



Session #107:
Innovations in
Aboriginal Housing:
Some Reflections

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Aboriginal Housing Some Reflections

- Background on Wigwamen Incorporated
- Overview of Wigwamen's "Kenwood Residences" project
- Financial challenges faced in development of Aboriginal housing, and how we've overcome them
- Tenant supports

Wigwamen Incorporated - overview

- Oldest and largest urban Aboriginal non-profit housing corporation
- Staff of 20, and 9 person volunteer Board
- Registered charity

Wigwamen Incorporated - portfolio

- Portfolio of 511 units currently
- Includes 470 units in Toronto, and 41 units in Ottawa
- Purchasing 145 unit building in April, 2016

A Brief History of the Kenwood Residences

- Site intensification study in 2007
- 2010 RFP from Aboriginal Rental Program – GTA
- First tender, September 2012

Financial Challenges – Capital Costs

- First Bids almost \$1,000,000 over budget
- Significant redesign
- Second tender, April 2013
- Second bids almost \$555,000 over budget

Overcoming Capital Cost Challenges

- Still more redesign
- Additional funding from City of Toronto
- Additional funding from MBDC

Financial Challenges – Rent Supplements

- Low incomes of Aboriginal applicant households
- Transfer of rent supplements
- Additional rent supplements



What did we build?

