People struggling with mental health
problems

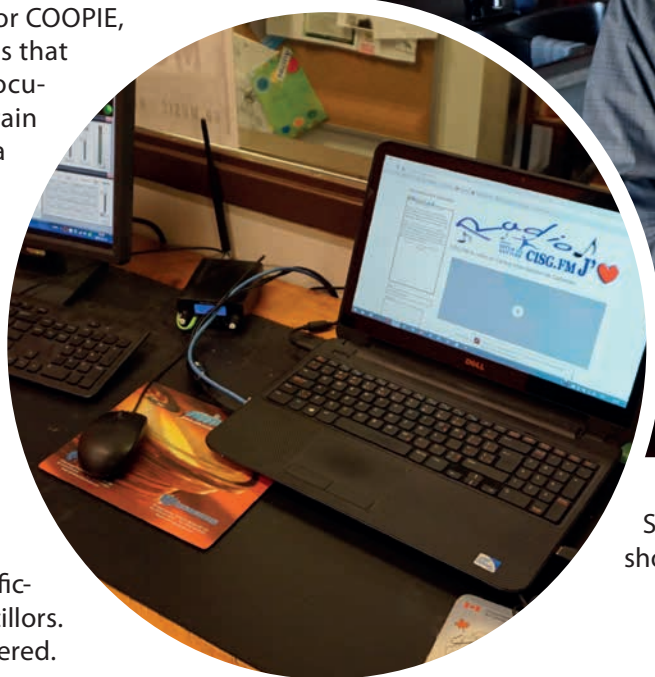
 **Employees**
1, part time

The organization benefits from the Quebec rent supplement program, which allows tenants, who are almost all on welfare, to pay just 25% of their income on rent. Although the day-centre can rely on experience gained over 15 years, the housing complex is a new stage in the impressive growth of Inter-Section. "Housing is new for us," admitted Danny.

"Fortunately, we had the help of ROHSCO (Regroupement des OSBL d'habitation et d'hébergement avec support communautaire de l'Outaouais) and we can also learn from other organizations in the region that have experience in mental-health housing. That said, we are the only ones offering this type of housing in the mental health area"

The centre offers five services that cover all spheres of regular life: leisure, training, psycho-social support, employability programs and support programs for members of the public grieving a suicide. The canteen, for example, employs some of the tenants through an Emploi-Québec action program. The Inter-envol Cooperative, or COOPIE, a social economy business that specializes in scanning documents, allows others to train as scanning technicians, a title that will allow some to find full-time work.

In addition to the canteen area, the first floor also houses a community radio station, which broadcasts three hours of live programming daily, and a community hall. Among the spaces set aside for directors and employees are offices for psycho-social counsellors. Their actions are multi-layered.



Among others activities, there is the "Grief after suicide" program, which provides collective or individual support groups where everyone can speak freely at their own pace and with the utmost respect.



A first glimpse the centre shows the collective and participatory approach: a dozen people are seated and talking around the cafeteria tables, not far from a pool table. Large windows overlook an outdoor patio and the office of community radio station is broadcasting on the Internet.



Sitting in his apartment, Mario Bertrand shows his appreciation:

"We like it here!"

LES HABITATIONS DÉGELIS

A COMMUNITY SUCCESS FOR 38 YEARS

The Habitations Dégelis Inc. provides seniors and families with 110 rental units at affordable prices. The community began in 1978 with a housing project called the Lions Block, named in honour of the group that instigated this wonderful success story.

The local Lions Club wanted to contribute to the well-being of citizens and is still active in pursuit of this common goal, since its members form the majority of the non-profit corporation's board of directors. "There was a shortage of housing in Dégelis. That's when the Lions Club started its commitment. In 2016, the needs are still there, it's not over yet," said Jean-Yves Lavoie, president of the non-profit group.

A collective project

The larger community of 3,500 residents reflects the spirit of solidarity that is the foundation of the Habitations Dégelis Inc. corporation. Thus, over the years its achievements relied on the collaboration of the city of Dégelis and the Caisse populaire Desjardins des Trois-Lacs. This also could not have happened without the participation of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Société d'habitation du Québec (SHQ).

"We respond to the needs of small families, individuals and seniors, particularly of people with low income; the Témiscouata regional county is one of the poorest in Quebec. Moreover, this allows people to remain in their communities, near their families"


- Jean-Yves Lavoie, president


The first social housing

The first phase of construction was completed in 1979 and provided 24 dwellings located at 101 East 7th Street. In 1983, the second phase contributed to the growth of Habitations Dégelis with the addition of three blocks of four dwellings known as Place piste cyclable. In 1985, two other buildings — Place du Longeron — accommodated even more families and single occupants.

 **Location**
Dégelis
3,500 inhabitants

 **Founded**
1978

 **Number of units**
72 for small families & singles
38 residences for seniors

 **Clientele**
Independent seniors,
families and single
individuals

 **Employees**
13

Le Manoir Rose-Marquis

Following a survey conducted by the city of Dégelis and the Economic Development Corporation in the early 2000s, the directors of the corporation decide to go forward with the Manoir Rose-Marquis project.



"On Morneau Ave., we see that almost all of the housing was occupied in the first year by newcomers to Dégelis. That's how the corporation contributes to development of the housing stock with quality homes, all while taking the needs of the community into account," the coordinator added.

Help the poor

The amount that a person devotes to his rent makes all the difference: 20 out of 48 residents at the Manoir Rose-Marquis benefit from the Quebec rent supplement program, which contributes to improving their quality of life. The new 4½-room units on Morneau Ave. are rented for \$500 a month. And the rent in the 30-year-old Lions Block is \$404.

The average age at the Manoir Rose-Marquis is 82. The social impact of a non-profit housing needs no introduction in Dégelis.

The economic impact

The Habitations Dégelis Inc. corporation also has a significant economic impact by providing, among other benefits, employment for 13 people including eight full-time workers. In addition, investments made with its partners were worth \$14 million in 2016. The task is far from over for administrators, however.

"The most glaring needs were from independent retirees who wanted to live out this period of their life in a comfortable and safe place"

- Diane Dubé,
Habitations Dégelis coordinator



The first 17 Manoir Rose-Marquis units were completed in 2004. A second phase of 21 new homes, the Pavillon Desjardins, was fully occupied by July 2012.

Morneau Avenue

Twenty-four social housing units on Morneau Ave. joined the community in December 2014. *"Beautiful, new two-storey housing! In fact, the occupants live in townhouses,"* explained Dubé. With the addition of these units, the Habitations Dégelis Inc. now manage 72 homes for families, in addition to 38 homes for retirees in the Manoir Rose-Marquis.

"It is not over, the needs are still there. We're thinking about a third phase for the Manoir Rose-Marquis"

- Jean-Yves Lavoie,
president



Financial partners
SHQ, SCHL, City of Dégelis, Caisse populaire Desjardins des Trois-Lacs, CLD du Témiscouata



Federation
FOHBGI



LA MAISON DU BEL-ÂGE

PROVIDE RESIDENTS WITH THE BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF LIFE, AT THE BEST POSSIBLE COST

The Maison du Bel-Âge non-profit was created through the initiative of the Knights of Columbus Council 2800 in Dolbeau, whose primary goal is to “help the elderly” in the area.



“People feel at home here, because they are at home. All residents are the parents of at least one family from our community and the surrounding area; the senior’s home is a direct link with the strength of our environment”

- Gisèle Larouche, general manager

Other individualized services are provided and added to the cost of rent. For example, help with bathing or getting put to bed at night, housekeeping, etc ...

The intensive home support branch is operated in collaboration with the CIUSSS Dolbeau-Mistassini in a private-public partnership since 2006. Within this branch, the Maison du Bel-Âge offers housing services, meals and basic care (orderlies) while the CIUSSS offers professional services (nursing, physical rehabilitation therapist and ergotherapist, etc).

The Maison du Bel-Âge includes two branches: the non-profit and the intensive home support section.

The non-profit accepts autonomous or semi-autonomous seniors and has set up mechanisms to help people maintain their independence for as long as possible. The room and board depends on the type of unit and the status of the tenant, varying from \$933 to \$1,913. Various services are included in the lease, such as three meals a day, 24-hours surveillance 7 days a week, and a medication dispensing service, among others. A nurse is on site Monday to Friday.



