



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2nd Session

Day 21

18th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

Pages 659 – 700

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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(Great Slave)

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	659
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	659
53-18(2) – Ministerial Policing Priorities Delivered to RCMP (Sebert)	659
54-18(2) – World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Abernethy)	659
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS.....	660
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Vanthuyne).....	660
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Nakimayak)	660
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Green).....	661
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Thompson).....	661
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (Testart).....	661
Supporting Seniors to Age in Place (O'Reilly).....	662
Definition of Housing Core Need (Beaulieu)	662
World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (McNeely).....	663
Recognition of the Late Joseph Sabourin (Nadli).....	663
Fort McPherson Participation in Relay for Life 2016 (Blake).....	663
RETURNS TO ORAL QUESTIONS.....	664
RECOGNITION OF VISITORS IN THE GALLERY	665
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	666
ORAL QUESTIONS.....	667
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	674
MOTIONS	674
Motion 19-18(2) – Need for a New Housing Strategy (Green)	674
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS	681
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	699
ORDERS OF THE DAY	700

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, June 15, 2016****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Mr. McNeely, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, colleagues. Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 53-18(2):
MINISTERIAL POLICING PRIORITIES
DELIVERED TO RCMP

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, this government has made the commitment through its mandate to support the RCMP and communities in their efforts to strengthen partnerships to prevent and respond to violence. The annual policing priorities which I set for the RCMP support this work. As in previous years, the priorities for 2016-17 continue to focus on the need for policing plans to be developed collaboratively by the RCMP with each community in the Northwest Territories. The priorities now go further and direct the RCMP to also have action plans for each community which will assist with targeting and bringing together resources from multiple sources. The majority of communities have identified stopping drugs and bootlegging activities as a priority. The mutual trust gained from building the community action plans has resulted in the support the police need in order to see results. Mr. Speaker, in April and March alone, the RCMP stopped almost 235 litres of alcohol from illegal distribution in seven communities. Also in April, there were several stops of vehicles outside of Fort Providence resulting in arrests and the seizures of large amounts of cocaine, marijuana, and liquid codeine. Information from these arrests led to a significant seizure in Yellowknife where 1300 fentanyl pills and four kilograms of cocaine along with other drugs and over \$80,000 in cash were successfully taken off the streets. Additionally, this year's priorities outline for the RCMP to continue to advance community-based solutions to change behaviours with youth, and change attitudes towards family violence. They do not do their work alone.

Community justice committees made up of volunteers from within the community and coordinated by the coordinator positions funded by the community justice and community policing division play a significant role in this partnership, and ultimately, the safety of our citizens. We are on the right track with the RCMP 2016-17 priorities. I applaud the work of the RCMP and the Department of Justice over the past years to enhance the quality of life in our communities. I look forward to continued progress this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 54-18(2):
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize June 15th as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Colleagues and visitors in the gallery are wearing purple to promote awareness of this important day, and I'd like to recognize the significant amount of purple in the building today. Mr. Speaker, our work towards eliminating elder abuse is done in partnership with the NWT Seniors' Society and the NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults. I would encourage all Members to read the Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults: a Five Year Strategy for the Northwest Territories, 2015 to 2020, prepared by the NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults. This strategy focuses on four priorities with eight principles that all contribute to the elimination of elder abuse. I look forward to following the strategy as it takes shape over the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, elder abuse can come in many forms including financial, emotional, physical neglect, and sexual abuse. Unfortunately, these types of abuse are too common in our communities. The NWT Seniors' Society Information Line data shows that of the 152 calls they responded to in 2015-16, three were related to senior safety and 21 calls were related to elder abuse. Elders have the right to be safe and healthy in their own homes and in their communities. They also have the right to make decisions about their money, belongings, and the care they would like to receive. We have been working with the NWT Seniors' Society to develop

screening tools to detect situations of abuse of older adults. Over the coming months, we will be piloting the use of these tools in our programs as a concrete action toward supporting improved detection of situations of abuse by frontline providers. If you are an elder who is being abused, talk with a trusted friend or a family member. If you are an older person who is being abused, ask privately if you need help. Help is also available from the RCMP and other professionals in your community. Mr. Speaker, I would like to encourage anyone who witnesses elder abuse to call the Family Violence Crisis Line at 1-866-223-7775, or the Seniors' Information Line at 1-800-661-0878. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today, I, too, rise. As I mentioned earlier in this sitting June is Senior Citizens' Month in the Northwest Territories. As part of that, today, June 15th, as previously mentioned, is another special occasion for our seniors and elders. The United Nations General Assembly in Resolution 66/127 designated June 15th as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. This represents the one day of the year for the whole world to voice its opposition and resistance to the abuse and suffering that is too often inflicted upon our elders. Mr. Speaker, the world's population is aging, and in the near future, the numbers of elders will begin to surpass those of young people. As that trend continues, the problem of elder abuse becomes a greater issue affecting more and more of the population. World Health Organization data indicates that between four and six per cent of elders around the world suffer some sort of abuse, a large part of which goes in reported.

Senior Citizens' Month is a time to set aside for all of us to recognize and honour the seniors and elders in our communities. On this day, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, gatherings and events will be happening across the globe to raise awareness and opposition to abuse of elders. In the Northwest Territories, we can make a difference in our own communities by celebrating and honouring our elders to make sure that those elders are safe, secure, and protected. Mr. Speaker, as I shared in my previous statement on seniors, I am sure each of us has had the occasion to be grateful and appreciative of an elder in our life, whether it's a lesson we were taught, a skill that was passed

down, a language or value practice that was gifted to us. For each of us, our seniors and elders have offered us the gifts, knowledge, and values that make us who we are today. The lives lived by our elders created the foundation for the world in which we now live. Their legacy and gift to us is that we live in a free and prosperous country that many call the best country in the world. Mr. Speaker, I urge everyone in this Assembly and all residents of the Northwest Territories to mark World Elder Abuse Awareness Day by celebrating, respecting, and thanking our elders for their contributions to our world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will also speak on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Mr. Speaker, with my colleagues, I would like to recognize World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, first launched ten years ago by the United Nations. This is not only a matter of public health and human rights, Mr. Speaker. Our actions and attitudes will shape the territory that our residents age in. As set out in the government's mandate, we will make sure that the elders and seniors get the care and support they need. That includes developing community-based supports for aging in place, building a territorial and regulatory framework for long-term care, expanding long-term care and palliative-care options, and building more senior support independent living units will help the Northwest Territories make sure that our elders and seniors get the care and support that they need. But those are not enough, Mr. Speaker. Aging in place will help elders and seniors remain in their own homes and communities for as long as possible, but our own attitudes and actions also have a role to play alongside government programs, and the people of the Northwest Territories must continue to build communities that bring together people of all ages. We all have a role to play in our communities, Mr. Speaker, and as younger people, we have the responsibility to respect our elders, to care for our elders, and learn from them, and to speak out against elder abuse. That can mean speaking out against individual cases, Mr. Speaker, but it can also mean taking preventative action, making sure elder abuse doesn't happen in the first place, by working with each other and through the program set out in the government's mandate to foster strong, healthy families and strong, healthy communities. Thank you to the elders who continue to guide us. You are the foundation of who we are today. God bless each and every one of you. Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, most of us love and respect the elders in our lives, yet abuse of this vulnerable and growing population is a problem in the NWT and all across the country. Almost three-quarters of older adults surveyed in the NWT in 2010 and then again in 2015 see abuse of themselves or their peers as a problem in their community. What is abuse in this context? The World Health Organization says it's a single or repeated act or a lack of appropriate action occurring with any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm and distress to an older person. It's a sad fact that all across Canada elders are most likely to be victimized by those who are closest to them, namely, their own adult children. Elder abuse can take many forms, but financial abuse and neglect are the most common forms here in the NWT. It's important to note that overcrowded houses, poverty, and the legacy of residential school experience can make matters worse here. The end result of any and all abuse is the same. It compromises the dignity, independence, health, and security of elders. It diminishes and frightens them. It's not what any of us want for our parents or for ourselves. The information I've quoted here comes from the report the Minister mentioned, Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults. It was completed by the NWT Network to prevent the abuse of older adults in November last year. The network has created a five-year strategic plan to make seniors safe in their own homes and communities. There are 20 recommendations in four areas to accomplish this vision. We all have a role to play in preventing elder abuse and creating safe, secure, and caring communities. Naming and speaking out about the abuse of older adults is one of the first steps to prevent it, and that's what today is all about. As Members of the Legislative Assembly, we have a special role to play. We can advocate for continued data collection so that we better understand the problem, and we can use this information to respond to the abuse of older adults in both policy and legislation. I will have questions for the Minister responsible for Seniors. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MR. THOMPSON: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It has been a great opportunity to be more aware of events and special days that occur throughout the year. This

past week was one of these times. Today, I as well will be speaking about World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. Mr. Speaker, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day is marked each year on June 15th as an official United Nation International Day acknowledging the significance of elder abuse as the public health and human rights issue. Since 2006, communities have used this day to raise the visibility of elder abuse by sharing information about abuse and neglect, and promoting resources and services that can help increase seniors' safety and well-being. Abuse of elders remains a private matter, and unfortunately, it is well-hidden from the public view. Mr. Speaker, elder abuse is a universal problem. It is prevalent everywhere. Abuse can occur anywhere by anyone, but is frequently, it is family that abuses their elders. Raising awareness and prevention of elder abuse requires the involvement of everyone. Public education and awareness are important elements in preventing abuse and neglect. The aim of such effort is to inform the public about the various types of abuse, how to identify the signs, and the symptoms of abuse where help can be obtained. As important as this day is, I believe that we must respect our elders, as they are our future and our past and our foundation of where we are today. Mr. Speaker, today in Fort Simpson, the health promotion unit is working with Bompas Elementary School to promote awareness to the youth. After the presentation, they are planning to walk over to the long-term care facility to have tea with the elders. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to see this happening in my community. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to stress that we need to respect our elders, take the time to speak with them, and most importantly, listen to their wise advice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON
WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, June 15th is world elder abuse day, and I want to spend some time today to discuss this issue that affects one of the most vulnerable communities in the North and the world. It is a natural part of our heritage as Northerners to show reverence for our elders. Northerners respect the long journey older adults have taken through their lives. Elders are the stewards of our history, culture, and traditions, raising a family sometimes beyond just your children, and growing up in a world where Twitter was only something that actual birds did. Elders in the North have certainly earned our respect. During the campaign, I was not well-versed on the issue of elder abuse. Since then, I have taken my time to learn more about this: reading,

research, taking a firsthand look at Avens, a community for seniors, and most importantly, listening to what our elders have to say on the issue. What I have heard is that we can all do our part to end abuse against older adults. Nearly 25 per cent of our society is quickly reaching the later stages of life. It is important we remain vigilant against those who would attempt to exploit our elders. In 2007, Statistics Canada reported that the overall rate of police-reported violence against seniors increased by 20 per cent between 1999 and 2005. Though our elders are the least likely demographic to be victims of violent crime, what's truly disturbing is that the largest group of those who commit violence against our elders were adult children or a current or former spouse. To put it more bluntly, Mr. Speaker, the ones who should be assuring the safety of our seniors the most, those they love unconditionally, are the ones putting them into unsafe situations. This is just plain wrong. Mr. Speaker, here in the NWT, our Seniors' Society back in 2010 took it upon themselves to do something about the ever growing instances of abuse. Starting with the Making Connections: Building Networks Symposium, from the information gathered there and other workshops, they established the NWT Network to Prevent the Abuse of Older Adults. The network now has over 55 members throughout the NWT who are committed older adult advocates who work to achieve reduction, prevention, and ultimate eradication of the abuse of older adults. I applaud this organization's good work, and am proud to see a grassroots network of seniors come together to address this issue for those elders affected by abuse. Mr. Speaker, we are their children and their grandchildren. Let's all do our part to protect the security and dignity of older adults. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORTING SENIORS TO AGE IN PLACE

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak today about the deplorable state of housing in the Northwest Territories. These conditions are documented in the preliminary results of the latest 2014 survey of housing needs. The preliminary survey results indicate that 32 per cent of NWT housing has problems and 20 per cent of our housing stock is in core need for reasons of suitability, adequacy or affordability. For our seniors, these hardships can be even worse. The recent long-term care study shows that the supply of senior's housing units and long-term care beds is already far behind demand and will only get worse. There will be a shortfall of 258 long-term care beds in Yellowknife by 2026.