Original building



demolished



Foundation: outside and in



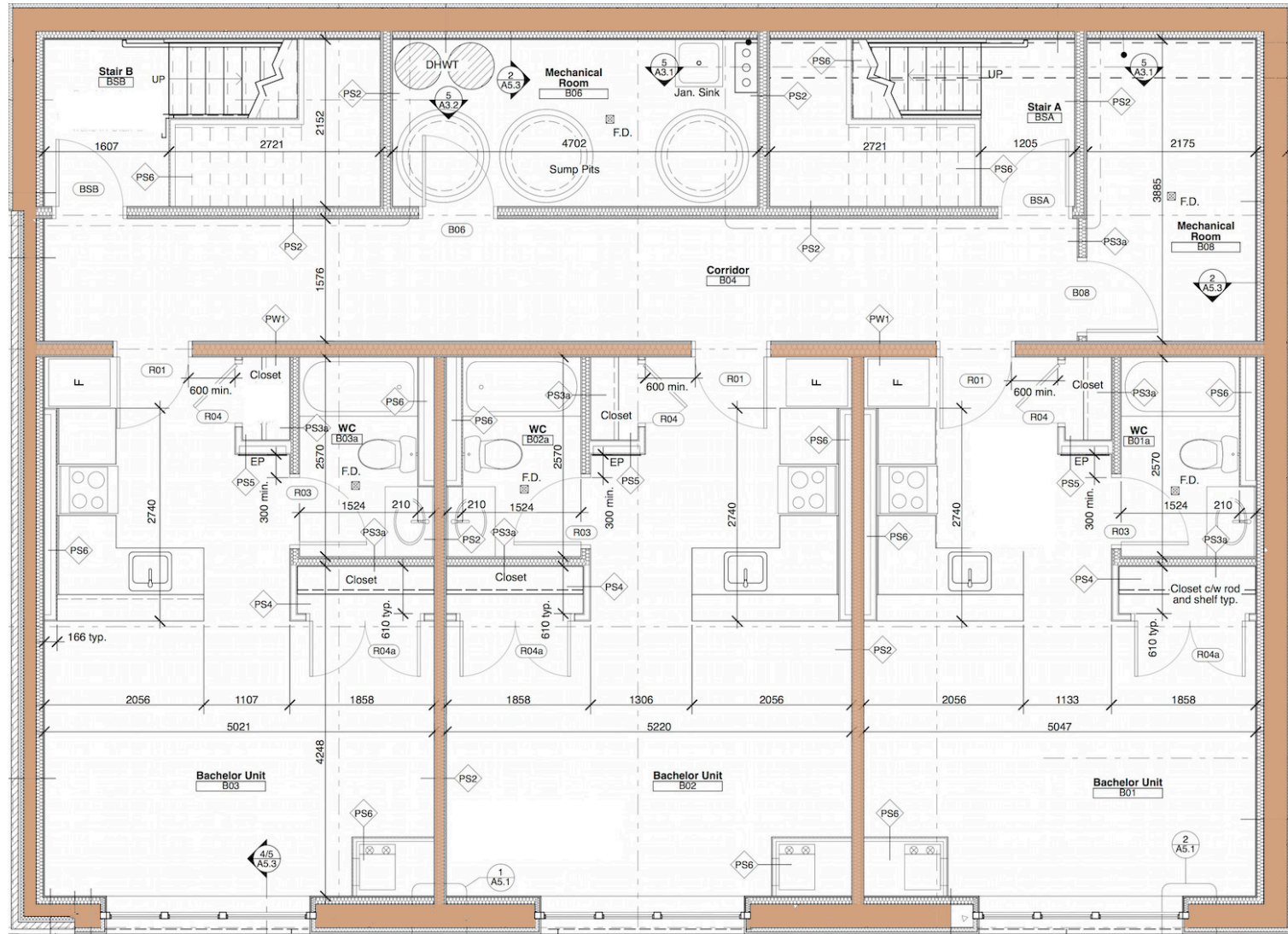
Exterior: spray foam and brick



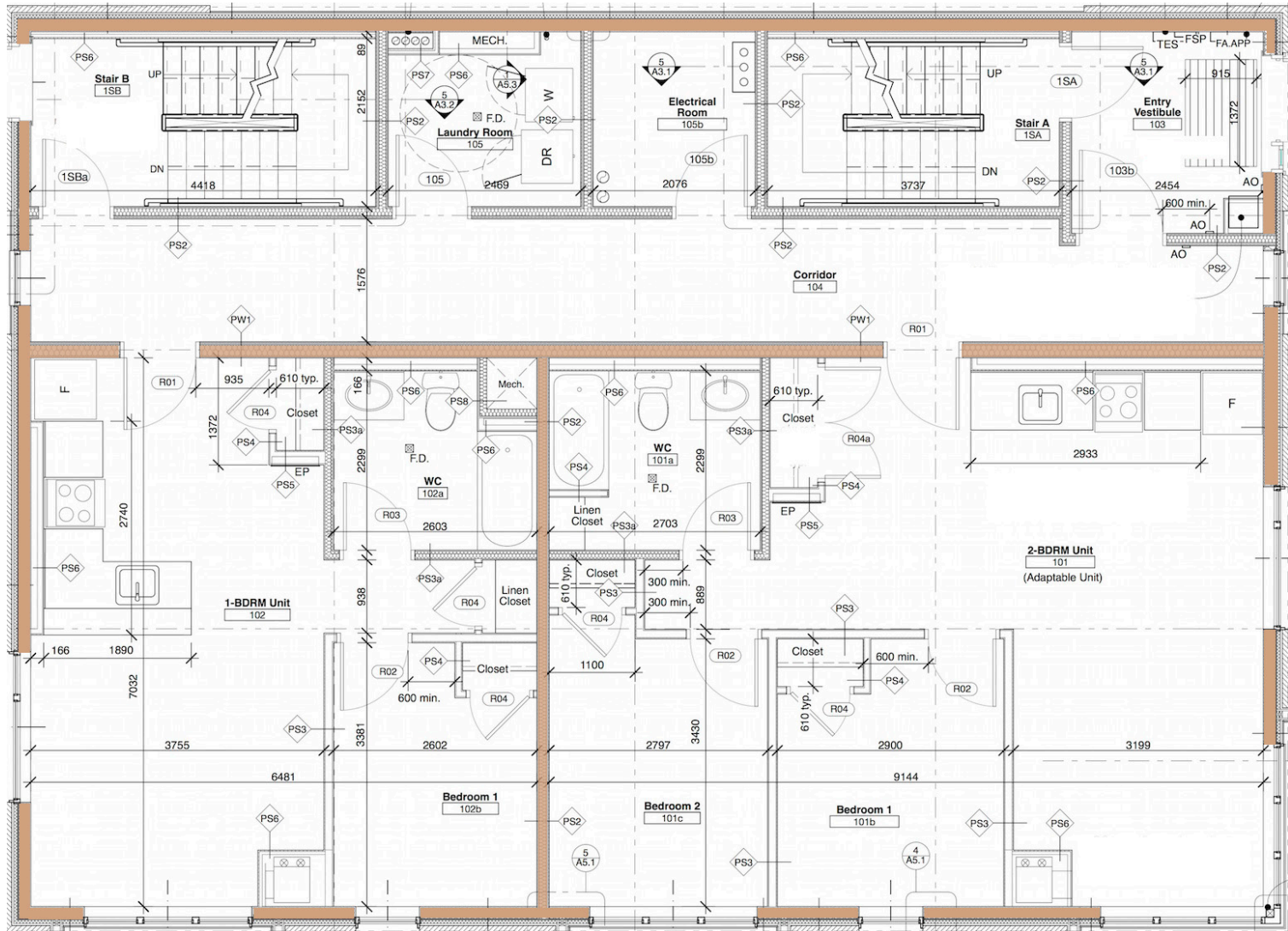
Complete!



