

## **First Nations Housing Crisis**

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The FSIN is calling for more funds to help with the First Nation's housing crisis.

The federal government provided 37 Saskatchewan First Nations with 21.3 million dollars as part of their stimulus package.

FSIN Vice Chief Delbert Wapass says while the money is welcomed, it falls short of addressing the real issues.

Wapass says they are calling on the government to properly consult with them to develop a long term sustainable housing strategy.

He says they need at least 6 thousand new units to solve the housing shortage. He expects that to cost anywhere from 750 million to a billion dollars.

Source:

<http://www.saskatoonhomepage.ca>

## **First Nation hoping to build houses in Regina**

A Saskatchewan First Nation that has more members living in Regina than on reserve says it wants to build houses in the city.

The Cowessess First Nation, located 170 kilometres east of Regina, has about 80 per cent of its 3,400 members living off reserve.

The band says more than 1,000 members live in Regina, a city where a shortage of low-income housing has been an ongoing problem.

According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, average rents went up 13 per cent in the area last year. CMHC also reports that apartment vacancy rates in Regina have been below one per cent this year.

Across Canada, housing on reserves is a federal responsibility. But Cowessess is also looking to the Saskatchewan government for help.

Spokesman Alvin Delorme Jr. said the First Nation has asked the province for money to help build affordable rental units on vacant lots in the inner city.

He argues rents in North Central Regina are now so high, many families simply can't afford it.

"There hasn't been any construction in Regina in the North Central neighborhood," he said. "There have been developments but they've been new developments for higher rent homes."

The plan calls for band members to be given preference for housing in any new units, but after that, any low-income family could apply, Delorme said.

Hali Lerat, a single mother of four who's on a house hunt, said she hopes the Cowessess plan works out.

"It would be great," she said. "I would be able to have ... somewhere nice for my children to come home to."

Right now, Lerat doesn't have a home to call her own. While her children stay with relatives outside the city, she spends every day looking for a house, she said.

"It's wearing on me," she added.

Delorme said the province hasn't said if it will provide money for the band's proposal.

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