The greater problem with these realities is that we want seniors to stay in their homes, aging in place is one of our mandated priorities. A general Canadian study in 2009 indicated that average out-of-pocket monthly costs for a senior to age in his or her own home was \$928 versus \$3500 for that same senior to live in an institutional setting. More detailed NWT-specific research is needed so we can focus our limited dollars to achieve the greatest returns. I think we heard some of that at noon today. Is the array of support programs offered by the NWT Housing Corporation adequately funded or oversubscribed and can program adjustments keep more seniors in their homes? What other supports, such as handi-buses and homecare programs will extend aging in place? We need to know where we are going with seniors aging in place and with the corresponding needs for seniors' housing, long-term care and chronic care. Our next housing needs survey will be completed for the year 2019, which should chart progress towards reducing core need. This survey should also begin to collect data on the age of respondents so we can better predict demand for aging in place services as well as institutional demands. Finally, we also need this information much more promptly. We're waiting in 2016 for the full 2014 Housing Needs Survey results, 18 months after the reporting period ended. We can't wait until 2021 to get the 2019 year results to better plan for housing and aging in place. Masi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON DEFINITION OF HOUSING CORE NEEDS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm making a Member's statement on housing, but I'd like to acknowledge the Seniors' Society. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to speak on the NWT Housing Corporation and their definition of core need. In general, core need for housing is identified as a household that has one or more of any of the main ingredients that form core need. Adequacy, in general, is a house that requires a retrofit; or suitability is when there are too many people sharing bedrooms; and affordability is when the family spends more than 30 per cent of their household income on utilities, land tax or lease, rent, or mortgage. I disagree with the NWT Housing Corporation's definition of core need. I believe that in order for a household to be in core need, it must have either an adequacy and/or suitability problem and must have an affordability issue. If the household has an adequacy or a suitability problem, but the household is bringing in an income where it is not spending 30 per cent of their income to house themselves, they should not be considered in core need. As is the same for a

household that has an adequately suitable house but cannot afford the operating and maintenance, can afford to spend less than 30 per cent of their income, then they should not be considered in core need. I believe the NWT Housing Corporation must change what core need means. If it does not change, then most anyone that hires a person that has an affordability issue, would be essentially taking that person out of core need, or if an individual that's considered in core need has an affordability issue was to go to income support and apply for income and they would take themselves out of core need. I believe that core need is an NWT Housing Corporation issue and that with the current definition, any of the departments that hire people or any of the departments that are able to give income to an individual can take people out of core need. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Sahtu.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I also want to recognize the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. I recall attending an NWT Seniors' Society presentation where the chair had mentioned, "to know the future, you first have to know the past." I thought that was quite a unique statement and I still recall that presentation. Elders are the pillars of our small communities and also our large communities and for the whole NWT for that matter. Earlier I was very encouraged by the presentation of our health Minister on the long-term care plan, a 10-year plan that includes all the communities and without a plan and I was thinking, Mr. Speaker, here without a plan, we really have no idea where we're going. It goes back to the chairman's statement of the Seniors' Society. I really was encouraged by the plan of our long-term care which includes clients of our elder's community. I applaud the department for developing that plan. Now, we've got a prosperous future and targets and objectives to seek towards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON RECOGNITION OF THE LATE JOSEPH SABOURIN

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

[English translation] He shared the story in the 1980's in the book of elders. Hey, it's okay. I've provided copies to my colleagues and translation as I understand it is on channel three.

Joseph Sabourin was born in the autumn of 1920 around Kakisa. My father sent me to mission school for four years but I didn't learn much. When he died my mother moved into a house in town. I left school and stayed with her. I was 12. We had no traps so we were given five. There used to be a lot of foxes where the airport is now, so my mother sent me to set the trap there, with fish heads for bait. I set the trap on the bank. When the fox was caught, it rolled down onto the ice and got away with the trap. My mother was real mad and wouldn't give me another. Instead she made me a snare with heavy wire from the store. I tried again, but my hands were so cold I didn't set it right. I did catch a fox and it got away, with the snare. Eventually though I did get one and it was worth \$35. My mother could now buy sugar, tea, and tobacco at the store. I was hoping and hoping that she would buy me some candy but all she said was, "since this is your first animal, give some tea, sugar and tobacco to the old people. Then you will have good luck in the future." I didn't get a cent. I guess she was right though, because I'm still alive today. My mother died when I was 14, so I lived with other families. One man didn't have any children of his own so he asked me to live with him and his wife and he said he would treat me as his own son. He taught me how to track a moose and we always went hunting in the summer. I have travelled all over on foot. Tathlina Lake is a big lake and I'm sure my footprints are all around it. I love living in the bush, especially at Redknife. It can be grim when it's cold and you have caught no fish, but if you kill a moose, then you rejoice. My happiest time of my life was raising my family in the bush. We had to move into town so the children could attend school. Since that time it has become harder and harder for us to return to our way of life. Life on the land is now considered to be of little value but I would rather live in the bush than have a job. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation ends]

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I'm always encouraged to hear one of the official languages in the House. Masi for that. Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FORT MCPHERSON PARTICIPATION IN RELAY FOR LIFE 2016

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the 2016 Relay for Life kicked off in the Northwest Territories last Friday, June 10th. What is Relay for Life? Whether you are cheering on survivors, walking the track, passing the baton to your teammates, or joining in the exciting activities, Relay for Life is more than just a cancer walk, Mr. Speaker. It's a journey. Relay for Life is supporting everyone in your life who has been affected by cancer. Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to announce that one of my communities in the Mackenzie Delta

riding, Fort McPherson participated in this very important event. I want to add that Fort McPherson was the only community besides Yellowknife and Hay River to have registered teams. The two teams registered with a total of 31 participants, Mr. Speaker. During this 12-hour walk which began at 7:00 in the evening until 7:00 in the morning, a total of nine cancer survivors came out and participated in the historic walk. Throughout the night, an average of one hundred community supporters joined the walkers, giving them strength to complete another lap. To go the distance, to make a difference for their families and friends with cancer. The organizer for this event in Fort McPherson was Janice Wolchuk. The 13-year cancer survivor and our grade three and four teacher at Chief Julius School. She introduced this event to her community and for sure this will be an annual event that Fort McPherson will participate in. Along with Janice, many of our local teachers helped raise awareness and contributed to fundraising efforts. The staff at the Charles Koe building in Fort McPherson also contributed. Alexander Neyando helped coordinate the event and assisted Janice with logistics. Congratulations to the registered teams from Yellowknife and Hay River for giving hope, strength, and courage to all cancer survivors... Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, colleagues. And especially for inspiring our small communities to participate. Mr. Speaker, our community of Fort McPherson raised a total of \$11,649.95. Thank you. Please join me in congratulating the community of Fort McPherson on a job well done. Mahsi cho.

MR. SPEAKER: Members' statements. Item 5, returns to oral questions. Minister of Environment and Natural Resources.

Returns to Oral Questions

RETURN TO ORAL QUESTION 32-18(2): BATHURST CARIBOU HERD MANAGEMENT

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Mr. Speaker, I have a return to oral question asked by Mr. O'Reilly on February 22, 2016, regarding Bathurst caribou management. The Government of the Northwest Territories, or GNWT, acknowledges the hardships experienced by communities who are unable to partake in caribou harvesting activities and is working very hard in collaboration with partners to put actions, plans and processes in place to support the recovery of the herd on a number of fronts. Restricting harvest is not the only management action that is being taken to address

the status of the Bathurst herd nor is it one that is applied lightly; however, in terms of relative impact on the herd it is one of the key management levers we have to reduce impacts on the herd. Developing approaches to habitat protection is a long-term endeavor necessitating the engagement of many parties. Environment and Natural Resources, or ENR, has been involved in a few initiatives to advance habitat protection and to protect caribou from disturbance during sensitive time periods. One is the involvement in the Nunavut Land Use planning process. ENR is a registered participant in the Nunavut Planning Commission, or NPC, process for developing a Nunavut Land Use Plan. The GNWT has put forward the position that industrial activity of any type, including mineral exploration and production, construction of roads, pipelines and other infrastructure, should not be permitted in the calving areas. NPC is attempting to build consensus on approaches for habitat and disturbance management through a combination of tools such as conservation areas, as well as seasonal and locational restrictions on development activities. Another initiative to protect habitat is range planning. ENR, with the support from the Departments of Industry, Tourism and Investment and Lands, is working towards the development of a range plan for the Bathurst caribou herd. This plan is being undertaken by a working group of 21 partners including the Tlicho Government, Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board, other Aboriginal organizations, industry, and environmental non-governmental organizations.

The range plan will be a guidance document for use by wildlife management authorities, including the government, in making recommendations on habitat management issues such as conservation areas, acceptable levels of disturbance on the range and seasonal or mobile caribou conservation measures. It is scheduled for completion in March 2018 and will apply across the historic range of the Bathurst herd. Actions related to individual projects are typically addressed through environmental assessments, the regulatory permitting process and through the development, implementation and review of wildlife management and monitoring plans for proposed and existing developments. Specifically, ENR remains engaged in a review process of proposed developments within the Bathurst range in the NWT and Nunavut to ensure that possible effects on the Bathurst herd are duly considered and mitigated where possible. For projects in the NWT, ENR is in the process of developing guidelines for industry to support development of wildlife management and monitoring plans which are now being required for operations that may cause significant disturbance to wildlife or habitat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Returns to oral questions. Item 6, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Colleagues, I'd like to draw your attention to the public in the gallery, more specifically, a former Member, Samuel Gargan is here with us. Welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Great Slave.

Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the NWT Seniors' Society began as an organization in 1983 when a group of seniors got together and began working with the government to provide services for seniors as well as older adults. Today, the NWT Seniors' Society and its advisory council continue to work with all levels of government to keep us apprised of issues of importance to seniors. For the past 18 years, the advisory council has worked tirelessly to prevent the abuse of older adults by creating awareness and providing education and information sessions to ensure everyone understands the impact of elders, families and communities. The NWT Seniors' Society feels that its advisory council is its greatest asset. Please join me in welcoming these dedicated people in the House today. Leon Peterson, Ann Firth-Jones, Beatrice Campbell, Merlyn Williams, Jeanna Graham, Florence Barnaby, Elizabeth Kunnizzie, Mavis Klause, Sarah Anderson, Sam Gargan, Carol Robertson, Joyce Williams, Yvonne Quick, and I'd also like to welcome Michelle Mulder and Martha MacLellan of the Alzheimer's Society of the Alberta and Northwest Territories and Stephen Jackson, the CEO of Avens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome an elder and also an interpreter who is sitting behind me. Ms. Annie Goose from Ulukhaktok, as well up in the gallery my great auntie, constituent and respected elder, Sarah Anderson from Tuktoyaktuk and Elizabeth Kunnizzie from Inuvik and the rest of the elders who are here, welcome.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Masi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, me too, I'd like to recognize members of the Northwest Territories Seniors' Society. In particular, I'd like to recognize the mayor of Fort Providence, also at the same time, a former MLA, chief, speaker, Mr. Sam Gargan. Also, at the same time, another member of the Northwest Territories Seniors' Society, Jeanna Graham, from my constituency of the K'atlodeeche First Nation, who is on the band council as well and

a constituent of mine too. Masi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River South.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: I have quite a few people in the gallery today. Maxime Gauthier, Sheldon Whitlock, Donna Lee and Reagan Jungkind, and Ms. Ann Firth, and Myrtle Graham, my CA, and also the NWT Seniors' Society. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like my colleagues, I want to recognize the many seniors we have here visiting the House today and thank them for the many contributions that they have made in laying the path that we get to walk on today. As well as thank them for their continued efforts in building the supports for their fellow seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Thebacha.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize RCMP chief superintendent Ron Smith in the gallery today. He was appointed as the chief superintendent of "G" Division in 2014 after progressing through multiple northern ranks over the last 20 years. We will be sorry to see him go, but wish him the best as he leaves later for a summer placement in Ottawa, not only for the summer, but ongoing. Sorry. He goes with our gratitude for a job very well done. Thank you. I would also like to recognize Leon Peterson and Beatrice Campbell. Leon is the current president, and Bea Campbell, past president of the NWT Seniors' Society.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge and recognize the Seniors' Society, particularly my auntie, Mavis Klause from Fort Resolution. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to say we have a strong Hay River contingent in the gallery today, which is nice. Mr. Sheldon Whitlock, Maxime Gauthier, Ann Firth-Jones, Deputy Mayor Donna Lee Jungkind and Reagan Jungkind, and Myrtle Graham. I'm happy to say that most are my constituents. There may be one of Wally's in there, so...

---Laughter

I'll be out in the lobby during the break and we can chat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize Yvonne Quick, who's a constituent in the gallery. I can't quite see her but she's done a lot of very important work in the development of the tourism industry here in the Northwest Territories. I also want to recognize Sam Gargan. I had the privilege of working with Sam when he was a regular MLA on a private Member's bill to introduce access to information legislation in the Northwest Territories. Thanks, Sam.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Inuvik Boot Lake.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome all seniors that are joining us here today, particularly Elizabeth Kunnizzie from Inuvik and Jeanna Graham. I did work with Jeanna many years ago as a community health rep and we did a lot of really good work together through the Northwest Territories. I'd also like to recognize Mr. Stephen Jackson, who gave me a great tour of Avens not too long ago and I appreciate the work that they are doing. As well as welcoming and acknowledge Mr. Ron Smith and I know Mr. Wade Blake's up there as well and appreciate the work that they're doing. Our Minister gave a great statement on the battle against drugs in the Northwest Territories and in keeping the drugs off the street. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Range Lake.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to take a moment to recognize the NWT Seniors' Society. These are the people who built the North and I have huge respect for them. I'd also like to point out Merlyn Williams, who is a personal friend of my father, my late father and it's always an honour to hear him tell stories, especially when he talks about the UFOs and the encounters with my father. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the gallery. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize an advocate for NWT seniors, Ms. Ann Firth-Jones from Hay River, originally from Fort McPherson. Also, Florence Barnaby and also Wade Blake who I'm convinced is my long-lost relative. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Recognition of visitors in the

gallery. I'd also like to welcome all the seniors that are here with us and also we have in the gallery, chief superintendent. He's been here for some time and leaving us, but it's been great working with you, Mr. Smith. Also Wade Blake is here with us. He's the director of community justice and community policing, previous chief superintendent as well, I worked closely with. I'd like to welcome you as well. Those that we may have missed, welcome to the Chamber and welcome to the gallery. It's always nice to have an audience. Masi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgements. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: I would like to recognize my aunt, Florence Barnaby, a strong advocate for the society and the whole society members and Sheldon Whitlock. I had the privilege of working alongside Sheldon here a few times over the winter road season back home. Also Stephen Jackson, who also gave me a positive tour of the facility of the Avens Centre. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. That was recognition of visitors in the gallery, I believe. Acknowledgements. Member for Sahtu.

Acknowledgements

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 9-18(2):
BRENDA BATON, 2016 PREMIER'S AWARD
RECIPIENT

MR. MCNEELY: Okay. I'll get it right this time.