Basement level layout

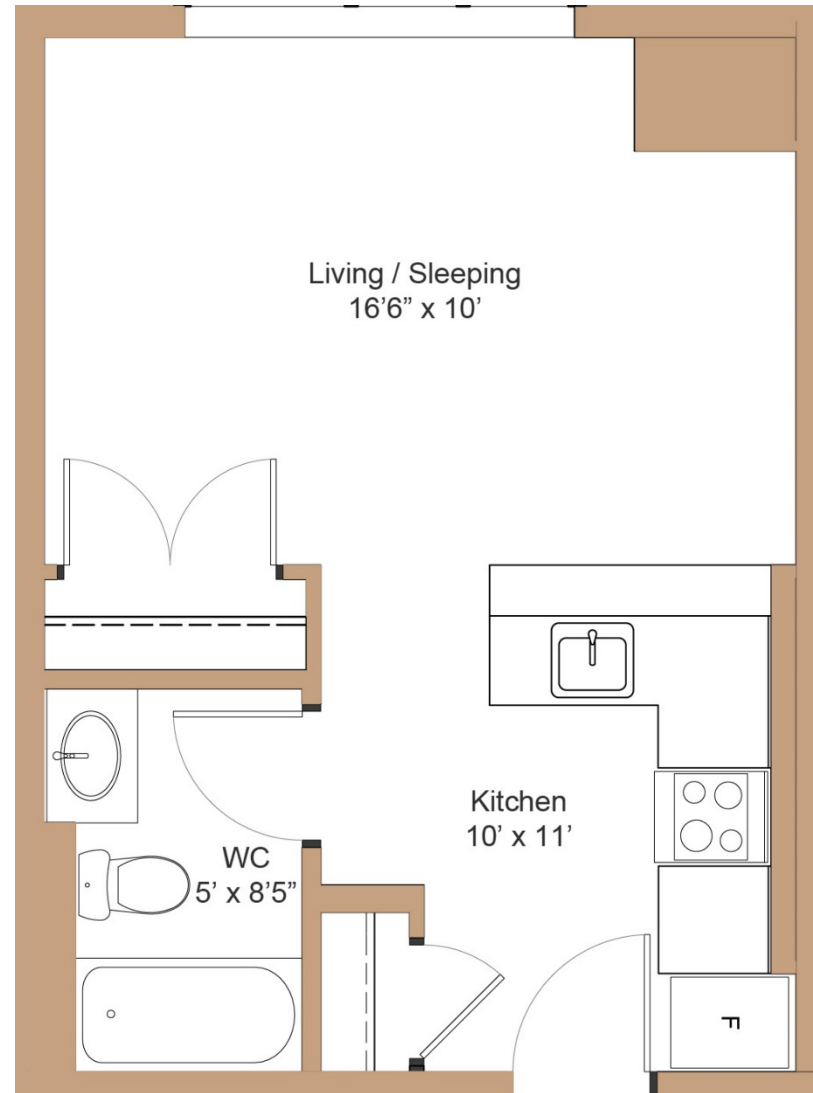


1st, 2nd, 3rd levels layout



Studio

- Three studio units
- All on basement level
- 452 sq. ft.