The intensive home care option allows seniors with loss of physical autonomy (profile iso-SMAF-9) to live

Location
Dolbeau-Mistassini
14,400 inhabitants

Founded
1981

Number of units
23 apartments
30 rooms

Clientele
Independent and semi-autonomous seniors (non-profit organization); people in need of care (intensive home support)

Employees
30+

in an environment adapted to their condition. The project is unique insofar as it overcomes the lack of resources for seniors who have health problems and often little support. The agreement with the CIUSSS allows for on-site care services, which eliminates the need for hospitalization in many cases or delays the need to enter a CHSLD.

The "Living Environment" committee

This committee is composed of residents, family members, volunteers from management and three members of the board. It informs residents, assists them in their activities and helps improve the quality of life in the residence. This committee is consulted regularly. Furthermore, a Code of Ethics clarifies the rules of conduct for all residents and workers at the Maison du Bel-Âge.

All activities are offered to all residents.

To facilitate this, the space allocation and arrangement of furniture in the dining room and in the activities room is designed to easily accommodate the disabled or those in a wheelchair



La Maison du Bel-Âge is a vibrant living environment where many activities are offered

The Bel-Âge Foundation is composed of an independent board of directors who manage the funds collected and the interest earned, which goes to the Maison du Bel-Âge. The Foundation thus supports various activities such as Christmas dinner or specific needs, such as buying automatic door openers. It also

offers residents free taxi transportation to the downtown mall twice a week.



The nurse and orderlies plan activities related to welcoming, entertainment and socializing and they coordinate a team of volunteers who organizes activities such as bingo, bowling, etc. There is also excellent collaboration with volunteers of the Hospital Auxiliary, who give their time and provide financial assistance for the purchase of accessories for the well-being of residents, such as the buying of activity tables.



BRIN D'ELLES

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF DISADVANTAGED SINGLE WOMEN AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

This is a story of women involved in the development of social housing with community support. It is a story of women determined to return control over their lives to impoverished women living with permanent residential instability.

Their names are Fernande, Manon, Carole, they decided to invest in improving their living conditions and those of other women in need.

"I could not live in a small studio apartment. When I heard about the project, I was on board immediately. I participated in all meetings of the board, with the architect, with the technical resource group," explained Fernande.

The women participated in on-site meetings and closely followed the construction work.

"We weren't ignored if we had questions, and we were well-placed to say what we needed"

- Manon, tenant

They saw their dream come true one day in 2004, receiving keys to beautiful, large three-and-a-half room apartments, each furnished with a double bed, all amenities and a balcony on which to enjoy the summer.

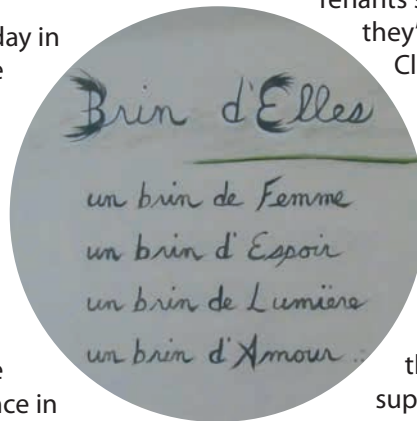
"It was like going into a new condo, it looks like a condo, our non-profit!" And that's not all! Best of all was the price of rent. Paying 25% of an income of \$700 a month makes all the difference in the budget.

"It lets you breathe! You can think about buying winter boots by putting a little aside each month"

To Fernande and Manon, it changed everything.

Tenants since the opening of the first phase of Brin d'Elles, they're now involved in a new development project with Claudette Godley — "my mentor" as Fernande says. As age begins to infringe on their health and mobility, these women need to live in a building that has an elevator. *"I thought it was my last apartment, but now, with my legs ..."* With a new proposal open to them, they're ready to climb aboard once more.

Half of the 24 tenants of Brin d'Elles have lived in their homes for over 10 years. This stability reaffirms the essential role of social housing with community support as a means of social integration.



Location
Montréal
1,988,000 inhabitants

Founded
Saint-Laurent project 2002
Saint-Michel project 2008

Number of units
Saint-Laurent project
22 apartments
Saint-Michel project
12 apartments

Clientele
Women in difficulty

Employees
2, part time

"We no longer manage misery, we manage autonomy"

- Claudette Godley, board chairperson



The Brin d'Elles non-profit was originally an initiative financed by the Fonds dédié à l'habitation communautaire (Fund Dedicated to Community Housing). Its success is due primarily to three factors: the unwavering commitment from the very beginning of organizations like the YWCA Montreal, the Centre de réadaptation en dépendance de Montréal (Rehabilitation Centre of Montreal), the Réseau Hébergement Femmes (Women Housing Network) and the Auberge Madeleine; the partnership and sustained involvement of tenants; and the FOHM (Fédération des OSBL d'habitation de Montréal) management service agreement.

The composition of the board of directors also reflects the commitment of all these players. They continue to work to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged single women at risk of homelessness by providing access to permanent, safe, decent and affordable housing with community support.



We know that access to stable, independent housing is an effective response to homelessness when we see that all the women who turned to Brin d'Elles previously experienced residential instability for three years or more. Now these women have their own secure and private living space; they have a social and community life just like any citizen.



Community support

The Brin d'Elles corporation provides community support in these two buildings through the presence of a FOHM councillor three days a week. This on-site availability provides support and security to tenants and



promotes their housing stability. In addition, the establishment of a social management committee, where representatives of the Board and tenants meet, helps prevent or resolve conflicts as they arise.

"You find the same problems as in any other similar building, but a collective spirit and mutual aid are among the values that are conveyed to ensure the welfare and safety of all residents"

"The FOHM presence brings undeniable support. Our projects are well managed and the volunteer members of the board are released from the management of everyday life. It provides time to look ahead," said Godley.



RELAIS FAMILIAL D'AUTEUIL

FAMILY AT THE HEART OF THE ACTION



Not far from the Rivière des Mille-Îles, north of Laval, imagine a small office with three employees, fifteen social housing units and dozens of community activities. Add a good dose of resourcefulness, a dash of common sense, a lot of energy, and all the mutual aid and humanity required and you'll get an amazing creation whose slight size belies the scale of its achievements.

A committed community, social solidarity

Since 1992, the Relais Familial d'Auteuil has provided 15 apartments for low-income single-parent families. Funded by the Ministry for the Family and the Société d'habitation du Québec, among others, its primary mission is to provide housing and living environment for family members. The organization also receives aid from the Community Organization Support Program. A coordinator, a family worker and a youth worker welcome clients and organize activities from the Relais office.


"When we receive a request, we know there will be at least a one-year wait because there is little turnover in our homes,"

said coordinator Delphine Hervé. *"But we redirect the family, we support them in their efforts and, of course, they're invited to our activities, which are open to everyone in the neighbourhood."*





Activities include a day camp, prenatal yoga, garage sale, community kitchen and homework assistance. The games room, which serves as the "everything room" is always full. Conferences with outside counsellors are also offered for parents on various topics. And recently, the food bank for tenants has also started helping neighbourhood families referred by the CLSC.

In fact, the "Relais" is well known in the neighbourhood and people love to come back.

 **Location**
Laval
401,000 inhabitants

 **Founded**
1992

 **Number of units**
15 apartments

 **Clientele**
Low-income single-parent families

 **Employees**
3, full time
2, part time

“Sometimes we receive some nice surprises. One day, a young man who grew up here came by to show us his newborn child. And although our children’s activities are reserved for people under 13 years, 13-year-olds come back ... as volunteers!”

- Delphine Hervé, coordinator

Recently, the organization’s motto changed from “Serving families” to “Family at the heart of the action.”

“Our mission is to contribute to the quality of life for families, but also to promote citizen involvement, mutual aid and social diversity,” the coordinator said. “If we look to the outside, to the neighbourhood community, our participants and guests will also look to that.”

“Auteuil is a suburban district that welcomes more and more immigrant families. So the objective of social diversity makes sense”



severe depression after a painful separation and the loss of her network of friends, the bright new apartment and the support she receives was like a second wind.