---Laughter

I'm killing two birds with one stone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier, the Premier's Award went to a constituent in Deline. Her name is Ms. Brenda Baton. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I would like to acknowledge Ms. Brenda Baton from Deline, who just received the 2016 Premier's Award for the NWT ASETS-Aurora College partnership. The Premier's Award is to recognize outstanding individuals and teams who have gone above and beyond. Brenda works hard and is dedicated to the work she does in her community and for the delivery of that program in the whole Sahtu region. On behalf of the Sahtu region, I would like to congratulate Ms. Baton. Continue with the great work for the Sahtu region, Brenda. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Acknowledgements. Item 8, oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 227-18(2):

SUPPORTING ELDERLY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier on, I spoke about elder awareness abuse day and today I have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Mr. Speaker, my first question is: how does the Our Elders: Our Communities framework support elders in the NWT? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure there's enough time on the clock. The Our Elders: Our Communities framework outlines seven priorities that will be used to guide the future program design for older adults to assist them to remain in their communities, as long as possible. That's the ultimate goal of aging in place. The seven priorities include:

1. Healthy and active aging;
2. Home and community care services;
3. Integrated and coordinated services across the continuum;
4. Caregiver supports;
5. Elder responsive communities;
6. Accessible and current information, making sure it's available; as well as
7. Sustainable best practices.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier today, Our Elders: Our Communities is a holistic document. It's not a narrow document. It is focused on trying to improve resident's experiences with aging and as I said, particularly, aging in place. We work closely with the NWT Seniors' Society as well as trying to ensure that our residents have access to a wide range of programs and services to ensure that they can stay in their home for as long as possible and that they can stay in their communities as long as they can. We're also developing specific action plans, so the action plan on community care services that is built around the top priority of areas of planning for long-term care. Our Elders: Our Communities is a holistic document, touching on many areas across the Northwest Territories for seniors in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the answer from the Minister of Health and Social Services. Seeing how all these services are available to elders, I

think moving ahead, we should make these services mobile so that the workers can actually come to the elder's home and offer these rather than the elders having to leave their homes many times of the day when some of them need wheelchair access. My second question, Mr. Speaker, is: what is being done in the NWT to address abuse of our elders?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, the department has been collaborating with the NWT Seniors' Society and the Network for the Prevention of Abuse of Older Adults. A key action in the strategy is related to training for frontline providers and screening, assessment and support of older adults who actually are undergoing abuse. Older adult abuse screening tools are designed to gather information about older adults and their circumstances in order to evaluate the possibility of abuse occurrence. Screening tools offer a framework for deciding what strategies may be the most appropriate, if problems are identified based on the individuals situations. The department has been working with the NWT Seniors' Society to develop these screening tools for health and social services providers, going to the Member's comment, so that they can identify elders who may be at risk of abuse and family caregivers at risk of burnout. The tools were focus tested by seniors in December 2015 and these tools will be trialed in practice setting during this fiscal year. We're collaborating with the authorities on policies to support implementation of the new continuing care standards. Those are a number of the things that we are doing, but it's all about partnerships, Mr. Speaker and working closely with the NWT Seniors' Society and other groups throughout the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity for the Minister to answer that. Mr. Speaker, my final question to the Minister of Health and Social Services is: what can a person do if they have concerns about the well-being of an elder? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, during my Minister's statement today, I did provide a couple of numbers that individuals could call. But if an individual sees or witnesses abuse, I think one of the important things that a person can do is start developing a relationship with that elder and learning about the elder, to help him identify the abuse that might be taking place. They can go to the elder's home and invite them to engage with other local seniors who may be participants in the society that is visiting us here today. I would encourage communication using the 1-800 numbers, getting in touch with other seniors and if

the abuse continues and it escalates, they may well also want to get in touch with the RCMP. But definitely getting to know the elders and learning about them and finding out what's going on in their lives is going to be critical and important.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

QUESTION 228-18(2):
PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS AVAILABLE FOR
NAHENDEH SENIORS

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the theme for today is about elders and seniors, I have some questions for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Housing please advise the House how many public housing units have seniors in them in Nahendeh? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently there's 37 public housing units with seniors residing in them in the Nahendeh communities. Of those 37 units, 29 of them are actually senior designated, meaning that they are specifically designed with accessibility features and these include the eight new units in the seniors independent housing complex that was just recently completed in Fort Liard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for her answer. It's very encouraging. What is the Minister prepared to do to ensure our seniors are able to age in place and live in their communities in the Nahendeh region?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: The increase in the senior population is really concerning to the Housing Corporation. We recognize that within the next five years, as much as 25 per cent increase in senior's population within our territory. In response to that, we're really focusing on building seniors' independent living complexes within the communities and we've collaborated with Health and Social Services on the design of these complexes to make sure that they're the most appropriate we can for our aging population. The most recently completed facility, like I said, was in Fort Liard and that will be fully operational very soon. Of those facilities that we're looking at building, they'll house eight seniors in each unit and then they'll also have a place for a caregiver within that just to make sure that the wellness of seniors is maintained as well.

MR. THOMPSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. In my region actually, it's probably getting really excited about some of this great stuff that's

happening. Mr. Speaker, besides public housing, what other programs does the NWT Housing Corp offer that will help our seniors remain in their communities?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Besides the public housing that we have, the things that we specialize specifically for seniors in their communities are, there are things that they can access like the emergency repair. We are really focusing on preventative maintenance with seniors. We're actually trying to get out of the office, like one of the other Members have said and actually into their homes. We're making it easier for them to access services. We have programs such as the SAFE program that makes sure that ramps, et cetera are done, CARE Major that they can come and get repairs up to \$100,000, such as roofs, ramps, which are very expensive, et cetera. The biggest thing that the Housing Corporation is doing though to reflect on the needs of their aging population, is that we're looking that all new housing units will be accessible in that they will have wider hallways, they'll have entry-level floor levels, we'll have bathrooms on the bottom floors and more secure walls within bathrooms so that we can add the ramps for people to help get out of showers, et cetera. We're looking at it within a more of a holistic approach that all new housing will incorporate senior's accessibility standards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the Minister for her answer. There has been information, Mr. Speaker, on small four-plexes being developed this year. Would these smaller units be made available for seniors in the future? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes, we're doing a pilot with the four-plexes within the communities at this point because we realize that, when we build four-plexes, actually, it's more energy efficient. We can have, for example, one furnace room that heats all four units. The other really key thing within that is that, in my own personal belief and probably research would back that, is that seniors are very sociable, and so we need to really respect that. We need to keep the brain capacity of seniors going. We can't isolate them in units that are individual, although we do have some units. The new four-plexes really allow for seniors to actually have that social network that they need and that does stimulate brain development. If these work out and it's cost effective, then we'll be looking at that design within most communities.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 229-18(2):
STRATEGY TO CREATE SAFE COMMUNITIES
FOR OLDER ADULTS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. Has the government made a commitment to implement the five-year strategy and action plan to create safe communities for older adults? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to be tabling the five-year strategy that was developed by the NWT Seniors' Society and the NWT Network to Prevent Abuse of Older Adults later today. The department has been collaborating with the NWT Seniors' Society and the network to support training for further frontline providers and screening assessment and support of older adults who undergo abuse. We have made a commitment and now make a commitment again here today that we will continue to work with the Seniors' Society and participate with the network in prevention of abuse of older adults on the actions that fall within our mandate. This, once again, is about partnership and working together and being part of the solution. We're committed to doing that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Just for greater clarity, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm that those priorities listed in the five-year strategy are, in fact, the priorities of the government? Thank you.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: The document I'm tabling today isn't a Government of the Northwest Territories document. It is actually a document of the Seniors' Society, but we have participated with them, and we will certainly continue to work with them to support any initiatives to limit or reduce the amount of abuse of seniors. The individual actions are the actions identified within that report, which is not a government document. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the Minister for that answer. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering if the Minister is planning a formal response to the document that he is tabling today. Mahsi.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're not planning a formal response to the document, but we do have a solid working relationship with the Seniors' Society. We'll continue working with the Seniors' Society. Where appropriate and where it falls within our mandate, we're absolutely willing to move forward on different initiatives identified within the

framework that we're tabling today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. One of the recommendations in this strategy that I want to highlight is to engage the government service officers, who are GNWT employees of course, in the communities as active champions in preventing the abuse of older adults. Is that an action that the Minister can commit to? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, those positions work for or are, rather, employed by the Department of the Executive, but the Department of the Executive has been engaged with the network, and the government services officers are their employees. The health and social services authority's frontline staff works with the community level with our government services officers and understand and appreciate their role in assisting elders in accessing programs and services. , As part of implementing the screening tools, the Department of Health and Social Services will work with the Executive as well as the territorial health authority to lay out a plan for engaging government services officers in training sessions so that they are prepared to identify different programs and services for elders in their communities and to work as champions for residents, including seniors and elders throughout the Northwest Territories.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

QUESTION 230-18(2):
DEFINING HOUSING CORE NEED

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if she can explain how a family that has an adequate and suitable housing be in core need.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Within the "core need" definition, there are three aspects that are looked at, and so that is adequacy, as you stated, suitability, and the third piece is affordability. Some people will live in an adequate house that is suitable but still can't afford to maintain that unit. That is the definition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEAULIEU: I'd like to ask the Minister if she believes that the income support program can be used to eliminate core need.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I don't think it's a really easy answer to say that one program can actually eliminate core need, especially when you look at the core need does talk about adequacy and suitability as well as affordability. Income support does address some of the affordability issues, perhaps not all of them, especially in the market communities where our rents are so high. But adequacy and suitability are not areas that, in my opinion, income support would be addressing.

MR. BEAULIEU: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if the affordability issue stands alone in core need. According to the definition that's in the Housing Corporation and even according to the definition of that with CMHC, they consider any one of the three to be core need. My question was: if you provide income, are you eliminating core need? That's my question again. Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister believe that having an affordability only, without having a suitability or an adequacy issue, puts the person in core need?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I'm going to try to address the question, because I'm a bit confused on what the Member is asking. Yes, affordability can still maintain someone in core need because, again, we don't have control over our market rents. Even if someone has a great-paying job, there can still be affordability issues in the market housing that is available. Now, if somebody chooses to live in a house that is above their means, that's a personal choice. But, as when it comes to normal market rents, there still will be affordability issues with people that work in the lower-income positions.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister for that response. Mr. Speaker, does the Minister believe that an individual that gets a good-paying job can take themselves out of core need if they have a house that is not suitable and not adequate? Thank you.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Actually, this is one example that I can say yes, that money does fix all issues because, if you do have enough money, you can actually make sure that your house is suitable and adequate. Yes, but it does come down to having the right financial capital to be able to make those changes.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 231-18(2):
FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION
OF ECOLE ALLAIN ST-CYR

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Mr. Speaker. Today I have some questions for the Minister of Education about his efforts to meet the need for adequate and equitable school facilities for the students of Commission scolaire francophone des Territoires du Nord-Ouest. First of all, can the Minister tell us what specific actions his department has taken to acquire federal funding for the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr? What meetings, letters, phone calls, et cetera, have been made to Heritage Canada? Merci, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you Mr. Speaker. On March 31st, we did send a letter to Minister Joly in regards to work that needs to be done on all schools throughout the Northwest Territories. We are working with Heritage Canada, putting together an application, actually, for Heritage Canada's complementary funding and education program which supports the construction and expansion of community space and education institutions. As I mentioned, we did write a letter. I wrote Minister Joly in looking at possible funding supports that are available to minority language education, and later this week officials from both our departments will be sitting down discussing some of the matters moving forward and, hopefully, that we can look at having a more formal meeting to discuss some of the issues here, in the Northwest Territories, specifically also on the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: I do appreciate the response from the Minister, and I did give him a heads-up because I've been requested to sort of follow-up on this matter by the commission. The commission, itself has undertaken efforts to persuade federal officials, including the Heritage Canada Minister, to provide additional funds for the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr, but the response from the federal Minister was that CSFT and all the commissions scolaires need to go back to GNWT and get them to make the request for additional funding. We're sort of running around here. I understand from the Minister that he's starting to pursue this. This is great. I think it's an issue where top-level leadership could make a difference. Will the Minister commit to contacting federal Minister of Heritage Joly personally to discuss this issue and press the NWT's case and follow up by seeking a meeting with Minister Joly on his next visit to Ottawa?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, we did send a letter to initially start the discussions. We have been keeping regular meetings with the Federation

Franco-Tenoise. Most recently on Friday, we had a really good dialogue. As I mentioned, we are putting that application together and making sure that, as a department, we're taking the responsibility to make sure that we can look at the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr. As I mentioned, we have officials from both departments that are going to set up a meeting on Friday, and we'll move it from there to see what our next steps are. I'm hoping that next time I am in Ottawa that we have a more formal meeting to address not only some of the infrastructure needs within Yellowknife but throughout the whole Northwest Territories, as well.

MR. O'REILLY: I appreciate the response from the Minister, and I'll keep pushing him to directly contact the federal Minister of Heritage, but the sad fact is, Mr. Speaker, that students are actually leaving Ecole Allain St-Cyr, and students are leaving, particularly in high school, to go to other schools, and that's because we've been waiting years for equitable and adequate facilities, such as a gymnasium. News that planning is underway for a new gym and more classrooms, that a request for proposals will soon be led for the expansion of Ecole Allain St-Cyr would give these students some hope. Can the Minister tell this House what concrete plans there are to expand the school?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: The department is meeting our obligations for French first language education under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Education Act, and the NWT Court of Appeal decisions. We are currently working on, hopefully, to break ground on a new gymnasium in the summer of 2017. I have also committed to trying to set up a meeting to go into the school to actually meet with the students and the staff, as well. We are hoping to break ground on a new gymnasium in the summer of 2017.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate, again, the response from the Minister. I'm speaking, I guess, from some personal experience here, too, because both of our children went through Ecole Allain St-Cyr, and they never had a gymnasium or access to some special classrooms. I'm just wondering when the students and their families can expect to actually walk through the doors and have equitable access to the same facilities that other Yellowknife schools have. When can we expect to have this work actually done?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Based on the availability of contractors here to help build, we are hoping, and our intention is, to have the facilities available for students by September 2018.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 232-18(2):
INCENTIVES TO SUPPORT THE MINING
INDUSTRY

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday, the Premier as Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment spoke about the government's efforts to support the mining industry. My questions about that today: the federal government recently renewed its mining tax credit, but it remains consistent throughout the country. I'm wondering if the Premier has discussed creating a higher credit for the North out of that tax credit and working the federal government to further incentivize the mining industry by expanding that tax credit for the three northern jurisdictions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My follow-up question would be: could the Minister then work with the Premiers of Nunavut and Yukon to speak to the Prime Minister and advocate for this benefit? The industry has been very clear that they would like to see expanded financial help to getting our resources out of the ground up here and to further expand on exploration activities.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We could. It's been difficult enough to get the federal government to continue the flow-through mining tax credit portion, but we could do that.