Studio

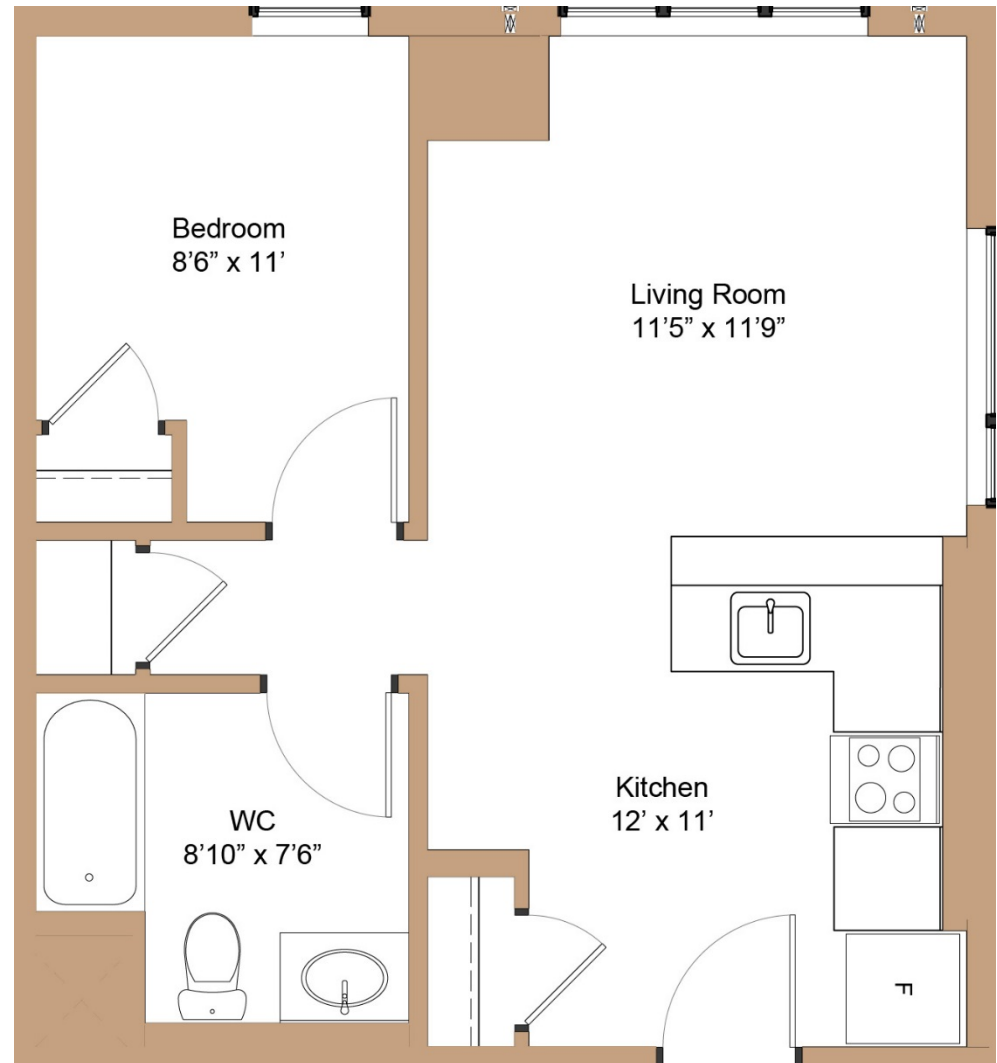
- Generous sized windows result in bright apartments



- Energy efficient lighting throughout

One bedroom

- Three, one bedroom units
- One on each of 1st, 2nd and 3rd floors
- 554 sq. ft.