“It saved my life,” she repeats to anyone who wants to listen. “When I separated, the housing I was living in wasn’t suitable. My social worker referred me here. When I arrived, I was so happy I participated in all the activities. There was the thrift store, the food bank, beautiful inexpensive day trips ... And when things go wrong, you can visit the community room. Today, we even have a collective garden in the back.”



Since 1992, provide support and break isolation

From the inception of the project in 1987, divorced and separated women decide to come together, organize community activities and help each other in their legal proceedings. In 1990, the group that would become the FAHMO mutual aid movement submitted a project proposal to the SHQ, calling for the construction of 15 low-rent housing units and a community space. In October 1992, the first tenants arrived.



Her youngest last son, who has dysphasia, also benefited from the active living environment. *“It helped him to get out in the world and out of his bubble!”*

After 10 years in the neighbourhood, Martine can’t imagine herself anywhere else. *“I haven’t had a car since my separation. Here, everything is done on foot: groceries, swimming pool, community centre, everything is close!”*

“It saved my life”

Martine arrived in 2006 at what she affectionately calls “le Relais.” At the end of her rope and coming out of a

“I’d like if there was more. I’d like it if other families in need could live in places like this”

- Martine, tenant



L'OASIS SAINT-DAMIEN THE ART OF WELCOMING SENIORS



Perched on the hills of the municipality of Saint-Damien-de-Buckland in Bellechasse, the Oasis residence officially opened its doors in 1988 after four years of effort from a group of volunteers led by Pauline Mercier, who still heads the non-profit.

In December 1984, the Oasis project launched after a fire at the Congrégation des Sœurs Notre-Dame du Perpétuel Secours in Lac Verde rendered the building unfit to continue accommodating seniors. "Our seniors had to be relocated in different residences between St. Eugène-de-Lotbinière and L'Islet, and we had to bring them back home," explained Mercier.

Four years later, the first residents entered the newly renovated residence on the grounds of the Collège de St. Damien, a building that housed the old teaching college. This first phase included 24 units suitable for autonomous seniors. The development was made possible thanks to a contribution of \$250,000 from the congregation, which didn't charge rent to the new organization. A similar amount was also raised in the community through a donation drive.

"The Oasis is a beautiful resurrection of a building that, in the early '80s, was underused"

- Daniel Guillemette, general manager


Pauline Mercier noted that the creation of the Oasis St. Damien was part of a renewal project she led while pursuing her Masters in Public Administration. A meeting with representatives of St. Damien organizations and the municipality got the ball rolling.

Additional phases


After the first phase, nine additional units were added between 1995 and 1998, funded by budget surpluses the non-profit had built up. A second phase, completed in 1996, allowed for the addition of 26 more rooms, this time for people with reduced autonomy.


At that time, the congregation donated the building to Oasis and the school board. A co-ownership agreement stipulating the conditions of sharing the costs of the building, in proportion to the respective areas occupied, was signed by the two parties. Today, the school board has 72 per cent of the building and the Oasis has 28 per cent.



 **Location**
Saint-Damien-de-Buckland
2,070 inhabitants

 **Founded**
1984

 **Number of units**
62 rooms
12 studios/apartments

 **Clientele**
Independent and semi-autonomous seniors

 **Employees**
2

In 2002, responding to a new request from the community, the Oasis leaders launched a third phase involving the construction of 12 studio apartments with kitchenettes, dedicated to autonomous seniors with a desire to do their own cooking.

In 2005, thanks to a recurring annual grant indexed at \$16,000 per person from the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the regional health agency,



host of regular services and equipment adapted to their conditions.

An Oasis resident for three years now, Judith Pouliot from St. Damien came here after fracturing her leg in a fall, and arrived with her husband, who was losing his autonomy.

“I like it here because it is a quiet and safe place. There are nurses who can answer questions if you have health problems”

- Judith Pouliot, resident

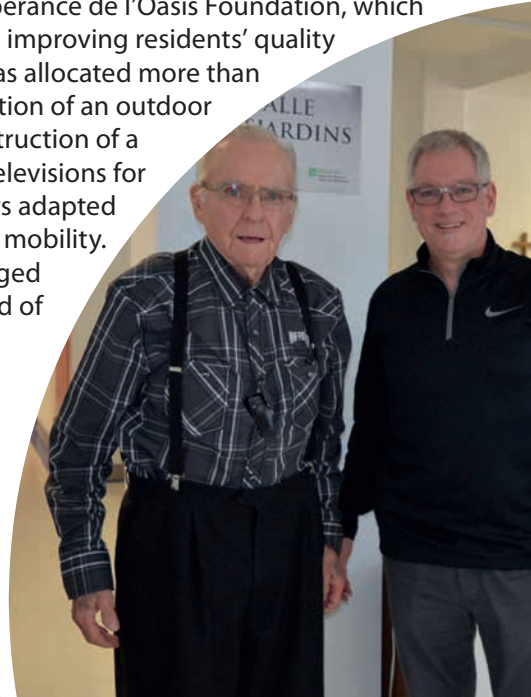
A lively environment

Oasis residents can enjoy a variety of indoor social activities (cards, billiards, bingo, religious activities, etc.) organized in collaboration with a team of volunteers, as well as outside sports activities in the summer.

Many services are also offered close by in Collège St. Damien. It houses, among other groups, the Maison de la culture de Bellechasse, which has a theatre and cinema as well as reception and meeting rooms. The presence of a primary school and a nursery school in the collège also allows for intergenerational exchanges between the Oasis residents and children attending the host institutions. Facilities managed by the municipality of St. Damien, which has supported Oasis since its inception, are also found in the collège. Thirty people work under the supervision of Guillemette and are supported by administrative assistant Sylvie Blouin and Guylaine Labrecque, the director of care.

A support foundation

The organization is also supported, Guillemette added, by the Saint-Joseph de l'Espérance de l'Oasis Foundation, which is constantly investing in improving residents' quality of life. The foundation has allocated more than \$50,000 for the construction of an outdoor patio as well as the construction of a play area for residents, televisions for common areas and chairs adapted for seniors with reduced mobility. The Foundation is managed by an independent board of directors and receives In Memoriam donations.



Oasis welcomed 10 people suffering from a loss of autonomy whose conditions required three or more hours of care daily.

“The cohabitation of different types of clients is important to us. Vulnerable people here also enjoy a pleasant living environment adapted to their reality”

- Daniel Guillemette, general manager

Services and security

Oasis is spread over five floors, four of which are reserved for housing clients. On the ground floor, we find the organization's offices and common rooms, a dining room and an activity room. Guillemette said that residents of the Oasis, regardless of their health status, benefit from a



RÉSEAU D'AIDE LE TREMPLIN

A VERSATILE ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL

Arising out of a preparatory employment program designed specifically to meet the needs of people with a history of psychiatric hospitalization, the Réseau d'aide Le Tremplin (RALT) rapidly expanded its activities to meet pressing needs.

From its inception in 1982, RALT was located in La Source, a building that houses several agencies and which constitute the heart of the Drummondville community life. It also actively participated in initial meetings in Montreal of the 10 organizations that founded the Regroupement des ressources alternatives en santé mentale du Québec (RRASMQ).

Project founders include Guy Châteauneuf, a man who contributed greatly to the development of community mental health resources in Quebec, notably through a psychotherapeutic and social approach based on community resources and community integration of referred clients. The model advocated by Guy Châteauneuf and the team around him (which included people who have experienced mental health problems) lies at the juncture of a medical and hospital approach and the social and community approach.

Like many non-profits, RALT was not originally an organization specifically working in the field of housing

From the starting point of community followup focused primarily on practical aspects, such as support and education in various day-to-day activities, combined with the creation of modest resources to provide individual assistance as well as a documentation centre, RALT inaugurated shared rental units on the private market. The health network soon gave it a "housing access" mandate, which kicked off the therapeutic housing and lodging component.

RALT counts on these resources and its own services to develop a helping relationship with people with mental health problems, but it remains true to its "network" name by



Location
Drummondville
71,800 inhabitants

Founded
1982

Number of units
20 transitional apartments
14 permanent apartments under construction

Clientele
People struggling with mental health problems

Employees
14

focusing on the development of a fabric of interlacing resources with the community, the institutions and with the population of Drummondville.