MR. TESTART: Thank you to the Premier for his response. Yesterday as well we heard from the Premier that the return on investment for the Mineral Incentive Program is at three to one, which is quite commendable. In a time when we need significant economic activity here, in the North, to get our growth back on track, why have we not invested more resources into this very important program that has such a high return and impact on our economy? It sits at \$400,000. In the Yukon, a similar program is at \$1 million. Why have we not committed more resources to stimulate our economy directly and create some jobs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the fact that we're contributing in the amount of \$400,000 is a very fair share. Yukon has had the benefit of devolution for over ten years; we're just going in to our second year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regardless of the circumstances of the Yukon, I do believe our economy is a few percentage points larger than theirs. At a time when we need economic activity, especially in the mining sector, and this program has a three to one return on investment, I'd like to see more resources put into this thing. I'd very much like to see the Premier commit to expanding on this program. If he could make such commitment that would be appreciated, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: In the life of the 18th Legislative Assembly that is exactly our plan.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

QUESTION 233-18(2):

INITIATIVES TO REDUCE THE COST OF POWER

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my statement is directed to the Minister responsible for the NWT Power Corporation. Maintaining current operations is a normal corporate business; however, creating new, innovative models of reducing cost is a demonstration of good management. I know we have heard in previous statements there, there has been some measure such as replacing the board of directors will amount to X amount of dollars in cost savings, but there's other initiatives that were highlighted in previous statements such as using more pilot projects like the solar power project in Colville, and I'd like to ask the Minister responsible, when considering the demand is increasing on the grid supply of power so the economy of scale comes in, and I'm just wondering what reduction plans are in place within the corporate structure? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of NWT Power Corporation

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The corporation is always looking at new projects and ways of becoming more efficient. There is, of course, a new board in place and I believe they've had some preliminary discussions, but their first meeting I think is only next week. They will be tasked with, as I mentioned earlier, looking at the whole of the corporation; looking at ways that can become more efficient and more productive. We also, however, will still be looking at new technologies to enhance the technologies we already have but always keeping in mind that we must attempt to supply power at a reasonable price to our constituents, the people of the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MCNEELY: In reducing costs and looking at creating more revenues that's ongoing, is there an internal briefing that could be supplied to the other side for such things as layoffs possibly, reduction of hours, those types of measures to reducing corporate cost?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, the corporation is always looking at reducing costs; clearly that's very important, particularly as I mentioned the other day that the amount of sales in the sense of the amount of power being sold seems to be constant or actually in decline. To avoid further large increases in rates we must look, and they must look, for efforts to reduce any costs they do have. Clearly, the new board will be tasked with that responsibility but I think senior management is well aware of that responsibility also and has taken efforts to reduce costs as much as possible.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can we request if there's any reduction plans on reducing internal operating O and M costs? Thank you.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I heard the question completely. I can advise that the corporation and its board will be tasked with attempting to reduce costs. I don't actually have a plan nor do they have a plan in mind, but that is simply part of the normal corporate responsibility of keeping costs in line, particularly as I say when we are in a situation where you're not increasing sales. There are ongoing efforts all the time to reduce costs. I'm not aware of a specific plan to reduce costs, but clearly that's a corporate and board of directors' responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there is one to be developed here in the near future or upcoming future, could that plan of reduction or reducing expenses be provided to our side there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, there is no specific plan at this time to reduce costs; there's always attempts to reduce costs. However, I will have discussions with the board and be giving direction to them in several areas, so certainly that is an area that I could bring back to this House if there is a specific request made by me through consultations with the people in this room, the Cabinet and so on. I don't think there's any specific planned reductions at this time apart from the normal ongoing corporate responsibility of keeping costs in line.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 234-18(2):
PLANNING FOR HOUSING NEEDS OF ELDERS
IN THE BEAUFORT DELTA

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have a few questions for the Minister of the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, earlier today we had a briefing and the needs in the Beaufort Delta will triple over the next ten years, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask: will the Minister work with the Minister of Health and Social Services to identify the needs to each community in the Beaufort Delta so we can begin planning? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members may be aware that the Housing Corporation is actually already on that. We are putting out a survey that will develop a community-based plan and we're more than willing to work with the health and social services department in providing services. When those surveys are received back we will know exactly what each community wishes and we would base our actions for the coming future based on the community needs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues have mentioned that aging in place is something that everyone in our communities would like to see. You know, our elders do not want to leave the communities they lived in all their lives, but yet we have some elders that are being asked to contribute up to 25 per cent of the actual costs of renovations to their home, for example. Will the Minister look at ways to either eliminate this or put it to five per cent? You know it's very difficult for elders to save money with the high cost of living that we have in our small communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Currently in the Northwest Territories we have 356 units that are actually suitable for seniors, designed specifically and have the modifications. This current coming fiscal year we're looking at adding another 63 with the modifications designed specifically for seniors, so that will bring us up to 459 units in the Northwest Territories that have the seniors' capacity. We are really actively working towards providing services for seniors so that they can age in place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's good to know what the department has, but I'm talking about the homeowners, Mr. Speaker. Many of my elders that have their own homes, when they need renovations they're either asked to contribute up to 25 per cent, you know, there's challenges. I know

we have the GSOs in the communities to help them, and also other areas to help the elders, but it's a real challenge for an elder to come up with, whether it's \$10,000, \$20,000, Mr. Speaker. That's what I'm talking about here. We need to look at this policy and possibly revise it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I do apologize if I didn't answer the complete question that the Member asked me. Currently, there are programs within the Northwest Territories that do have a user co-pay component with that. The corporation would love to be able to provide programs that have no cost; however, in all honesty, we have a small population within the Northwest Territories and currently we're spending seven times the national average rate. Most provinces are spending one per cent of their revenues on housing; we're spending seven per cent of our revenues currently on housing. We really need to be cautious about how far we go with that. Even though we're spending seven per cent of our revenues, we've never been able to meet the national core need average. In effect, if we're going try to get closer to the core need we need to really be careful on what extra programs we're putting out there and how we spend our monies because we can't go much further than seven times more than the national average. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, you know, it always seems to be cost is always an issue when it comes to whether it's providing services for elders or people in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, we need to make sure our elders are cared for. You know, cost is no issue. With all the funding we do get here in the Northwest Territories we have to ensure that we are taking care of our elders in our communities, that's the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, and we need to make sure that our policies make sure that that happens. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. I didn't really hear a question there, more of a comment, however, I'll allow the Minister if she wishes to answer.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I accept that as a comment.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Health and Social Services.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 67-18(2):
CREATING SAFE COMMUNITIES FOR OLDER
ADULTS: A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY FOR THE
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 2015-2020

TABLED DOCUMENT 68-18(2):
THE NWT ON-THE-LAND COLLABORATIVE
FUND PILOT REPORT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following two documents entitled "Creating Safe Communities for Older Adults: A Five Year Strategy for the Northwest Territories 2015-2020" and the "NWT On The Land Collaborative Fund Pilot Report." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Justice.

TABLED DOCUMENT 69-18(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO ORAL QUESTION 182-
18(2): RCMP SERVICES IN WRIGLEY

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Follow-up Letter to Oral Question 182-18(2): RCMP Services in Wrigley." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motions. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

Motions

MOTION 19-18(2):
NEED FOR A NEW HOUSING STRATEGY,
CARRIED

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

WHEREAS the right to have a home is recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as necessary for our health and wellbeing;

AND WHEREAS there are 15,000 houses in the NWT and one-fifth of them are unaffordable or unsuitable or inadequate;

AND WHEREAS this chronic deficit has not been reduced in the five years between the 2009 and 2014 NWT housing surveys;

AND WHEREAS the core housing need for Canada as a whole is 12 per cent;

AND WHEREAS Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation funding for the operations and

maintenance of social housing is declining and scheduled to end in 2038;

AND WHEREAS there are 738 families and individuals on the waiting list for affordable public housing in the NWT;

AND WHEREAS our mandate for the 18th Assembly calls on government to increase the availability of safe, affordable housing;

NOW THEREFORE I move, seconded by the Member for Deh Cho, that the Government of the Northwest Territories make a commitment to reducing the level of core need for all NWT housing by two per cent per year for four years so that we can meet the national average;

AND FURTHER that the government make investing in social housing a priority;

AND FURTHERMORE that the government increase lobbying efforts to restore CMHC contributions for operations and maintenance and that the GNWT organize its own spending to take maximum advantage of federal funds available;

AND FURTHERMORE that the government develop a comprehensive and fully costed strategic plan to achieve these goals and provide the plan to the standing committee on social develop at the earliest opportunity;

AND FURTHERMORE that the government provide a comprehensive response to this motion within 120 days. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is in order. To the motion. I'll allow the mover to speak to the motion.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I rise today as the mover of this motion aimed at addressing the deplorable state of housing endured by too many of our citizens, and disproportionately by our most vulnerable citizens. The purpose of this motion is to demonstrate the determination of this Assembly to take action to improve the state of our territorial housing stock: its suitability, adequacy and affordability. It is a priority of the 18th Assembly to increase the availability of safe and affordable housing and create solutions to address homelessness. As this motion states, the prevalence of core need in our housing stock, both publicly and privately owned, is large and trending larger. The 2014 NWT Community Survey provides information on the condition of all housing in the NWT by examining nationally accepted indicators, including suitability, adequacy and affordability. I know we've talked about this today Mr. Speaker, but I'll just briefly go over them again. Suitability is defined as having the appropriate number of bedrooms for the number of occupants as determined by the National Occupancy Standards.

Adequate housing must have running water, an indoor toilet, bathing and washing facilities and must not require major systemic repairs. Affordable housing costs less than 30 per cent of net household income. If a dwelling does not meet one or more of these conditions: suitability, adequacy or affordability, the dwelling is considered to have a housing problem. If a dwelling has a housing problem and a total household income below the core need income threshold, it is considered to be in core need. The data points out that the chronic deficit in core need is not improving, and it won't improve until we get serious about meeting the housing needs of our citizens. The available data and our motion indicate that there are 15,000 houses in the NWT and that one-fifth of them are unaffordable or unsuitable or inadequate; in other words, in core need, and that compares to a national core need rate of 12 per cent. As to supply, we know there are 738 families and individuals on waiting lists for public housing in the NWT because it is their most affordable option. The lack of opportunity for affordable accommodation drives the prices of rental housing up in an endless cycle. This situation hasn't improved for as long as we've been carrying out the territorial housing surveys and that's not surprising. When it comes to capital spending, it's the roads, bridges, fibre optic link, and the so-called economic building blocks that get the lion's share of cash. Two hundred-plus million for a bridge; a hundred million as the territorial share of the road to Tuk and \$85 million for a fibre optic line.

Despite these investments, the GNWT has a public infrastructure deficit of \$3.4 billion as calculated last year. The largest part of that is for roads but the figure also includes hospitals and health centres, and community-owned infrastructure. This is huge figure, Mr. Speaker; twice the size of the territorial budget and it doesn't include the investment required in housing. Half of the 2400 units owned by the NWT Housing Corporation will need to be replaced in the next 20 years at a total cost of \$600 million. The question is about what order to address these needs in. What are the capital spending priorities of this Assembly? They're stated as the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Slave Geological Province Highway and the Whati All-Season Road, in that order. These are the projects we've repeatedly been told will bring prosperity, employment, opportunity and an end to want for our citizens. Well, that hasn't happened before, Mr. Speaker, and in our flat economy it's not likely to happen now. The cost of living here in Yellowknife has not been reduced because we have a \$200-million bridge. The Inuvik to Tuk Highway will be completed in 2018, but with the oil and gas industry moribund, that's not going to magically bring jobs to either Inuvik or Tuktoyaktuk. In all our communities, the prosperity and well-being of our citizens

depends most fundamentally on having an adequate and affordable home to live in. Keeping and getting a job depends on having a safe and healthy place to live. Getting to school and being ready to learn, that also depends on having a safe and healthy place to live. In fact, of course, no one benefits from having substandard housing.

Mr. Speaker, that's the reason for this motion. With it, Members want to send a clear message to this government, and to the people of the Northwest Territories, that we are serious about making progress on improving housing conditions. For the purposes of the coming business plans, we are indicating the direction we want this government to heed in setting future spending priorities. The motion calls for action in three ways. We are calling on this government to make a commitment to reducing the level of core need for all NWT housing by two per cent per year for four years so that we meet the national average. The government will need to evaluate of the total cost to redress core need at a rate of two per cent a year and attach a dollar value to the work that will be needed annually to achieve this goal. We would hope and expect to see that funding commitment begin in the next business planning cycle. That deals with the adequacy and suitability elements of core need.

Mr. Speaker, there's then supply. Our motion calls on the government to make investing in social housing a priority. This government needs to factor in the \$30 million annual investment to replace public housing units. There's another unknown amount of money required to meet the needs of the hundreds of people who are on the public housing waiting list. I want to stress that one of the major justifications this government makes in putting the case for big infrastructure projects is the employment that will result. This is no less true of a big capital building program for housing. Investing in an increased supply of public housing will put people in homes and, for the periods of construction, will put people to work.

