



CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

# PROJECT PROFILE

## Women Building Futures Training Centre

Edmonton, Alberta

Women Building Futures (WBF) is meeting two community needs with a renovated warehouse in Edmonton : 1.) Affordable housing for women and 2.) Opportunities for women interested in careers in the trades.

WBF is a non-profit society based in Edmonton that offers lower-income and Aboriginal women 16 weeks of pre-apprentice training in the construction, oil and gas trades. The program, Journeywoman Start, has been enrolling 60 women a year. With its new training centre in the renovated warehouse, it is expected that up to 400 women will be enrolled.

### The Affordable Housing Solution

The renovations to the warehouse added 42 affordable housing units for lower-income women who have been accepted into Journeywomen Start. Eighteen of the units are for designated for single mothers. Each unit can accommodate a single mother with up to four children.

## Highlights

Women Building Futures offers affordable housing and training opportunities for women interested in careers in the trades in a renovated warehouse. Renovating the existing building saved on construction costs and provided on-the-job training.

**Client group:** Lower-income and Aboriginal women seeking careers in the trades

**Developer:** Women Building Futures

**Number of units:** 42 affordable housing units, of which 18 are for single mothers and their children. The project includes a pre-apprenticeship training centre.

**Tenure:** Rental

**Who was involved?** Women Building Futures; CMHC; Western Economic Diversification Canada (for the training centre); the Government of Alberta; the City of Edmonton; the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund; community and industry partners

By renovating instead of building a new centre, WBF saved on construction costs, was able to use the renovations as on-the-job training and recycled a building. The renovation added two floors for the affordable housing units and increased the size of the building to 4,645 m<sup>2</sup> (50,000 sq. ft.) from 2,787 m<sup>2</sup> (30,000 sq. ft.).

In addition to pre-apprenticeship training, the WBF offers counselling support, child care, financial aid, personal coaching,

and relocation services for individuals who are moving to Edmonton from small communities, northern reserves and settlements.

The project, which opened in January, 2008, received more than \$3.4 million from CMHC and the government of Alberta through the Affordable Housing Initiative for the affordable housing units. Another \$1,181,292 came from Western

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Economic Diversification Canada for the training facility. As well, the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund contributed more than \$1.4 million to the project.

In 2006, WBF started the She Works Fundraising Campaign, to raise money to buy the warehouse; to set up a scholarship program for applicants to the pre-apprenticeship training and to establish an endowment fund to support operating costs for the renovated building.

**CMHC Contact**

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or another representative of CMHC's Affordable Housing Centre  
[http://www.cmhc.ca/en/corp/cous/cous\\_023.cfm](http://www.cmhc.ca/en/corp/cous/cous_023.cfm)

**Additional Information**

Women Building Futures. To read about the affordable housing component, select "About Us" from the top menu and then select "Affordable Housing".  
<http://www.womenbuildingfutures.com/cms/>