One bedroom



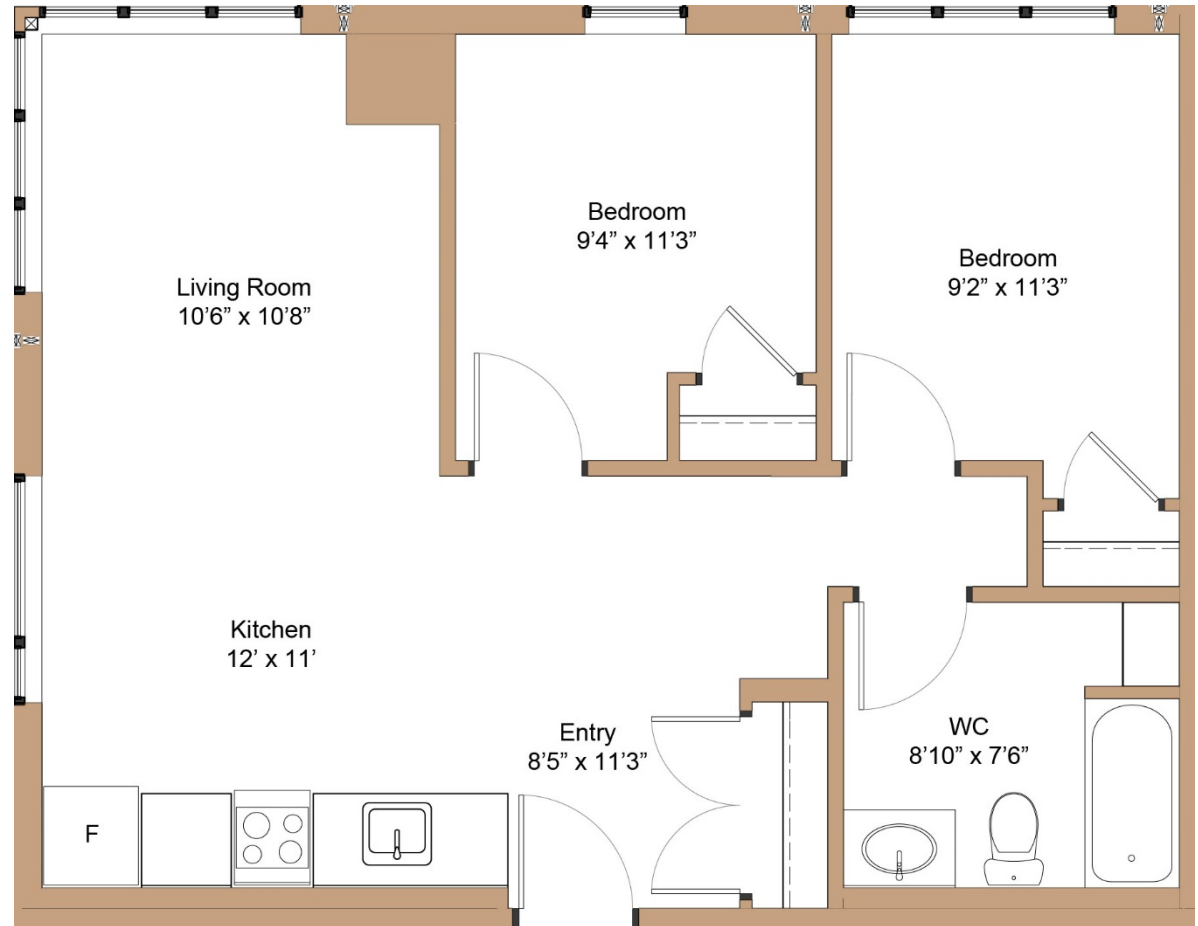
- Splashy accent walls

- All units sprinklered



Two bedroom

- Three, two bedroom units
- On 1st, 2nd, 3rd floors
- 758 sq. ft.



Two bedroom



- Low or no VOC materials used

- Two bedroom units can be adapted for users of wheelchairs



Unit type summary

Kenwood Residences Unit Types

No. Units	Unit Type	Average Sq. Ft.
3	Studio	452
3	1 bedroom	554
3	2 bedroom	758
Total	9	

Need for Tenant Supports

- We are not a supportive housing agency
- Impact of pervasive poverty, racism, discrimination and trauma results in need for supports

Tenant Support Staff

- We do have legacy funding for a Tenant Counsellor
- We have also sought and obtained funding for an Aboriginal Housing Support Counsellor and a Transitional Housing Worker

What Kinds of Supports are Provided?

- Links with agencies such as the Furniture Bank
- Liaison with OW and ODSP case workers
- Basic computer training
- Referrals for counselling

Workshops

- Community Engagement Session on “Healthy Babies Healthy Children”
- Tenant Rights and Responsibilities with Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- Centennial College “Post-Secondary Information Workshop”
- Culturally focused workshops such as quilting, mask making, regalia, drum, and moccasin making

Other Programs

- Wigwamen “Children’s Book Club”
- Back-to-School Backpacks
- Wigwamen Post-Secondary Scholarship

Questions?

Comments?