Finally, this motion calls upon our government to increase lobbying efforts to restore CMHC contributions for operations and maintenance, and for the GNWT to organize its own spending to take maximum advantage of federal funds available. Mr. Speaker, I'm not overstating the case when I say the need is desperate. We want our citizens to prosper and to see an easing in the huge burden of negative social conditions, so many of which can be attributed, directly or indirectly, to poor housing conditions. We built a \$200-million bridge that provided a negligible, if any, benefit in reducing the cost of living here in the North Slave. How the Members of the day put that project ahead of putting roofs over the heads of our people is beyond me, but this has got to stop. We cannot continue to ignore the suffering, and that's not

melodramatic. This does result in suffering of our citizens. We cannot continue to see this trend become worse and worse as the years go on. It's time to call a halt, beginning with this motion today. I look forward to support of Members for this motion. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. I'll allow a seconder, Member for Deh Cho, to speak to the motion.

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of this motion and in seconding the motion. I'd like to thank my colleague for developing the motion, and I encourage the House to pass this motion unanimously. Housing, of course, is a basic need apart from food and plus at the same time a sense of belonging of human people. Here in the NWT, housing is the foundation and plus the very pillar of our society. It's become a very big issue in the NWT, and you know I think it's about time that we come together to forge a trail to ensure that, you know, the future generations that are coming down the line have a very strong foundation. Here in the NWT, we pride ourselves on being Northerners at the same time recognizing very distinctively and priding ourselves in our homeland. We need to reflect upon those very words, our homeland. If we don't have a home, then we don't really have a land. In that respect, Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of this and encourage all my colleagues to support this motion. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have to confess that before I was elected I really didn't pay a lot of attention to the housing situation here in the Northwest Territories, but I was certainly shocked when I did look into the 2014 Housing Needs Survey. You know, the sort of statistics in here, non-market communities, 44.3 per cent of our housing has problems. Thirty-two-point-three per cent of non-market communities have housing in core need. That's a third of the housing in non-market communities. People should let that sink in for a minute. Now, when we talk about housing, people need to understand, I think, as that the mover says, and I want to thank the mover for her efforts on this, that it does actually create jobs. Construction creates seven times the number of jobs compared to oil and gas extraction, three times the number of jobs compared to diamond mining. Repair and maintenance creates 25 times the number of jobs compared to oil and gas and 12 times the number of jobs compared to diamond mining. These aren't socialist statistics or come from some crazy source; these are actually from the Northwest Territories Bureau of Statistics and 2012 NWT economic multipliers report. I'm not making this up. If we want to put our people to work

in the Northwest Territories, put them to work building homes and maintaining them. That's what's going to turn our economy around, not big mega projects. We need to invest in housing. I don't have to make the case for this. The mover and the seconder already did that. When we reviewed the business plans, I was certainly surprised that we don't actually have a plan to bring our housing stock into better shape. I asked directly the president of the Housing Corporation: do we actually have a plan to bring our housing out of core need? No, we don't have such a plan. I was just astounded. In the federal budget, the federal government is actually looking at doubling its investment in affordable housing. They've indicated that they have \$732 million for Aboriginal and northern housing in the last federal budget. We don't have a plan to access that funding. We don't have a proposal. Sure, there's guidelines that may still have to be developed, but we don't have a submission ready to give to the federal government to bring our housing out of core needs. That's a failure of our system. We've got to develop that plan. That's what this motion calls for and I implore our Members of this House to support it unanimously. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I speak to support the motion on housing from the Member for Yellowknife Centre, seconded by the Member for Deh Cho. Mr. Speaker, as the motion indicates housing is a basic need. You can't have success in school, you can't have a successful career; you can't follow whatever pursuit you choose as a vocation unless you have a sufficient home. It's essential to the health and well-being of individuals and families and frankly the North. In the North, we face significant challenges in many areas of public administration because of our huge land base, widely distributed population, and harsh environmental conditions. We recognize that the challenges increase our costs in an uncertain economy. These conditions are precisely why the need for sufficient housing must be a priority. People with safe, secure, and affordable shelter will be able to remain healthier, stay in school, be more successful at whatever vocation they choose. Suitable, adequate, and affordable housing is a foundation upon which success in life can rest. For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting this motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise also in support of this motion. I think that the housing situation in the NWT is bad. We have situations in our small communities where we

have a lot of home ownership units. The survey from the Housing Corporation itself indicates that over 38 per cent of those units are in core need, and the majority of that core need is made up of suitability and adequacy issues. I questioned the way they determine core need with the idea that NWT Housing Corporation has a strong belief and apparently so do the federal government that a person that has a perfectly good home that's suitable that cannot afford it is actually in core need. I just don't understand that logic, but that as it may be makes this motion important that when the government responds to it and we're asking for a plan, we need to look at that because in reality if you said you wanted to reduce a core need by two per cent per year or eight per cent over the next four years, you can just provide cash subsidies to the 1,800 people on the list that we're considering to have an affordability issue only and we're counting them as core need, and we would just eliminate core need or reduce core need much below the national averages by addressing core need by addressing affordability which the government calls core need. I want to make sure that when the government responds to this. That they're responding to it in a constructive way where we can see housing projects, where we can see jobs in small communities and some of the people in these communities that are counted to have core need issues because they have an affordability issue can actually take themselves out of core need just by working. I think then it's really important that the government when they put this plan together, if they put this plan together, it's going to be a recommendation from this side, I'm sure, that it includes good projects in the communities. Projects where something physical happens so that we have people working on these houses in the communities addressing the core need issues for those specific homes, hopefully addressing some aging in place issues at the same time. It's got a lot of good facets to trying to do some work in housing. It's considered to go very well for the employment and especially for the individuals in housing.

You know, public housing people often come to me and say, "my house is in very poor shape." Often my response is, "well, it shouldn't be." "My house is too small." "Well, it shouldn't be." Because public housing is designed to eliminate core need. We have people in public housing and the government themselves, the Housing Corporation themselves, indicate that there's a huge issue with suitability in public housing, a huge issue with adequacy in public housing. These public housing units have maintenance budgets, they have extraordinary maintenance, they have retrofit budgets. All of these things that are actually supposed to address the housing problem and apparently it doesn't. When I look at core need, I'm looking at home ownership and I'm concentrating on home

ownership, and that's the majority of my work as a Regular Member in this Assembly, as a Member on Cabinet, as a Regular Member previously. The majority of my work has been to address housing needs. I get into a community and I visit 30 households, 15 of them, 20 of them, are talking about housing, even if it's a separate issue. It always comes back to housing. Everyone has a housing issue. There's no jobs out there for them to be able to take themselves out of core need. It's an opportunity here for the Housing Corporation to use the money that they get from the government, from us, and from the federal government, and from the GNWT every year to be able to effectively and strategically spend that money on housing where we have benefits, benefits of employment that'll have, and I've been talking about this forever, that has a rippling effect, a positive rippling effect, across the communities. If we're able to put people to work, they're able to address these core need issues. I think this is so important. I think this is a start. It would be a good start for this Assembly. If we're looking at moving to trying to seriously and strategically spend money and seriously and strategically try to lower the core needs across the NWT, I think we'll have made a big achievement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the motion. Minister of NWT Housing Corporation.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I might need my glasses for this one. I have some small font here and I'm aging. I just want to make one correction before I begin though. I've heard a couple of times that the 2014 needs assessment, Members have quoted it's 32 per cent in housing core need, and that is actually incorrect. 31.7 per cent have a housing problem, but everyone that has a housing problem does not necessarily mean core need. The total core need actually on this assessment from 2014 is 19.8 per cent, so I wanted to correct that to start with. Then to go further with the motion actually, we've been told that we need to get serious, and we are serious about housing within the NWT. The GNWT does agree that we need to look at the goal of decreasing core need to at least the national levels. We use this point... And every time we meet with the federal, provincial, territorial meetings we say that constantly that the NWT, Nunavut, and the three Territories of the Yukon Territory have the greatest housing needs and the greatest core needs, so we talk about it all the time. We advocate it all the time, and so we are serious that we need to address that. The federal engagement, however, is really key to doing that. I mean we could build all the houses we want. The reality is that the CMHC funding is declining and will end within 20 years, and if we don't find a way to provide for that operating and maintenance cost we're in trouble, so

we do need a plan. I'll address that later on in my talking. The other thing that I want to talk about is that we have spent millions of dollars from the years 2009 to 2014. We invest \$174 million in capital investment in housing. Of those years, even though we spent \$174 million, from the same time in 2009 our core need was 19 per cent. After spending \$174 million in 2014 our core need was 20 per cent. We actually went up a percentage within that. We've spent millions and millions and it's still not addressing we have huge needs.

The other thing that I'd like to talk about is that we have made an indent within the communities. Our core need within the communities has actually gone down substantially and at the same time that our core needs of the communities went down, Yellowknife increased. It went from nine per cent to 18 per cent, and that's really about affordability. We don't have rent controls within the NWT and so the Government of the Northwest Territories has no control over what market rent is going for. People that work in the services industry that are making a minimum wage, \$10.50 an hour, have affordability issues within the market communities because rents are like \$1,500 minimum for one bedroom. There are huge affordability issues and the Government of Northwest Territories can't control that because we can't control the rental market. I want to talk about one thing we tried. My people say is it just about money so we have tried to do a transitional rent program that we gave people \$500 a month to supplement their rent. It was a two-year program. In all honesty, when people say about income support and money, that was kind of a supplement to income support because we were giving people extra money on top. It wasn't really building housing or fixing housing. It was only keeping people in housing. Within that, we had a really hard time getting the intake for it, even though we advertised weekly in the newspaper for a full year of that. We needed to work on some communications, but it wasn't done.

What are the drivers of core need? We have huge issues: an aging population that we are facing, limited employment opportunities in our rural and remote communities, Members have spoken over and over in the House about the lack of jobs within the communities and the lack of positions. The government recognizes that. Some of the strategies that they have been talking about is highways to make people more accessible, to deal with the cost of living, to promote mining, et cetera, looking at fisheries, looking at other enterprises that we can do, diversifying our market. We are considering it, but jobs are key. Until we have adequate jobs for everybody in the communities, we will always have core need issues. The other issue we have is really aging infrastructure. We have really old homes. Again, with the lack of CMHC funding, it is

declining, so we have trouble meeting all the needs of the people. Huge populations of the community actually rely on public housing. Our needs are bigger than our abilities to deal with them. We have a host of programs, but really what I want to say is that the federal government, they do recognize that northern housing is a priority. Although, I need Members to realize that we only have 43,000 people within the NWT, and we cover a huge, vast area of land within the whole of Canada. Within that, when we are getting federal transfer payments, it is based on the 43,000 people. We don't have the resources that larger centres in the south have. Our whole population could fit on a couple of blocks in some of the major cities in the south. We don't get the money that they have. However, within this new year, the federal government has given us \$35 million that we will use towards that. They recognize it, and we are advocating strongly. The housing percentage of money that we spent in the Northwest Territories compared to our revenue, even though we get the least amount. We only get paid for 43,000 people. We spent seven times the national average on our housing compared to our revenue than every other jurisdiction. We are spending huge amounts of money, more so than anyone else. We don't have the revenue base to be able to justify that.

There was a comment made as well that we didn't have a plan, that the Housing Corporation had no plan. In fact, the Housing Corporation has been using a plan. It is called "Building for the Future: Northern Solutions for Northern Housing." They were using that, it was developed in 2012, and it just recently expired. We are actually looking at doing the survey, like I have said many times in this House, and the results of the survey will lead into our new plan. The plan will be, like I said and I presented in our business plan as well, we know that CMHC money is gone, and we are working on a 20-year plan, not a three-year plan or a five-year plan, but a 20-year plan, to actually address the declining CMHC funding. The other thing people have said is we need to step up our lobbying efforts and that we have no proposal for the federal government. Actually, in fact, I have met with the other two territories. We have agreed to work in partnership to promote the needs of the Northwest Territories. We haven't got an MOU, but we are in the process of designing it. We have developed a package that is still in draft form, that the three territories have to approve before I will release it, that advocates for the federal money. The three territories have come together. We are advocating strongly as a group to make the federal government recognize that the territories are different in that we have higher needs and higher costs. Then of course, again, we are going down at the end of this month to actually have the provincial-territorial meetings to address that.