Moderate supervision is provided by a RALT worker and the length of stay varies according to needs

The Réseau d'aide Le Tremplin, a sort of sympathetic and caring octopus, is the very model of a versatile organization that knows how to adapt its services not only to the needs of people with mental health problems, but also to the availability of government subsidy programs.

Central to this big puzzle piece is the RALT headquarters on Lindsay St., located in a converted auto repair garage. This is where you'll find the Réseau offices, one of four shared housing units and the beating heart of the tight-knit community for many years: the day centre and collective kitchen, where you'll find the support group and other resources.



Started in 1984, the therapeutic housing program has been located since 1990 in a large heritage building. Well furnished and renovated, the building is on Dorion St., near the city centre. The program is aimed at helping residents through a difficult emotional period or to prevent hospitalization or to acquire more autonomy after psychiatric hospitalization. Capacity is eight adult men and women.

Each person has their own bedroom and everyday life is shared (meals, groceries, housekeeping, etc.)

The average length of stay is three months, living expenses are affordable and adapted to the individual situation.

Another component is the shared accommodations, large units for autonomous individuals who can't or prefer not to live alone. The homes are located in downtown Drummondville and each has three individual bedrooms.

And it's not over! RALT is behind the Habitations santé mentale Drummond (HSDM), a new building that will house permanent and transitional housing and provide on-site support. After many ups and downs, which held RALT staff and administrators spellbound throughout the duration of this veritable saga from 2013 and 2015 (the first lot identified for the building had proven unviable because of contaminated soil, and neighbouring buildings requiring costly work), the team quickly landed on his feet! A new lot was found near the city centre, plans were drawn up, and the financial package approved: the largest building in the new construction project can move forward.

The opening of 14 3½-room units (including four adapted for disabled guests) and a community hall is expected at the end of 2016





LA SOCIÉTÉ DE LOGEMENTS DES VÉTÉRANS PROVIDING QUALITY HOUSING TO VETERANS

In 1952, the CMHC built two buildings with four housing units for veterans in Abitibi-Témiscamingue. In 1954, eight other buildings were added for a total of 10, all managed by the CMHC.

Later, the CMHC suggested to veteran tenants that they create a company to acquire the buildings, which was done in 1977, when the Société de Logements des Vétérans de Rouyn-Noranda was founded.

Logements des vétérants manages 40 homes that have been partially renovated, without any subsidies. Whenever a property is vacant, the company makes the repairs necessary for the proper maintenance of its buildings: plastering, painting, plumbing, electricity. Anything goes. The buildings have the same architecture and are all in very good condition.

Clientele

As the name suggests, the corporation was created to support the veterans of Canada's military by providing them with a quality housing complex. Veterans seeking accommodation are divided into three classifications.

Classification A:

- Veterans of World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam and the Gulf War
- Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces with service in NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) or the UN (United Nations).

Classification B:

- Regular CAF veterans who did not serve with NATO or the UN
- Veterans of the CAF Reserves class "C" who served with NATO or the UN.

Classification C:

- Widows of veterans
- Veterans' families (adult son or daughter)
- The elderly
- Low-income families
- Low-income individuals
- CAF Reserves veterans without no class "C" service with NATO or the UN.



The majority of veterans are from the area. Only two veterans of the Second World War and a dozen veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces who have their service with NATO or the UN remain. Their veterans' ages range from 50 to 90.

The veterans are personally involved in activities such as Remembrance Day, Veterans Week and war amputees. Some are members of the Royal Canadian Legion.

Tribute

Dolly Gratton is the second vice-president of the Société de Logements des Vétérans. She explains what led her to get involved with the company.



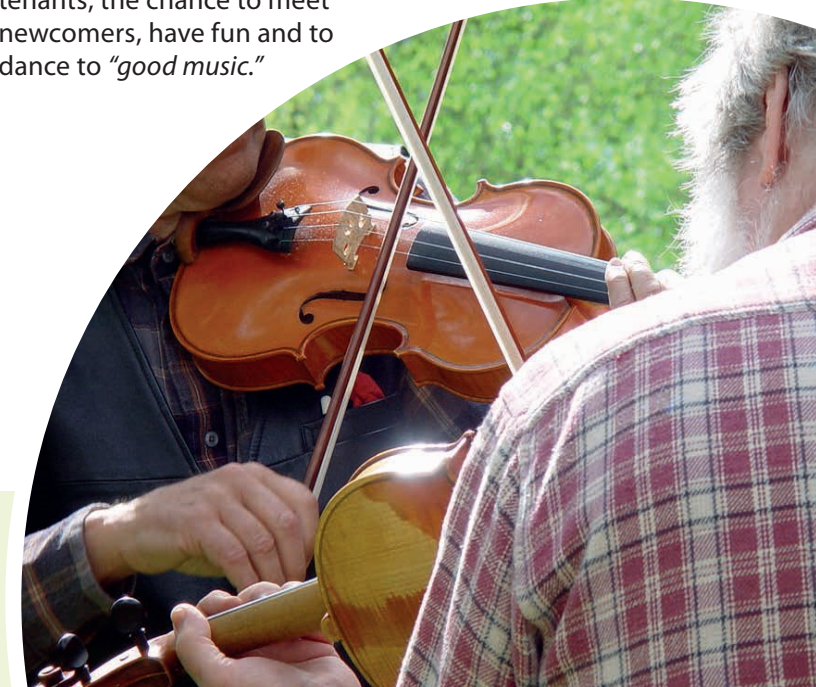
"My husband, Antonio (Tony) Bourgon, was a veteran of the Second World War and served overseas for a period of five years and ten months. He was wounded three times. My husband and I moved into Logements des vétérants on Dec. 1, 1980. He died in 1992 at the age of 72. I decided to keep my apartment, where I remain today"

In 1980, 20 units of the upper floor were heated with a gas furnace that was installed in the corridor. Several years later, the company decided to remove the gas furnaces and install electric baseboard heating. Since 1980, windows and exterior doors were replaced twice.

"Me and several other tenants have invested our money to improve our housing"

Tenants here, in general, feel good, and they appreciate the tranquility and respect for other neighbours. They stay as long as their autonomy allows.

Every summer Logements des vétérants organizes a country-style dinner, allowing socialization between tenants, the chance to meet newcomers, have fun and to dance to "good music."



LA MAISON ANITA-LEBEL

A HOUSE UNLIKE ANY OTHER



Baie-Comeau's Maison Anita-Lebel is not a house like others. It provides shelter to female victims of domestic violence who are reorganizing their lives and who need accommodation for up to 12 months.

These women, with or without children, come from a territory that spans from Tadoussac to Baie-Trinité, 300 kilometres apart. "A woman comes here to get the best skills possible in order to be able to function alone in an apartment and, above all, so that she never has to relive domestic violence," says the coordinator and true conductor of Maison Anita-Lebel, Suzie Levasseur.

The idea for Maison Anita-Lebel dates back to the mid-'90s, when councillors at the Baie-Comeau Maison des femmes, which offered short-term accommodation, found that they lacked an essential service: transition or so-called second-stage housing.

"Women come to a shelter in emergency, they are there about a month, and there was nothing after"

- Suzie Levasseur, coordinator

"Many women, for lack of alternatives, had to return to their violent partner. It was essential to find a resource to rebuild their confidence and self-esteem and empower them to become independent, financially and emotionally."

It took a tragedy to open everyone's eyes to the importance of that kind of resource. On Sept. 9, 1996, Baie-Comeau resident Françoise Lirette and her son were murdered by her violent ex-partner, who then committed suicide. The

murderer had publicly declared his intention to do just that, but nobody could intervene to prevent it.

"Since that event, the community has rallied around the project. It really is a community project, the Maison Anita-Lebel" the coordinator said. "I have worked in other organizations and I never saw mobilization like that to rebuild and renovate the building and furnish the apartments. Businesses, organizations and citizens were mobilized and the city of Baie-Comeau ceded the building for \$1."