I also want to talk about the definition. It was approached by a Member that we should change the definition of our core need within the NWT. However, I think that is kind of, at this point, not reasonable because the motion is actually looking for us to address our core need to match the national core need. If I change our definition, then I am actually comparing apples to oranges instead of apples to apples. If we want to match their national definition, then we have to use the national definition so that we can actually have a comparable rate so that it is measurable so that we know if we have actually met it. It would be easy to say affordability is a write off. Take everybody that can't afford their places and write them off. I have beat the national core need because affordability is a core need. When people are making \$10.50 an hour and they are paying \$1500 a month, that is a core need. They cannot afford to do that. What is really different here, that we do differently in the Northwest Territories that isn't done in the other jurisdictions, is that we don't base it off of just 30 per cent. We consider the affordability, 30 per cent, but we also consider our cost of living. Within our public housing units, for example, people are only paying between four per cent to 19.5 per cent of their income towards rent. Every other jurisdiction that is using this core need are paying 30 per cent. We already are giving people breaks because we are not charging them 30 per cent than everyone else is. We have had the luxury to be able to use our monies to provide programs as we think best for northern people. If I am forced to meet the core need as defined by the national definition, then I have to restructure and look at the programs that we do and say, okay, if we are just looking at those programs and we only want to meet 30 per cent, then I really have to be careful and say, is it the best use to meet that goal that we provide extra programs. For example, the four per cent in the rent charges instead of the 30 per cent. I have to really caution the Members to be really careful in what they are putting forward with this motion because the NWT Housing Corporation does a lot of programs that are outside just meeting the core need. We do have some programs, as in CARE Major, that will give programs... That are not a cost-sharing. All of those things might have to come to an end. If my whole focus has to be on just getting down two per cent a year to meet the national core need, then anything extra that we are doing that isn't in the national standards, we need to look if we can afford that, or if we should be taking that money and putting it towards the core need that the Members wish so that we can become a national standard but really not addressing the needs of the people within the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Sahtu.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to rise to say that I will support this motion. On the basis of this challenging issue of housing throughout our 33 communities, I know in listening to previous government statements there, it is a department that is surely putting its best efforts forward based on the resources it has. It goes on a 360 scenario where you come back to where it is, just a lack of resources. It kind of disturbs me to use other industries and multipliers to emphasize the needs for this one and the creation of jobs. Addressing this hidden benefit that we do not recognize in our cash flow and in our general accounts is the benefits created by the Norman Wells oil field. The Norman Wells oil field has been producing a magnitude of benefits to the federal coffers. If we had another field like that, rest assured, then we could have measurables to prove that industry works and generates prosperity for this government, in turn injecting more programs into the communities. I ask and I will reply to my question in saying I see on a daily basis over 100 direct jobs in the community of Norman Wells for Imperial Oil, that is not to mention the supply chain management system in place to support the community and support that industry. If you included that additional workforce, it will be much higher. The town of Norman Wells realizes over \$300,000 in quarry fees. That is additional and over and above. There is an incremental amount of benefits out there. For those reasons, I think we have to keep our options open on industry creation of benefits that lie within this high-potential part of Canada. I make that statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly the issue of core need is a complex one. I don't think any Members of this Assembly underestimate how challenging it will be to solve. What this motion does is provide clear direction that is both measurable and achievable to this government to address a serious problem here in the NWT. If it is true that the national core need statistic doesn't apply to the North, well my constituents don't feel it that way. They're looking for relief in terms of affordability, and I think the same can be said for many of the constituents, at least the Regular Members' constituents. We've heard we need to do more and that is why I stand in support of this motion and why this motion is being debated today, because we do need to do more to create affordable, safe, secure housing for Northerners. This motion doesn't commit this government to any spending; it commits the government to action, an action that can be clearly communicated with Northerners. What we are doing to make a difference in their lives and make a difference to bring the North in line with the national

standards and celebrate an improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the people we serve. For that reason, I encourage all Members of the Assembly to support it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. I'll allow the mover, Member for Yellowknife Centre, to conclude her remarks on the motion. Oh, sorry, we do have another Member to the motion. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that we hear a lot about, I mean in all my time here, and having had the opportunity to be the Minister of Housing and work in the housing field for over half of my life, I mean I understand some of the challenges that the housing across the NWT is facing. I've said it before and I'll say it again, that I will put the condition of our units up against anywhere in the country. There are some challenges. Is it perfect? No. Does it need some work? Yes, it does. It's an ongoing process. For those that have been around for a while and been involved in housing for a while, know that it's an ongoing process. One of the things I would like to see, if we do have another community needs survey, is have one that's not so much opinion-based. Because if I went to all 19 Members of this Assembly and asked you is there anything wrong with your house, we'll always say yes, because as good as you keep it there's always something wrong with your house. It's a challenge that I think this government's willing to meet and I think the Regular Members have pointed out that it is a challenge that they want to see this government met. The reason I stood up is to say, because this was direction to Cabinet, we will be abstaining from the vote. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just going to be brief on this. A couple things come to my mind. If core needs keep on going up when we keep on spending money on this, then we're doing it wrong. I honestly think that we need to be looking at how our Housing Corporation is doing the job and working with the people to make it more efficient. My other challenge I have is we look at cost-saving measures by bringing modular homes in, but we don't take into the fact the income support or the money that's being taken away from people working. Again, this is a challenge. When I look at the survey done by the Housing Corp, they talk about the social programs, talk about accountability, there's no problems there. When we look at it adequacy problems, suitability, were huge in these areas. Where actually it, what is it here, 19.4 per cent in public housing as an issue. We're at 19.8 per cent for total core needs as an issue. I think the government needs to look at it. I agree

with the Finance Minister: we need to do it right. If we're going to go in and do surveys, it's great that we're going out and asking people for their opinions, but let's actually do it right and get it done right this time so we don't have these challenges in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. To the motion. I'll allow the mover to conclude her remarks on the motion.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I've been involved with housing issues for many years before I came to this Legislative Assembly. I have seen people live in want of a decent place to live, to succeed in their lives. I have often said that you can't expect much from someone who doesn't have a house or who lives in overcrowded housing and housing that is in very bad repair. How will they get out of bed in the morning to go to school? How will they get the rest they need to do their jobs? Mr. Speaker, an important moment for me was at Christmas when a house burned down in Tuktoyaktuk. There was a picture of it on the CBC News website. Mr. Speaker, that house was the size of a normal living room. The story reported that 12 people lived there, 12 people lived in that house in Tuktoyaktuk. Their family was going to have to take them in because they had nowhere to live, which meant that overcrowded conditions would become even more overcrowded. This government puts out hundreds of millions of dollars for health and social services, education, economic diversification and so on. If people don't have the basics, all we're doing is sticking a Band-Aid on this problem. We need to address the basics of this problem. I recognize that this problem is different in different places. In Yellowknife it is affordability. In the smaller communities it is suitability and adequacy. Whatever plan that the Housing Corporation is going to come up with, and I'm sure that the Housing Minister is engaged in that at this moment, it has to address the different issues in different places. I recognize that this is a potentially overwhelming problem, the numbers are so large, of houses in need, people in need, and the money required to get on top of all of this, but we have to try. We just simply do have to try. We have to be strategic and ask the government to be strategic, to work with them to create a successor to the Building for the Future plan and roll this discussion into consideration of that strategic plan to come up with tangible measures to reduce the core housing need, which is ultimately the right measure for this problem. I appreciate the support of my colleagues. I'm disappointed that the Cabinet will abstain on such an important and fundamental issue, and I'd like to request a recorded vote. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

RECORDED VOTE

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. A recorded vote has been requested. All those in favour, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Ms. Green, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Vanthuyne, Mr. Blake, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Testart, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Thompson, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. SPEAKER: All those opposed, please stand. All those abstaining, please stand.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Moses, Ms. Cochrane, Mr. Abernethy, Mr. McLeod – Yellowknife South, Mr. McLeod – Inuvik Twin Lakes, Mr. Schumann, Mr. Sebert.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. The results of the recorded vote: in favour, nine; opposed, zero; abstentions, seven.

---Carried

Motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Marci cho, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the committee would like to consider Tabled Document 50-18(2), Main Estimates, 2016-2017, and committee would like to consider the NWT Housing Corporation budget.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Does committee agree?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We will consider the document after a short break. Thank you.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We are back to order. We've agreed to consider Tabled Document 50-18(2), Main Estimates, 2016-2017 and we've agreed to begin consideration of NWT Housing Corporation. I'll turn to the Minister responsible for the department for opening comments, Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the 2016-2017 main

estimates for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. The main estimates propose a budget of \$146,907,000, an increase of 2.6 per cent or \$3,780,000 from the 2015-16 main estimates. The budget includes a contribution of \$81,702,000 from the Government of the Northwest Territories for 2016-17. These estimates continue to support the objectives of limiting expenditure growth in order to sustain the long-term sustainability of the fiscal framework.

Highlights of the proposed estimates includes the addition of \$16.6 million in new federal social infrastructure funding aimed at public housing replacement, repairs and renovations to Northwest Territories Housing Corporation rental housing, single units to address small community homelessness, semi-independent Housing First units in emergency shelters, repairs to family violence shelters and third-party social housing, homeownership repairs and other minor capital repairs;

This federal funding includes:

- \$1.1 million for replacement and modernization and improvement projects to seniors' public housing;
- \$3.5 million in strategic initiative funding for RCMP housing;
- forced growth of \$164,000 related to northern allowance for Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and local housing organization employees;
- sunsets of \$700,000 for energy efficiency initiatives and \$5 million in capital funding to support public housing renovations;
- reprofiling of \$578,000 of the new federal funding to the Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements program; and
- reductions of \$435,000 to the Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership program.

The proposed Northwest Territories Housing Corporation estimates continue to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly. Specific activities in support of these priorities include:

- building more seniors' supported independent living units;
- marketing preventive maintenance, renovation, and mobility upgrades to let seniors age in place;

- support Housing First, address the high demand for singles' households, and review homelessness supports;
- implement community-based housing property management services;
- rationalize public housing utility structures to promote self-reliance;
- support land requirements for new housing investment;
- develop options to support Aboriginal and local governments in meeting the housing aspirations of their residents; and
- improve the energy efficiency of public housing.

That concludes my opening remarks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Would you like to bring witnesses into the Chamber? Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce her witnesses?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On the right hand I have Mr. Jeff Anderson, he's the president and CEO for the NWT Housing Corporation. On the left Mr. Jim Martin; he's the vice-president of finance and infrastructure services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. We'll now proceed to consider the detail for the NWT Housing Corporation. We have the departmental summary on page 358, but we'll defer that. This is a little different from the other departments. We will turn back to page 356 for the first information item. It shows the expenditures, capital and financing, financing sources. I'll give the Members a moment to have a look and then we can proceed with comments and questions. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have a question on the opening remarks. I'd like to ask the Minister what marketing preventive maintenance means? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Marketing preventive maintenance is preventive maintenance services that we provide to people, such as seniors, et cetera. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Okay. I know what preventive maintenance is. I just wanted to know what marketing preventive maintenance meant.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll be marketing preventive maintenance programs, because we realize that preventive maintenance is the proactive way of addressing issues. For example with our seniors, we'll be actually trying to go into their homes and to try to promote the preventive maintenance aspect as a key focus within our fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Nothing further from Mr. Beaulieu. Any more comments or questions? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We're on page 356, correct? I notice in the CMHC/AHI and renovation programs there is almost a \$16-million increase. Could they please explain? Is that the federal funding that we got from the federal government? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, yes, it is federal monies that we received, the \$16 million. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: No, that's all I have on this page. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Further comments or questions on this page? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question concerns the capital acquisition plan. I'm wondering if the Minister can tell us about the rationale that's applied to deciding which assets to acquire? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How we do the capital acquisition is we consider the following items for priorities in our capital planning. We look at the age of the asset, we focus on units that are over 40 years of age, we look at the condition rating, the operating performance and the community and LHO

consultations within that. Then units are considered beyond economic repair if the cost to repair the asset is 70 per cent or more of the cost of replacement. At that time, it makes more sense to build a unit. Most units beyond economic repair are replaced with multi-configured units that we're looking at, such as the small multi-units that we've talked about in session today. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for that response. I'm wondering then whether there is any regional distribution of the money beyond the age of the asset and the other items that she spoke about. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We look at the stock within the territories and we try to make sure that the stock is actually fairly evenly distributed throughout the communities that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the reasons I ask is because I think some of the highest core need for affordability and suitability is in the Tlicho region. The amount of money that is going to be spent in the two neediest communities, Gameti and Whati, is minimal compared to other communities. I'm wondering if the Minister can explain why that is. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, some of our smaller communities actually don't take as much revenues because the population is small and the amount of unit that we, Public housing, has in there are small too, so we don't need as much financial resources within those communities to be able to address their needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Do we have any further comments or questions on this page? Does committee agree: we move on?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Moving on to page 359, active position summary. Comments or questions? No comments or questions from committee. We can move on to community housing services. We have deferred the total activity on 361 and we can discuss the information item on page 362. Comments or questions? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, I'm just trying to follow along. When I was asking my questions, I thought we were on page 356, but weren't we in fact on page 358?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We were discussing page 356; that was the first page that we discussed. Now we've moved on to page 362. Do you have comments or questions on page 362? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I noted in the Minister's opening remarks, she said she was going to implement community-based housing, property management services. I'm wondering if she could explain what that means. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we're looking at expanding our LHO services to Fort Liard, Whati, and Gameti. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Nothing, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Nothing further from Ms. Green. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Minister. In regards to Fort Liard, when is it going to be established? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, you will see that set up fairly soon. We are just trying to get office accommodation at this point, and then you will have three positions within the Fort Liard community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the Minister for that answer. Are these three staff going to be reporting to Simpson or is it going to be just a LHO with a local board in Fort Liard? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To begin with, we will be reporting to the regional office until the LHO office is stabilized. Then we will look at getting a local board within that community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. These three positions, what are the positions going to entail? Is it plumbers? Carpenters? Or is it office administration? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, the standard LHO setup within the community is one manager and two maintenance workers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is it going to be just general maintenance people? I know in Fort Simpson, they have plumbers and the like. Within Fort Liard, is it just going to be general maintenance and they will still have to bring in people from Fort Liard or businesses to do the other maintenance? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do strive to get housing maintainers for those positions. These are community positions and we try to work with the capacities within each community. It depends on what the abilities and the skills within the communities and who applies for the positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that. In regards to these LHOs and these positions, will there be on-the-job training? Will they bring in somebody, say from Fort Simpson, or around the areas, to help get them better prepared? Kind of a mentoring process at the beginning. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My deputy minister tried to joke and say no.