The expression "to move heaven and earth" is not exaggerated in the case of Maison Anita-Lebel, which performs small miracles with a slim budget of around \$125,000 a year to

Location
Baie-Comeau
22,000 inhabitants

Founded
1996
(opened in 1999)

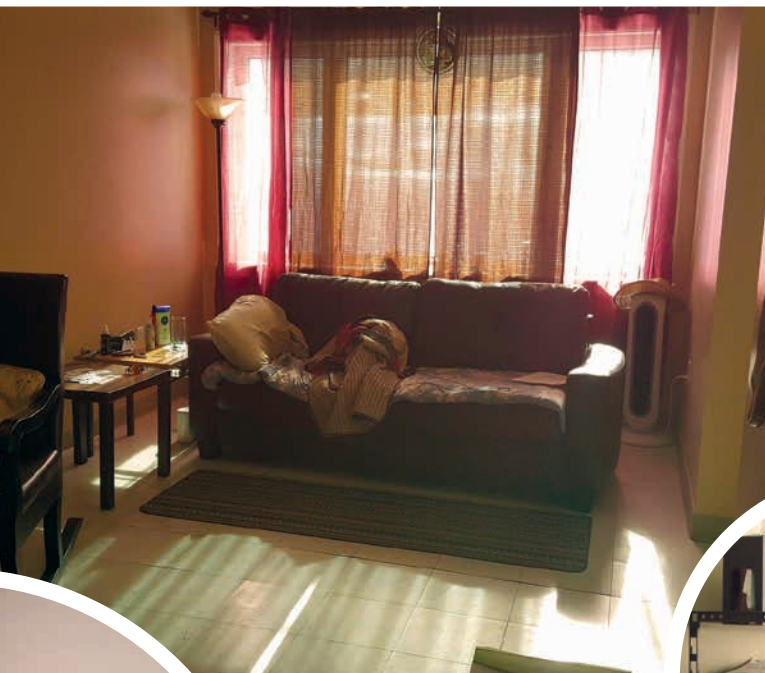
Number of units
8 apartments

Clientele
Female victims of domestic violence,
with or without children

Employees
2

both manage an eight-unit building and offer specialized services in domestic violence.

“The problem for second-stage shelters is that we don’t fit into any funding category”



“We have no choice but to organize, to find funding as needs arise. We hope to one day have an adequate budget.”

Women who go to Maison Anita-Lebel, about 15 a year on average, find refuge and a chance for a fresh start. In return, they must agree to a proposed minimum program that includes group sessions and a monthly individual follow-up, to develop their autonomy and to respect the code of conduct.

“Outside the home, women have a lot of legwork to do. We accompany them there”

- Suzie Levasseur, coordinator

“It looks simple for most of us, but the women who come here have to pay their rent. This, too, is part of the autonomy. There are women who arrive here who have never had a bank account. Sometimes, we have quite a ways to go.”

Women and children residents can enjoy the common room, which has Internet service and a collection of books, DVDs and video games.

“The use of the common room and the activities we offer them allow these women to break the cycle of depression or isolation”

Residents can’t have male visitors except immediate family. *“This is their cocoon, their place of refuge. Women must learn to live alone,”* Levasseur emphasized. As for the code of conduct, it requires among other things that they not be in a suicidal crisis and they do not consume alcohol or drugs in the apartment.



To maintain security requires a high level of confidentiality, which is essential for the protection of women who could be threatened. So outsiders can’t photograph the residents.

For the record, the real Anita Lebel, a citizen of Baie-Comeau, was a pioneer in providing women with shelter. During the 1970s, when this kind of service didn’t exist, Lebel took women and children who were victims of domestic violence into her home.

“She housed them, fed them so they could catch their breath before heading to their families or reorganize elsewhere, so they could fly on their own,” said Levasseur, an obvious admirer of the work of Anita Lebel.



LES HABITATIONS DU CENTRE MULTIETHNIQUE DE QUÉBEC

A LIVING ENVIRONMENT TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF NEWCOMERS



The Centre multiethnique de Québec (CMQ) is an independent community organization that, for more than 50 years now, has undergone different transformations arising from its belief that immigration is essential to the development of Quebec and that supporting and assisting the settling in of newcomers is beneficial for the whole community.

Its outreach activities have taken many forms over the years. More culturally based during the 1960s when it was known as Amitié-Culture, it turned towards the concepts of twinning and social consciousness in the '80s, then began calling on different Quebec sociopolitical forces to take responsibility in the 2000s.

The CMQ initiated the Habitations du Centre multiethnique de Québec project as a complement to other actions of the centre.

The HCMQ offers temporary and transitional housing to immigrants newly arrived in Quebec City. It offers a living environment tailored to the needs of newcomers, conducive to the learning necessary for their adaptation and social integration in the host society through access to the in-house services provided by the CMQ.

Some important dates in the creation of HCMQ:

- November 2010: CMQ Housing Forum, proposal for a temporary housing project.
- 2011-2012: Creation of an action committee aided by a technical resource group (Immeuble Populaire).
- December 2012: Incorporation of the new HCMQ entity.

- July 2013: Purchase of part of the Canopée building from the Quebec Municipal Housing Office and renovation of the entire building.
- October 2014: Moving CMQ offices into the new HCMQ premises.
- November 2014: Opening of emergency rooming services and transitional apartments of the HCMQ.


Services offered to refugees


Emergency rooming: the HCMQ has 19 emergency rooms for state-sponsored refugees for at least five working days, pending their arrangement of private accommodation. The HCMQ can accommodate up to 76 people in emergency and provide three meals a day.

Transitional housing: the HCMQ has 20 transitional units for up to 20 families, or 100 people. These temporary shelters are reserved for state-sponsored refugees who have

 **Location**
Québec
516,600 inhabitants

 **Founded**
2012

 **Number of units**
19 emergency rooms
20 transitional apartments

 **Clientele**
Newly arrived immigrant families,
immigrants workers

 **Employees**
7

particular support needs, as determined by the team. Considered the second stage of the integration, these accommodations are available for six months to two years. Personalized support is offered throughout the rental term, allowing tenants to acclimate and integrate well into Quebec society.



For now, state-sponsored refugees represent 80 per cent of the emergency room users.

Clients in 2015 were mainly of African origin (Central Africa, Congo, Burundi, Ivory Coast, etc.) and Bhutanese. However, international events have an impact on the origin of the clientele, with several Syrian families welcomed by the HCMQ since 2016.

Services for economic migrant workers

Migrant workers can use temporary accommodation (emergency rooms) upon arrival in Quebec City while they find housing. They are helped by the CMQ in their search.



Apartments and emergency rooming

On Nov. 1, 2014, HCMQ welcomed the first residents to its transitional apartments. The units filled progressively with the arrival of refugees supported by the Department of Immigration, diversity and inclusion (MIDI). Indeed, two-thirds of the apartments are currently occupied by families who had previously lived in the emergency housing, since they had a pressing need for assistance in adjusting. The remaining third are families of refugees already living in Quebec but whose support needs were earmarked by the CMQ. Currently, all apartments are occupied.



Community activities

Aside from the involvement of tenant families in the upkeep of common spaces on their floor, the most spectacular is probably the community garden on the building rooftop, managed in collaboration with the CMQ, the OMHQ and urban gardeners.

This facility allows families, tenants and employees to garden together and to meet in a social context. The next harvest is expected soon

An environment for involvement

The local community is very active in the CMQ and HCMQ. More than 400 volunteers are involved on a daily basis, as members of the board, receptionists, helping with food services or games room supervision, sewing or craft activities, or to help with food service or the supervision of games rooms, assisting in moving, etc. Their constant involvement provides a positive first contact between members of the host society and newcomers.

The emergency units received their first guests on Nov. 17, 2014. The first clients referred by the CMQ had unfortunately been left homeless by a fire and needed assistance. Then came the MIDI clients and the HCMQ also began to accommodate economic migrants (skilled workers) as well as other clients referred by partner agencies.

HABITATION POPULAIRE DE LA TUQUE

A CASE OF HOUSING NON-PROFIT STICKING TO ITS SIMPLEST FORM



La Tuque — this outpost of the Haute-Mauricie region, located on land formerly occupied by the Atikamekw, a trading post and important rallying point for trappers, loggers and lumberjacks, the site of ancient hydroelectric dams and paper mills — is one of the cradles of French-Canadian and Quebec society, in addition to being the birthplace of the great poet, Félix Leclerc.

The early industrialization of the region left marks still visible today, with a major working class population and ageing housing stock that was left in very poor condition in the late 1970s.