But I am not accepting that. The reality is, yes, that we do try to train. We recognize that we need to build the capacity sometimes in the communities and so we provide training. There is no limit to the training in case you were wondering that. It is based on the needs of the workers. We will train and give them the support that they need until we figure and they figure that they can work on their own. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. It makes me very happy to hear that. We are building capacity, which is great. With this LHO, is it just strictly going to be Fort Liard, or is it going to have off-shoots to Nahanni Butte? Because right now Fort Simpson covers the whole region, so I am just trying to understand if they will have an off-shoot to one of the other smaller communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point, we are just going to start with Fort Liard because we do have the other two communities that we also want to focus on. Then we will look at other communities that don't have those provisions within the next fiscal budget to determine where we go next with that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In regard to apprenticeships, I know I have been talking to the local one in Fort Simpson and they are still trying to figure out how to get apprenticeships in there. Has the department looked at getting the apprenticeships into the community or is this an LHO directive? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Apprenticeships are really valued within the Housing Corp and also within the GNWT as a whole. Yes, we try to promote apprenticeships on their own. We also support the LHOs if they can identify someone within their community and they think that they are appropriate for an apprenticeship program, then we would consider their request for financing so that we can provide that support within their community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister for that answer. Just a little bit more clarification in regards to this process. Is it 100-per cent funded by the Housing Corp or is it 50-50 or cost-sharing arrangements to ensure success? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Housing Corp actually fully funds for the apprenticeships, so the LHOs do not have the extra expense on them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am good with this page. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister if we will be talking about the development of options to support Aboriginal and local governments in meeting housing aspirations of their residents further on into the main estimates.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am a bit confused with the question. As stated again previously in the House, I am more than interested in working with the Aboriginal governments so that they can take ownership with their own housing needs. I am really conscious that we need to make sure that they are not set up to fail. It would be sitting down with them and actually defining what they want and moving forward in that way. Our interest is in working with governments that are looking at self-governing and taking on housing. We will look at providing the supports and skills they need to be able to take that on if anybody has somebody interested at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this is a budget session. In the opening remarks, the Minister indicates that they will be developing options to support Aboriginal local governments. My question: is it appropriate at this time to speak on that issue or is it actually a line item in there, in this main estimate somewhere where it is not completely apparent to me at this point. Asking that question: is it in the main estimates? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, that was just actually mentioned in our opening remarks. We don't have a budget line on it. Currently, what we are doing though is we are providing presentations to Aboriginal governments on housing activities currently. We are looking at things like the land designation on the Hay River Reserve. We are working with Aboriginal governments so that they can meet their needs above and beyond what we normally do within our activities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is it for this line of questioning. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Any further questions on this page? Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question relates to an earlier statement that was made in the House in terms of the jurisdictional issues and red tape that stand in the way of taking the boards off a board of houses and making them available for residents to call their homes. Speaking specifically of the Hay River Reserve, can the Minister give me an update in terms of what type of arrangement has been made? Perhaps the offices from either Hay River district or else the South Slave district that perhaps will be involved in terms of working with the First Nations to ensure that those houses are made available for residents on the Hay River Reserve. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Specific to the Hay River Reserve, we have been working hard within that to support the Aboriginal government on the reserve. There were 16 units actually that we built and put up and actually ended up being boarded up because of land tenure issues. We have dealt with negotiating with the federal government, which took a long process, and I have to give credit to the Minister before my time actually for starting that, but we now have ten of those 16 units that we actually have negotiated with the federal government and we have land tenure. We are still continuing to negotiate with the federal government to get the other six units opened up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the idea in terms of the LHOs and their association with maintenance and communities... But I understand on the reserve they don't really have an existing LHO. My question is where would the maintenance come from? Would it come from the Hay River district housing district? Would it come from the subsidy for housing district? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, the Hay River LHOs provide support to the Hay River Reserve. Like I say, we do have three communities in this fiscal budget that we are looking at developing LHOs in their communities. Hay River Reserve would be one of the ones that we would be examining within the next future budgets coming up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One of the corporate highlights in terms of the housing mission and corporate goals is to improve services that was for implementing and expanding community-based housing property management services in rural and remote communities. Would the First Nations have an opportunity to perhaps sit down with the Minister and her department in arranging at least some form of maintenance arrangement to ensure that those houses could be serviced perhaps if the opportunity exists? Or else maybe explore the opportunity to see if the services and maintenance could be done by First Nations people from the reserve? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, within this current budget, we have committed to setting up three LHOs within the community so we won't be taking on any more within this current budget. We are more than happy to meet with the communities and see what we can do to best meet their needs. Again, like I had said before, we will be examining other communities within each fiscal budget coming up. The goal is to have LHOs in all communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: This will be my final question on this section, Mr. Chair. Is the Minister indicating or stating that possibly in the near future there could be an existing LHO on the Hay River Reserve? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I reinstate that we are committed to trying to get in every community that has the capacity; we are looking to eventually have an LHO office. At this time, in this budget, no, we will not be providing LHOs in the Hay River Reserve. But, yes, I am willing to meet with them and, yes, we will consider it in future years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Anything further, Mr. Nadli? Nothing further from Mr. Nadli. Do we have any further comments or questions on page 362? Seeing none, we will return to the page 361. Are there comments or questions on the operations expenditure summary on page 361? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is my understanding that the Housing Corporation includes the cost of power in the rent that is charged. Is that correct? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, at this point, people pay nine cents towards the utilities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will take that to mean nine cents per kilowatt hour. My question is: what plans is the Housing Corporation making to reduce the costs of subsidizing power to the social housing units, to their units? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. If the Minister could clarify that it was nine cents per kilowatt hour. Thank you, Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do appreciate the Member's comment and correction. It is nine cents per kilowatt hour. I apologize for that. What we are doing to try to address that, as well, is within this fiscal budget, we are looking at increasing it by another six cents per kilowatt hour to make it 15 cents per kilowatt hour, which is still lower than the general population is paying, but promotes independence within the population. There is also a cost savings when the public pays for their power versus the GNWT paying for the power. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister tell us that, with an increase of six cents

per kilowatt hour up to now, 15 cents per kilowatt hour, what the impact would be on the rent scale? She could choose either the lowest rent or the highest rent just to giving us an idea of the impact. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There will be no impact on the rent scale, actually. This is above and beyond the rent scale. The average cost that will come to a family would be about \$27 per month. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you very much, and I appreciate the Minister's answer on that. Could she tell me what kind of communications plan will be implemented to inform residents about this increase and about ways that they can save costs on power? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The rate increases are usually done by the Power Corporation, so we're working with them on that. We will be communicating to all the residents, though, because we're hoping to implement this by August. There will be communication sent out to everyone that is using our units before that, to give them enough notice. The whole goal is to get people to do more of, just, conservation. We know that the biggest driver or the biggest savings for utilities is conservation, so we need to get people more focused in that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister say how much this increase in power will bring in to the NWT Housing Corporation? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For this year, we'll actually save about \$500,000 by transferring that six cents per kilowatt to each family member. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering if the Housing Corporation has any other energy efficiency or consumption efficiencies planned for

their units, in the areas of heat and water for example. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Housing Corporation has really taken energy conservation really seriously, and so we have a number of measures. That goes back to the multi-units that we're looking at doing, the four-plexes, in communities where they have one boiler system that serves all four units. We also support the Arctic Energy Alliance, who provides, for example, light bulbs to all community members. As well, we have solar on quite a few of our larger units that we have in the communities. Energy is a huge issue for all of us, and the Housing Corporation is trying make our units as energy efficient as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the Minister for that answer. Can the Minister say how much money is being invested in this energy efficiency in this budget? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, I can't actually give you a figure at this point. It is millions of dollars. All of our new units are actually looking at being more energy efficient, so our whole construction going forward is looking at energy efficiency. I can't really nail down a figure on that, but it is in the millions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that the Minister may not have that information to hand, but I'm wondering if she could commit to providing it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we can provide that to the Member and to committee if they would like it, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's everything.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just a follow-up on my colleague's questions: I think one of the best ways to promote energy conservation is to share some of those savings with people that are in public housing. Is there a plan or a way that that can be done to help encourage people in public housing to save energy? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we did commit within the business planning process that we would consider that. At this point, no one is paying their utilities, so once people... Once we give our limited payment of utilities... Once people have more ownership of their own, then we will look at initiatives to actually support that so that we can promote conservation, because that is the most efficient way to conserve energy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the commitment from the Minister. I'm just trying to figure out the timing of this. Is the Housing Corporation going to look at some way of sharing the cost savings with its tenants through energy conservation? Is that going to happen this year or next year or at some future point? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll be doing some research, not only nationally but also internationally, to kind of see what initiatives are out there for energy conservation, so we will commit to that. We also really have to be careful that we're not going to give it all out because part of the savings that we will be taking from the transferring the cost of the power over will actually be used to address our declining CMHC funding because we need to make sure that we have revenues to deal with the operating and maintenance costs that will be coming up, which are declining every year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that there's going to be some research done on this, but could the Minister commit to get back to the standing committee later in 2016-17 with a plan to do this?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. If people could keep their sidebar conversations down, it's making it a bit difficult to hear. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the Member's comment, yes we can commit to actually providing a report back to committee on that within this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Cochrane. Once again, if Members don't mind keeping their conversations a little bit quieter, it's making it difficult for some Members to hear. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that commitment, and I'll look forward to seeing that report. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Are there further comments or questions on page 361? Seeing none, I'll call the page. Community housing services, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$54,017,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): We will proceed to page 364, Executive, operations expenditure summary. Do we have comments or questions on this page, page 364? I'll give committee a moment. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Chair, thank you. I think that the motion that we passed today and discussions we had during the business planning process points to a need to create a new strategic plan for the Housing Corporation, and I understand that they have committed to work on that. Can we get an idea of when that plan might be ready for us to review? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To actually set down a timeline would be difficult because the survey has to be completed first. I have committed to working with providing a survey to some of the local self-governments to be able to look at the survey questions. I have committed to actually providing it to the MLAs to get their input on the questions. Once we get the questions down, then we have to distribute the survey to every staff member, every LHO, every person that's using it, so to nail down a definite date would be difficult at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister remind us what kinds of questions the survey is trying to answer and who the target for the survey is? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The survey is targeted to the communities. By "communities," I mean the government if it's self-government and also the residents within each community. The needs assessments that we currently give is a breakdown and it's an opinion survey, of course. It gives a breakdown on what basically people think are the core needs within their communities. It gives us something that's statistical that says: this is what we should be basing our programs off. We've used it for many years, but it doesn't really address what the community says. If the community is saying that, for example, there are 10 units that need to be fixed in the community but we don't have a seniors' home, the community needs assessment might put priority to the 10 homes, but the community, itself, may see the seniors' home as more important for them. I just want to make sure, being community-based, that we actually are meeting the needs of the community, not what a piece of paper that is done on opinion-based statistics would show us but actually what the community says they prioritize, what they need within their communities. Specific instants, like our needs assessment doesn't talk about cultural-based housing, and I want to know what cultural-based housing means within each community so that, when we provide community houses and supports within those communities, we're conscious of the cultural aspects and the needs to promote culture within each community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm just wondering, if the survey is going to cater to the needs of each community, how a strategic plan will come out of that? I don't understand how the one will lead to the other. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A strategic plan will be developed from the needs surveys in that it will be community-based. Each community, 33 communities within our region, within our territory, will be identified individually, and then the long-term plan will be to address the needs individually within that community. It's not a strategic plan that lumps all into one because I don't believe in

one-size-fits-all. It will be a strategic plan that identifies within each community what are their goals and then strategically how do we address the goals within those communities. There will be community focus, and then there will be a Housing Corporation focus that prioritizes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I'm concerned about is, with this approach, which sounds quite fragmented, how will the Minister be able to make the case to the federal government to increase their investment if there aren't overarching goals of reducing homelessness, reducing core need, and other larger goals? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The strategic framework that we're looking at internally for the Housing Corporation will be based on community needs defined within that, and that is to be as culturally appropriate as possible to the different communities within the territories. However, the territorial plan for the federal engagement will be looking at core needs throughout all three territories, and that information will be based off of our 2014 needs assessment which was done across Canada. We'll be using that tool, as well, to promote the best interests. The federal government, in my opinion, doesn't need to know that we want to have linoleum, for example, in a community because they're hunters, in their homes, but they do need to know that we have a percentage of core need in the whole territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What I'm understanding now is there are two kinds of initiatives here. One is to have the communities to develop their own plan, and I'm not sure how, then, that plan is going to be funded. Then there's another one where the three territories are putting their needs together for federal engagement based on the 2014 assessment. I think my question is: how will the individual community plans be funded? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The community survey, the community needs, will be funded as they are currently, by the funding provided by the federal government and provided by the GNWT. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering if the Minister can tell us or commit to telling us how many empty but viable units there are in each community. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I want to start off with that comment. Because a lot of people, a lot of people actually, believe that every empty, boarded-up home within the communities actually belongs to the NWT Housing Corporation, and that is a fallacy. In fact, there are a lot that are actually market houses people have had and they've left for other houses. People have left. We do have a listing of every community of all of the empty units that are boarded up that belong to the NWT Housing Corporation, and we can provide that to the committee, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There was also some discussion, and this sort of folds into the motion that we passed today during the business plan process, of creating a plan that quantifies the costs of bringing all the housing up to date. Is there work going to be completed in this year that brings that about? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There is work that will be done to address the core need within the communities as outlined within our budget. In all honesty, we'd need about \$30 million to address our own stock at this point, within this fiscal year. Currently, we don't have \$30 million to provide for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could the Minister please expand on that idea, \$30 million to bring the housing stock up to date? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: That assessment is made on if we were to renovate and to bring all of our stock up to a 50-year life span. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's over what period of time?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Year-20 and year-35 houses need to be renovated to bring them back up. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. I'll make this my last question. I understand from the Minister that it would cost \$30 million a year to bring the housing stock up to date. For how many years would the corporation have to spend \$30 million to accomplish that goal? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a 20-year needs assessment, so we would need \$30 million every year for 20 years. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Are there further comments or questions on this page? Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I'm totally confused now about surveys and plans. Can the Minister tell me what sort of surveys she was just discussing with my colleague and how that relates to the five-year housing needs surveys that are conducted by the NWT Housing Corporation? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the needs assessment that's done, for example the 2014 needs assessment that was done last, is done every five years. That is used throughout, nationally, actually, and that defines the core need that people advocate within that, 30 per cent of your income going to housing, et cetera. That's a national tool that we utilize to kind of determine where we are on par with the other regions. The survey that we're seeking to send out is really about individual choices and individual needs. The biggest thing that stuck out for me is Aboriginal governments asking me for culturally appropriate housing. The 2014 needs assessment does not identify anything around culturally appropriate housing, and so I need to find out more

information on that from the people from the communities so that we are providing appropriate housing within their communities, not based on a national survey but actually on what each community says they want to see. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Minister for helping me to understand the difference between these two tools that the Housing Corp is going to be using. I'm still trying to understand how the current surveys that are going to be sent out, is there going to be questions around costs to bring housing stock up to or out of core need? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you Mr. O'Reilly. Minister