At the time, not only were more and more young people leaving La Tuque for larger cities, but older people were struggling to find housing that was both decent and affordable, and many of them had no other choice other than to consider a move to homes in the city.

Jean-Guy Charland, who was then the manager of the Caisse populaire La Tuque, had

gradually become aware of the problem and decided to try to tackle it head on. During a general meeting of the Caisse, he called on members and appealed for volunteers in the room to set up a committee to look into the matter.

The basic idea was to bring together members of the community to find a way to provide quality housing at reasonable prices to people in the La Tuque area

Logically, a non-profit formula seemed the best approach. A few years later, the first Habitation populaire de La Tuque building opened its doors on Gouin St. Barely a year and a half later, faced with housing demand that wouldn't stop growing, a second building was erected nearer the city centre, on St. Louis St.

Habitation populaire de La Tuque is a case of non-profit housing sticking to its simplest form. There were no architectural flourishes or socio-community experiments, just square and solid buildings, safe and affordable housing. Tenants, although elderly, didn't require organized communi-



Location
La Tuque
11,200 inhabitants

Founded
1984

Number of units
42 apartments

Clientele
Seniors

Employees
1

ty support. The CLSC provides home care for a number of them. Landscaped public areas outside are accessible all summer. The board consists of seven members, two of whom are tenants (one per project).

The Habitation populaire de La Tuque corporation employs one part-time manager, Jean-Pierre Courteau. Affable and methodical, Courteau worked for 32 years at the l'Énergie school board, where he was the manager of material resources. Now retired, he puts his knowledge to use for the elders of his city. An expert on building maintenance, he is in his element here.

A visit reveals the excellent condition of the spotless premises. Fire prevention facilities are in place, the building has a sprinkler system. Residents dream of one day adding an elevator to the Gouin building; seniors on the third floor would certainly welcome it... but Courteau noted that *"unfortunately, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation has no program for that."*

Here, the *"end of the contract"* is something to look forward to because, when the operating agreement with CMHC expires in four years, the end of mortgage payments won't be the only change. It will also loosen an administrative straitjacket and allow greater flexibility, including opening up management *"in phases"* of the Gouin and St. Louis street buildings. Suddenly, the Gouin elevator could become reality. The only problem is what will happen to the seven housing units that benefit from the rent supplement program? Courteau said the problem is being considered and solutions will be found that neither penalize subsidized tenants nor any other residents.



"The goal, is not to make money, it's to have better accommodations at a good price"

- Jean-Pierre Courteau, manager

Residents here know to look out for each other. Curtains that stay shut, a light that stays off, mail left in the doorway or simply *"a neighbour who we don't run into at the usual time and place,"* these are the kind of signals that residents will interpret as a call for help. It's an environment and a feeling valued by older tenants



"What's most appreciated here is security that gives the neighbourhood the feel of a close-knit community."



HABITATIONS AUX BAUX SOLEILS

INSPIRING THE DEVELOPMENT OF OTHER NON-PROFIT HOUSING GROUPS



The foundation for Les Habitations Aux Baux Soleils was poured in 1993 after more than 15 years of campaigning by activists in the Châteauguay Social Housing Committee.

The group had already won the battle to build low-income housing for the elderly, a more acceptable goal for politicians of the era. But for the ambitious activists on the housing committee, space in public housing offered little to families looking to manage their own environment.

The leitmotif of the founders was to create an environment that accommodated single-parent families, where housing was a goal and the primary objective

Uniting these families would also allow for the creation of an environment encouraging social development, popular education and self-management.

The project was strongly supported by community organizers and leadership of the CLSC, whose mandate included fighting poverty, for which the housing issue was paramount.

It was agreed from the outset that tenants would have a large role to play in the maintenance and management of Habitations Aux Baux Soleils, but that their participation would be on a voluntary basis.

Development

All tenants are automatically members of the non-profit corporation and the majority of positions on the board directors are always held by member/tenants, who have been running the housing group for 23 years, with the help from management services of the Fédération régionale des OSBL d'habitation de la Montérégie et de l'Estrie (FROHME) and community support resources.



Location
Châteauguay
46,260 inhabitants

Founded
1993

Number of units
46 apartments

Clientele
Single-parent families

Employees
1, part time

That assistance is made possible thanks to the “community support in social housing program” and has been the subject of a three-party agreement between FROHME, the health and social services network and the NPO since 2008.

Of course, Habitations Aux Baux Soleils has had its ups and downs, successes and failures, but by relying on its strengths, the non-profit has helped dozens of families to be proud of themselves, exercise control over their environment, help each other, better themselves, feel safe and to develop management and labour skills. Some have picked up a variety of interests and many mothers have returned to the labour market or to school thanks to their involvement in the corporation.



The evolution of the Habitations Aux Baux Soleils project inspired the development of seven non-profit housing groups based on the same self-management model, including Habitation Solidarité in Châteauguay, Habitation Philomène in Mercier, Habitations de la Vallée des Tisserandes in Ste. Martine and Habitation Logiciel in St. Constant.

These corporations, among others, founded the FROHME regional federation of housing non-profits in 2000 and have passed on their values to other organizations that have developed in the Roussillon regional county in subsequent years.

On the eve of its 25th anniversary, the Habitations Aux Baux Soleils has been experiencing a promising renewal

Several new families from different cultural communities, encouraged by the values of the organization, picked up

the torch passed on by the older generation with their cooperation, support and open arms.

Les Habitations Aux Baux Soleils is a proud achievement for the community. The voluntary participation of tenants in organizations like Aux Baux Soleils during general meetings and in demo-



cratic debates between tenants on the management of their homes is much admired. Everyone pitches in, from clearing snow from sidewalks to mowing the lawn, collecting rents and watching over finances.

The members of the Corporation are convened to two annual meetings, including one in the spring for the presentation of activity reports and financial statements and to elect members of the board. The September meetings remain the most popular, with the participation of 46 households to share the 46 tasks annually assigned to each unit to help with management, cohabitation and maintenance of their buildings.

This success is possible thanks to the founding values of the project and to the funding for community support resources

- Martin Bécotte, general manager, FROHME

NOUVEAUX HORIZONS

AN NPO THAT HAD EARNED THE TRUST OF THEIR FELLOW CITIZENS

The history of the retirement home in the village of Havre-aux-Maisons dates back before the 1970s. At the time it was the family home of Omer Thériault. When it was passed on to his children and partner, it became the Thériault motel.

The motel was at the time set up with 20 rooms parallel to the main road, the doors facing the road, with private bathrooms, dining room, bar and restaurant kitchen. The motel lasted more than a decade, and was then sold to Jean-Pierre Cormier. The place retained its vocation and was called the Auberge l'Islet.

In the mid-1990s, Cormier mandated liaison officer Manon Richard to conduct a feasibility study for the creation of a seniors residence. The study showed it was needed and a group of people, including the former owner, Manon Richard, and Jean Deschênes, joined the founding committee of the non-profit New Horizons group. Established on Nov. 12, 1996, New Horizons is the building tenant.

The beginnings were rough. The first to offer this type of accommodation in the archipelago, the vacancy rate remained quite high. Four people were working on it at the time

The non-profit bought the building in 2000, with the Accès Logis program contributing 50 per cent of the funding to renovate the building; the other part of the funding came from the Magdalen Islands community. The New Horizons group had earned the trust of citizens.

Eleven homes were added in a new wing in 2007, again thanks to the Accès Logis program and local partners, which shared the bill. The municipality soon approved a property-tax exemption, leaving New Horizons the responsibility to pay service taxes for sewers, water and garbage. The decision to expand allowed for improved profitability by sharing fixed costs.

The new wing featured studio apartments with mini-kitchens, more spacious private bathrooms to improve hygiene, and administration offices. Tenants can't cook in their rooms, but a counter in the dining room provides everyone with access to a microwave oven and a coffee machine.



Location
Îles de la Madeleine
12,300 inhabitants

Founded
1996

Number of units
31 apartments

Clientele
Seniors

Employees
10

The residents

The average age of residents is 90. The deans are Marie-Jeanne Poirier, who will celebrate her 102nd birthday in December 2016, and Elzéar Poirier, who turned 100 on March 2.

Within the 31 units are six couples living together. One of these couples recently celebrated 72 years of marriage!

Twenty people are on the waiting list.



Activities

A residents committee was formed to manage an activities budget. Many are religious in nature: reading the daily rosary, mass once a week. A "tea and knitting" group formed by a volunteer was added to a host of key activities such as bingo, card games, beanbag toss and weekly cribbage tournaments. Other artisans are invited over for the afternoon where knitting isn't just for fun but has a very specific purpose: handmade creations are helping raise funds to refurbish the common room. More than half the \$32,000 goal has already been met, thanks as

well to the involvement of partners and In Memoriam donations.

But what the residents love above all else are the visiting musicians

Outings are organized by the residence.

Services

Three meals a day are provided as well as a medication service. Assistance may also be provided for the laundry room. The local CISSS provides nursing care and services as required.



The staff

The board is composed of one resident, one employee, two family members of residents and three directors from the community.

The management team consists of a chief councillor who manages services to residents in collaboration with the director, who also oversees the general administration, and a chief cook. The team can count on a dozen very caring and dedicated employees for the well-being of residents.

Security

A couple stays on the grounds as night supervisors six nights a week. A day councillor stays over on the seventh night.

All rooms have two emergency alarms, one in the bathroom and one next to the bed. An alarm system protects the building and 50 per cent of the space is serviced by sprinklers. Although housing is on the ground floor and each has a door leading to the outside, New Horizons has made this a priority issue for 2016-2017. Emergency evacuation drills are carried out regularly and the evacuation plan was recently reviewed. The call and response list is now updated and first responders as well as volunteer firefighters are stationed near the building. In addition, a generator was installed at the beginning of the year to ensure greater safety for residents.

UN TOIT POUR TOUS

A CONCRETE EXAMPLE OF CHANGE INITIATED BY INDIVIDUALS FROM THE COMMUNITY



This is the story of a struggle that lasted nearly 25 years for some tenants, who now live in a beautiful apartment on rue des Ateliers, close to the Rosemont métro and Marc-Favreau library.

A long struggle that led to the creation of community housing. *"It wasn't the artists who lived there, but the city blue-collar workers who worked in the mechanical workshops before they were relocated that came up with the street name Ateliers,"* recounted one tenant with a grin.

The Petite-Patrie housing committee of the Petite-Patrie housing development round table began to demand social housing on the land that would be left vacant after the city announced in the early 1980s that it would relocate its workshops elsewhere.

Thus was born a great mobilization of citizens in Montreal which created, among other things, the *Un toit pour tous* (A roof for all) non-profit housing group.

In 1985, the Petite-Patrie housing development round table became the engine behind the project on the municipal workshop site, demanding the construction of 1,000 units. Several obstacles arose along the way, but committee members never let up: the relocation of workshops was postponed two times and the land had to be decontaminated, which meant cleanup funding had to be found before you could even think about building. Ultimately, the non-profit turned to the city for funding, otherwise the vast project would never have been possible.


Several citizen mobilization campaigns took place during all these years, ranging from the mailing of 1,000 postcards to politicians, signed by the residents of the neighbourhood, the occupation of politicians' offices, public assemblies, solidarity campaigns and marches calling for community housing in the neighbourhood, participation in political de-


"The committee brought together neighbourhood residents and got us to play with Lego blocks, that's how we made the project development plan"

- Lucille Perron,
one of the first activists and tenants

 **Location**
Montréal
1,988,000 inhabitants

 **Founded**
2002

 **Number of units**
60 apartments including:
10 for people with reduced mobility or physical disabilities
30 benefit from the rent supplement program

 **Clientele**
Families with children, single parents, couples, singles

 **Employees**
1, part time

bates, the publication of briefing documents, the construction of an interactive model project on the site, etc. These are just some examples of the sustained mobilization of the Petite-Patrie housing-development round table.

The partnership between the *Un toit pour tous* non-profit, the round table and the technical resource group ensured the project came to life.

Finally, in June 2010 the first tenants, including several members of the committee of applicants for social housing in La Petite-Patrie, entered their new homes that had been won through constant mobilization



Several residents had been involved in the project for over 25 years, never giving up despite the obstacles. The first real-estate project initiated by *Un toit pour tous* is called "Les Habitations des Ateliers verts."

"We maintain the land, we recycle, we clear snow, we're home"

- Lucille Perron, one of the first activists and tenants

The project has a large room used primarily for meetings of the board and committees of *Un toit pour tous* and by other community groups in the area.



The project is a concrete example of social change initiated by individuals from the community, who go on to become activists, then agents of social progress.



Particularités

Project Green: Novoclimat-certified project, geothermal wells, centralized domestic hot water loop, heat recovery of waste water, roof structure strengthened for the future installation of solar panels, access to composter for vegetable matter, among other measures



Web
untoitpourtous.ca



Financial partners
SHQ, SCHL, City of Montréal, Rénovation Québec, Caisse populaire, Hydro-Québec, Gaz Métro



Federation
FOHM

CENTRE DES ÂÎNÉS DE GATINEAU

A COMPLETE LIVING, ACTIVE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR SENIORS

The Centre d'Amitié de Gatineau, later renamed the Centre des aînés de Gatineau (Gatineau Seniors Centre), was founded in November 1977. It was born in the basement of the St. Jean-Marie-Vianney de Gatineau cathedral.

The Seniors Centre moved in September 1982 and has undergone an expansion and diversification of its activities over the years. In 2010, the Centre acquired a strong foundation and a space that could accommodate its needs through the acquisition of the very cathedral it had called home decades earlier.

"There was a request to provide activities for seniors and we were limited in our space. That's when we learned that the church was for sale. We just bought the church and the adjacent land," explained Sylvain Germain, director of the Centre.

It was in late 2012 that the new Faubourg Jean-Marie-Vianney, a six-storey residential block next to the cathedral, was finalized. It was designed specifically for independent and semi-independent seniors.

An innovative community housing project

This avant-garde project is a complex of impressive scale that encourages an active, safe and comfortable life. There are

102 one-bedroom units and 28 two-bedroom apartments; 91 tenants receive rent subsidies.

«It's a nice mix between people who are better off and those who have less; we don't notice the difference»


- Sylvain Germain, general manager

In addition, 12 units are specifically designed for people with reduced mobility.


The Faubourg project, which included the renovation of the cathedral, was completed at a cost of nearly \$22 million, thanks to the support of all levels of government, including \$7 million in federal funds, \$2.6 million from Quebec's Accès Logis program and contributions from the city and the Caisse populaire Desjardins de Gatineau. The project followed the energy saving standards of the Novoclimat program

 **Location**
Gatineau
274,000 inhabitants

 **Founded**
2012

 **Number of units**
130 apartments
91 benefit from the rent supplement program

 **Clientele**
Seniors

 **Web**
www.ainesdegatineau.ca

At home with the residents

Tenant Petra Régimbald leads a very active lifestyle. Her 3½ is a living space she has quickly grown to love, especially for its ease of access and the housekeeping services offered.



"I love it when I come home"

"I stayed in a cooperative before, but I had stairs to climb and there were collective chores to do. At first, I didn't want to leave at all, but I wasn't able to maintain everything and I could hurt myself falling. My children told me that I should take advantage of this opportunity," she said.



An active living space

Le Faubourg is a complete living space, an active and secure environment where seniors are far from alone. The vast space of the old cathedral offers an active and integrated living environment for residents through divided activity rooms, including a cafeteria offering lunches.

Various activities, multidisciplinary training, clubs and committees allow residents to connect with members of their community and stay active. The Centre's facilities provide an important socialization space that attracts seniors daily from throughout the Gatineau area.

"This kind of project, incorporating housing for seniors and the structure of an entire community centre, is quite unique in Quebec"

- Sylvain Germain, general manager



"We have all kinds of people coming to the workshop. After retirement, all titles disappear and among our woodworkers you'll find former lawyers, notaries, accountants and bankers," Mr. Germain noted.

The sale of vacuum-sealed meals prepared on site, specifically meat pies, is another social business project. *"We have no choice, social economy enterprises enable us to have financial support, without which it would be hard to make everything work,"* said Mr. Germain.

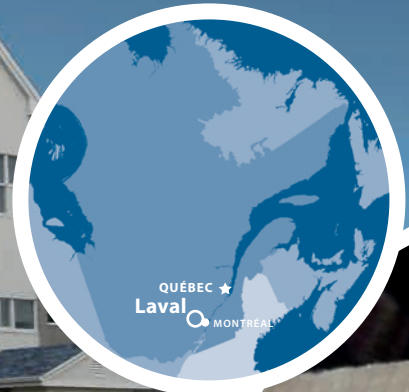
With 30,000 square feet, there's no shortage of space. The Centre offers a wide range of activities of all kinds six days a week: watercolour painting workshop, crafts room, woodworking and wood carving shop, games room, library, tai chi, zumba, knitting club and even an internal newsletter. These are just a few of the activities taking place at the Faubourg and are services open to all Gatineau seniors.

Social economy projects

The diversification of the Centre also includes social economy businesses, including a catering service and a carpentry workshop.

The Centre is a real high-level workspace that allows seniors to produce all kinds of wooden pieces that are sold in local craft markets. Among the pieces that command attention: funeral urns.

HABITATIONS DES REQUÉRANTS ET REQUÉRANTES DE LAVAL MUTUAL SUPPORT AT ITS BEST



Built in fall of 1994, the project arose out of the demands of activist groups for the construction of social housing and the defence of social rights, notably for people struggling with mental health problems.

A history of struggle

The origins of the Requéranants et les Requéranantes project go back to the 1970s and '80s. At that time, the Laval ACEF (Association coopérative d'économie familiale), which fights for the right to live without debt, was offering various free services for the economically vulnerable. Its activities centred on education, organizing and the defence of the interests of the population in all aspects of consumption and debt.

During the same period, a coalition of Laval community groups (Association pour la défense des droits sociaux, Comité logement, Association Parents Unique), representing a broad range of social justice activists, formed the Requéranants et les Requéranantes committee to demand the construction of social housing in Laval. This project was promoted by the FRAPRU (Popular Action Front in Urban Redevelopment) housing coalition at provincial level. Highlighting the very low stock of public housing, cooperatives and non-profit housing in the territory, various groups challenged municipal governments to act via demonstrations and occupations.



"The Requéranants et les Requéranantes committee has been established to reflect on, discuss and debate the political situation of social housing in Laval," said Claude Gingras, who was an ACEF coordinator for 15 years and still lives in the building.

In May 1985, ACEF Laval published the first edition of its newspaper, which recorded the history of the struggle. The newspaper appeared 23 times until the fall of 1990.

Despite organizational difficulties, ACEF continues its mobilization and community support activities. At the same time, after having made four requests to the

Location
Laval
401,000 inhabitants

Founded
1993

Number of units
16 apartments

Clientele
People with low income, people struggling with mental health problems, single-parent families

Employees
3, part time

Société d'habitation du Québec, the organization finally received a grant to begin construction of Habitations Les Requérants et les Requérantes Laval. With additional help from a technical resource group, the project had \$1 million budget.



“The poor first”

Months later, the first tenants made their entrance in the non-profit housing project, whose mandate was to accommodate low-income households and people with mental health problems.

“It was above all for the poor. In the application to the SHQ, low income counted for 35 points (in the scoring). Mental health problems, that was only five points,” noted Gingras.

“We decided to build a non-profit housing organization and not a cooperative, which would mean tenants are involved in maintenance, in addition to the management. For seniors and those struggling with mental health issues, it was too complicated”

In the non-profit, tenants form committees and get involved in the management of the building. Mobilization outings are organized regularly (for example, for the defence of welfare and mental health rights). For many years, Gingras welcomed the 20 tenants into his kitchen at general meetings, two or three times a year. Discussions were always political, but also related to the collection of rent, from a collective mutual-aid perspective.

“Unpaid rent problems are managed on a case-by-case basis. We were against the eviction of tenants during my chairmanship of the board of directors. I was convinced that we were able to handle it”

- Claude Gingras, tenant

For the first eight years, the board was composed of a majority of tenants and, to support them in management, two external members (a social worker and a lawyer). Since 2005, other external members were added, and two tenants remain on the board.

A community support worker is present a few hours each week. He is employed by The FOH3L (a federation of housing non-profits in Laval, Laurentides and the Lanaudière), with a grant from CISSS (Integrated Centre for



Health and Social Services). Moreover, apart from the tax clinic and “bonne boîte bonne bouffe” project (low-cost fruit and vegetable basket delivery), entertainment activities are organized for tenants (such as a sugar shack outing, summer barbecue, corn roast, Christmas dinner, etc.).

“The challenge now is to maintain the involvement of tenants more than 20 years after the project was launched”

- Simon Farago, FOH3L's community organizer



CENTRE D'AMITIÉ AUTOCHTONE DE VAL-D'OR

KIJATÉ – BUILDING 24 SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS FOR ABORIGINAL FAMILIES

Kijaté, meaning “full of sun” in the Anishinaabe language, is a response to the housing crisis that has been raging for years in Val-d’Or.

The Native Friendship Centre in Val-d’Or is a crossroads of urban services, an environment and a cultural anchor for First Peoples, dedicated to their well-being, justice and social inclusion. It promotes harmonious coexistence in the community. As the leader of an engaged Indigenous civil society, the centre actively contributes to the social, communal, economic and cultural development of its community through innovative and proactive strategies. As a member of the vast movement of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in Québec and Canada, the Val-d’Or centre emphasizes the social economy as a durable economic development tool in addition to providing jobs to nearly 100 people, mostly women. More than half of the staff are First Nations members.

Combined with the housing crisis that has persisted in Val-d’Or since 2005, the growth of the urban Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada data show a boom of 322 per cent growth in the Aboriginal population in Val-d’Or census agglomeration between 1996 and 2011), prejudice and racism against people from First Nations communities unfortunately remain very common and greatly affect the quality of life of Aboriginal people in town. The Friendship Centre has also identified, after conducting a survey within its departments, nearly 125 individuals and/or Indigenous families who have urgent needs for affordable housing on the Val-d’Or territory. In most cases, these marginalized people currently inhabit housing that is substandard and/or too small for their family.



These conditions affect their health and that of their children.

The *Kijaté* Native Friendship Centre project in Val d’Or will construct 24 social and community housing units.

More than just a social housing project, Kijaté is part of a truly socially innovative approach based on collective action and citizen mobilization

This initiative is specifically tied to the urban vision of Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, which encourages speaking out, taking action and collective decision-making. The full exercise of the rights to education, to health, to

security of the person, equality, non-discrimination and the right to self-determination are all affected by the urgency of ensuring housing rights.

The innovative nature of *Kijaté* comes from a culturally relevant approach that requires an understanding of the historical, economic, political, legal, social and community contexts of Aboriginal people, and is a new response to the challenges and needs of the community. The *Kijaté* project is dedicated to low-income Indigenous families who have special needs for integrating and adapting to life in the city. More concretely, communal spaces will be developed to allow the deployment of frontline services from the Friendship Centre, in particular by organizing collective cooking activities, various workshops, community training and psychosocial services.

The *Kijaté* project is the result of an Aboriginal community process that began in 2009 and led to an agreement by the SHQ to support the construction of 24 units, with the conditional commitment confirmed in November 2015.

Members of the community have been waiting patiently, but with great hope, for seven years for the start of construction, planned for the fall of 2016

In addition to providing access to housing and culturally appropriate and safe primary care services for Aboriginals, *Kijaté* promotes activities aimed at developing self-reliance, improving living conditions and social integration of urban Aboriginals via community support and through the development of social connections.

Kijaté will contribute to engaging the urban Aboriginal community in a social transformation so that everyone can become active and satisfied citizens, reflecting their culture and interacting as equals



Housing non-profit organizations in Quebec



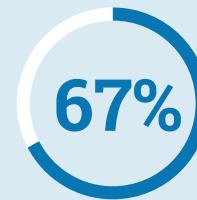
A citizens' response to the needs
of the vulnerable and the excluded



of NPO tenants
earn below
\$20,000
a year



of NPO tenants
are
women



of NPO tenants
are above
55 years old



of NPOs
offer community
support activities



of NPO buildings
offer less than
20 housing units



of NPO tenants
used to be
homeless

The Réseau québécois des OSBL d'habitation
gather, support and represent
Quebec's regional federations of housing NPOs



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