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will not be asking in the survey what they think they would need to bring it up to core need. We will, however, be asking what their incomes are to assess whether they are in core need. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The survey will ask questions about affordability in terms of income, I guess, of some communities. I am not quite sure what that level of detail, but how about the other two aspects of core need: suitability and adequacy? How are those aspects to be reflected in the survey that's to be undertaken? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, so what we will be doing is providing them kind of a background that says based on the 2014 needs assessment within your community, this is what we identify as the needs, and then we will be asking the communities based on those and saying can you prioritize what your needs are within that, and are there other needs that we haven't addressed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. As I understand it then, in this work that's going to be done as early as this summer, there will be questions around suitability, adequacy, and affordability. I'm just wondering, I fully understand the need to have community-based housing plans, but if that

information is not rolled up in some way at a territorial level, how can there be a plan, a budget to actually do the work to get our housing out of core need, and to roll that up does require some level of consistency in terms of soliciting information. I'm not suggesting that one size is going to fit all in terms of the plan, but if you don't have a consistent way of asking questions and identifying the core need and costing it somehow, how do you roll it up at the territorial level to develop a proper budget or a plan? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The surveys that will go out actually will be the exact same for each community. The questions will be the exact same. It will just be the answers that we're looking at compiling and dividing that on communities. For example, if I asked Yellowknife and said what would be your priority for this year and they said... I'm just giving examples. If they said for our community, we want a seniors' home, and I asked Whati on what their priority is and they said we want to have CARE Major expanded, then we would look at that within our needs assessment. We would be using both tools and saying okay, the needs assessment says that within Whati, their core needs for suitability is this percent, and they've identified that as their major goal, so within that fiscal year, we would be costing and putting that focus within that community on what they want. Whereas in Yellowknife, we would be costing and putting it on towards more of, say, the seniors' home that I gave for example. Each community will get the same questions. The answers will be costed, and then we will define the priority, what we're going to do in each community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think I'm understanding this a little bit better, but the communities then themselves are not going to be asked about costs. The costs are going to be developed by the Housing Corp in terms of helping communities put together their plans and then rolling that up somehow? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the costs of doing this work will actually be on the NWT Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. that's good to hear, because then there will be a consistent way of costing out the work, and the Housing Corp knows how to cost out housing projects, so they will be applying some sort of consistent methodology presumably, and that stuff can be rolled up. Then would we be in a position to make some predictions of how that will address core needs across the Northwest Territories? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As stated before, we're not throwing away one tool to recook another. They're kind of two different tools. The core needs are actually addressed within the needs survey that are done nationally, so those would still be there. They will still be our priorities. However, we will be asking the communities what they want us to focus on. if, for example, if the federal government, say, gave us \$300,000 to address CARE Major, then we would look at that \$300,000 and say which communities out of the 33 communities have identified CARE Major as their priority, and then we would focus that money, so it would be individual. If we had federal money for seniors, then we would say which communities have identified seniors as their priority and that would be how we would distribute the money versus the current system. Instead of saying we get \$500,000 for seniors and we got 33 communities so we will just try to give a split of that to every community, which, in my opinion, is not the most effective usage of our funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Still just a little bit confused here how this information is going to be rolled up to develop a plan that addresses core needs, but also can be used to prepare plans, proposals that can be submitted to the federal government, given that they seem to have more money for housing. There's some kind of disconnect there. I don't understand how this work is going to help the Housing Corp develop plans that cost out core need and that can be then submitted to the federal government for funding. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, really want to focus that the advocacy to the federal government is based on the core

need assessment, the 2014 core needs assessment. The federal government does not need to know, in my opinion, what each community has prioritized. They need to know that core need within the whole NWT is substantial. Then as well, remembering that we have agreed to a partnership tri-territorial that we are going to be advocating to the federal government, so it would be really disrespectful, in my opinion, once we have agreed to that partnership, that we would be looking individually and trying to promote our own. The three territories when we speak about housing have been speaking in general to the federal government and saying as the North, we have huge core need issues and we need more money. You cannot use the base formula based on population to address our needs.

In general, we're not saying to the federal government that this is how many houses in each community. We're saying we have higher costs of living. We have huge needs. We have lack of infrastructure. We have higher, bigger challenges than communities in the South, so therefore, we need to have base-plus funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly's time has expired, so we will move on to Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister explain what culturally appropriate housing is? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not going to say it's a really good question, but it is a really good question because I didn't have any idea either. The first time that an Aboriginal government came to me and said we want culturally appropriate housing in our community, I kind of thought in my head and I said well, I'm sure that doesn't mean tents and igloos, because we've kind of passed that. I asked them what does culturally appropriate mean to you, and examples were given. For example, the IRC had said that within their community, culturally appropriate, they're hunters, and within their community, they bring in meat, and I know that my father used to be a hunter as well. They bring in meat. They hang it in their house. They have blood dripping. We currently, we bring in tile, housing with tiles and laminate flooring. The blood is dripping. It might go through the cardboard if they have cardboard down, and it gets into the cracks, and it's rotting within their flooring. For them, they want to have ideally laminate or linoleum flooring, and ideally, they'd like some kind of a drain within the room so that they can hang meat. Now, of course,

in Yellowknife, we don't have, my assumption is that we don't have as many people in our public housing units that are hunters, so for Yellowknife, those kind of additions to housings would not be appropriate. I'm not going to go across and say within every community, now we're going to put in linoleum floors and drain pipes, but within the higher north communities, if they address that and they say that's what they need, then we'd be focusing our housing units within those communities based on what they say. Culturally appropriate means whatever the community feels is culturally appropriate to them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the Minister for clarifying that. I think that's a very interesting example, and in the context of food security and traditional activities, that's a very important piece of the puzzle that I wouldn't have considered, so I appreciate the Minister sharing that with us. I think this is a way that our government can be a leader on this is if we make those kinds of decisions that listen to our people, and especially, it reinforces that nation-to-nation dialogue that's going to be so important for Canada moving forward. I wish her all the best in this approach. I have nothing further to say. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. I will let the Minister respond if she would like.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I just want to respond by saying thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Next, we have Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I feel like I have been talking about core need all day here, and then we're getting into more questions around core need. I would like to know how the Housing Corporation sees affordability when the house is in perfect condition and adequately sized or suitably sized, affordability as a housing issue, as a core-need housing issue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. within the affordability, if a person has a suitable house and adequate house in that the roof doesn't leak and they have the proper amount of bedrooms, affordability can still become an issue if they are making, for example, making \$10.50 an hour, and there's no other units within the community, so although they have enough

bedrooms and the roof doesn't leak, they are in a unit that they have no option to be in, but they can't really financially afford to be in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's still my question. My question is what is a person living in a perfect house with enough bedrooms with no adequacy issues that doesn't make enough money have to do with Housing Corporation? My understanding of core need is it's pretty basic. It's not that complex. You have to have an affordability issue, because if you're making \$250,000 or \$300,000 a year, no matter what your house looks like, how small it is, you're never going to be in core need. The same applies the other way. Unless you have a suitability or an adequacy issue, how on earth are you in core need for housing? Because you don't make enough money? Then you go get a subsidy or you get some money. I recognize that the Housing Corporation would like to address people that have affordability issues, not core need issues, affordability issues in other rentals as an example. People that are renting in a private market. They can give subsidies to those guys and reduce the people that have an affordability issue across the Territory or in Yellowknife or wherever there's other rental units, but we can't do anything about their house. We can't add a bedroom to somebody else's house. We can't start fixing somebody else's apartment. The individuals in there have affordability issue? We address it. If the Housing Corporation wants to address that issue, that's fine. Why call it core need for housing? It's not a core need housing issue. I was amazed to see that CMHC has essentially the same description, but we must know that affordability can't stand alone. We must know that by now, that affordability cannot stand alone. No one can convince me that somebody that's not making enough money that lives in an adequate and suitable house has a housing core need issue. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Affordability is a core need. The Members just moved a motion that the Corporation is to try to work two percent per year to meet the national standards, which are set by CMHC, which address affordability as a core need. Within Yellowknife, the major issue is affordability, and it has a huge need of people that can't afford. Nationally, the standard is if you're paying more than 30 per cent of your income for your housing needs, you are in core need. At any point, you're at risk of being homeless. If we ignore people that have a suitable house in

that they have enough rooms, that their roof doesn't leak, and we ignore that they aren't making enough money to pay for the market rent that we're charging in the communities, then we're not addressing, in my opinion, the realities of people. Affordability is a core need, and for anyone that has made \$10.50 an hour and trying to pay for rent within our community of Yellowknife knows that affordability is a core need. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'm not asking the government to ignore people that can't afford their homes. There are subsidies that can be paid to individuals. My point is we have a budget that is there to address people that have adequacy, suitability issues. Somebody's house is not adequate to live in, whether they're lacking electricity, hot and cold running water, continuous heat, solid foundation, whatever, all adequacy issues, however, and/or it's too small. They got more than two people using the national standards on individuals. I'm not going to go through that, but just sufficient to say they have more individuals in the home that either can share or single people in rooms than they have in this particular apartment. How does that become a housing issue? It's an affordability issue, I agree, but in order to have a core need issue for housing, you have to have a suitability or adequacy issue. I could go on and on about the need survey and why we're indicating that people, I mean, private rentals have an adequacy issue or private rentals had a suitability issue. If someone is renting a two-bedroom apartment and chooses to have four people or five people live in there, that's their business. Why would we all of a sudden identify that, mark that down as a core need issue and report it as such? It's the same thing with apartments. If somebody is renting an apartment, spending more than 30 per cent of their income towards apartment, that's not a housing issue. It's an affordability issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm going to have to beg to argue with the Member on that one. Affordability is defined within the national standards on core needs. Like I said, we've just passed a motion in the House that said we're to work towards addressing the core need, national, and so I don't know how I would work towards that if we changed the definition and our definition of core need does not match the national definition of core need, because then I cannot at any time address... I can't compare apples to oranges. If you want me to do the motion and work towards addressing the core need then you need to

use the definition of core need that is nationally accepted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll say one more thing on this. I'm not asking the Minister to ignore core need first of all, I'm asking the Minister to make sure that if there's an affordability issue if there is an affordability issue then it should be coupled with adequacy or suitability or both. That's true core need. An individual that doesn't make enough money that's renting an apartment off Northern Properties is not necessarily in core need as a standard that the Housing Corporation has to go and address. Does the Housing Corporation even have a program to address core need, the affordability issues in the community? If they do, it'll be just a cash thing. As, like I said, they can't go to somebody else's apartment block and start putting in plumbing or running water or adding roofs to someone's private home, right? The question is, shouldn't these all be together? At least affordability should be coupled with one of those other needs or both. Affordability should not stand alone, just as adequacy shouldn't stand alone and neither should suitability. Because a person can have a suitability and adequacy issue but does not have an affordability issue that individual is not in core need.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not too sure what more I can say. The national standard says that it's one of the three: affordability, suitability or adequacy, and my direction earlier in the House said that I have to work towards those national standards. Unless the House is willing to change the motion then I need to be able to work towards the national standard as defined. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Seeing no further questions or comments on this page. I see Mr. O'Reilly has comments or questions. Proceed, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, I'll try to keep this short and I don't want to prolong the discussion. I don't know what Yukon and Nunavut are doing in terms of preparing a plan or a proposal for the federal government...

I'm hoping I can get the Minister's attention.

Sorry. As I was saying, I don't know what the Yukon or Nunavut are doing in terms of preparing a proposal or submission to the federal government for extra money for housing but I'm trying to put myself in the shoes of the federal minister. If there

are these national standards for housing, that's what the last discussion was largely around, we need to use those and adopt them. We've got a 2014 survey that identifies a bunch of our housing as being in core need. The issue is we don't have that costed out. In my opinion, and I'm trying to put myself in the shoes of a federal minister, I want to see a proposal that actually costs out what it would be to bring our housing out of core need. That's the kind of plan, that's the kind of proposal that I think a federal Minister wants to see. How are we going to have that put together, using existing money or some other way, so that we can cost out what the core need is, and that can be submitted to the federal government? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the Members would like, we can actually put together a document that shows the costing to address every single core need within the Territories. We can provide that. The reality, though, is that the argument that we give for the tri-territories is a business case based on the higher cost of living within the territories, and so we advocate again, not on what each territory would need. We just advocate based on that we have the highest core needs amongst the three territories in all of Canada. The federal transfer payments currently for housing cannot be based on a population base; that it has to be base-plus funding. Contrary to what I said, I mean, the tri-territorial business case that we just provided to the federal government resulted in us getting \$35 million. Actually advocating as three territories without costing and saying that we have huge needs has worked in that we've never gotten \$35 million and now we've gotten that, and the federal government has recognized that we have to have a northern strategy. They're listening just on the basis of us saying that we have higher cost of living; that we have a huge Aboriginal population; that we have huge needs and that's the business case we provided and to date it's working. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank the Minister for her answer there. I think it would be really help if the Regular MLAs then actually saw this business case that was submitted. If that could be provided to committee I think that would help us understand. I applaud the efforts of the Housing Corp in putting that kind of work together to get the feds off the per capita housing formula that tends to be used for federal funding programs so that's great. That's part of the issue, but I think the motion that we were talking about

earlier in the House is: what would it take to get our housing stock out of core need? How do we cost that out and can we put together a plan and can that form the basis of submissions to federal funding programs. That's where I think the Regular MLAs were coming from, is we want to have that 2014 survey that shows core need, what is going to cost us to get out of that situation if we put that together as proposals and cost it out and get that into the federal government I think we're getting closer. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are a number of variables to address the whole core need of the NWT and we can do that. It would take a bit of time and a bit of work but we can produce that. Of course, it wouldn't be an exact science because there are differences. The bigger issue for me, though, is that we have an understanding amongst the three territories that we will not advocate individually; that we will advocate as tri-territorial which gives us more power, and unless I can get the other territories to do the same then it sounds like I'm going to be advocating for the Northwest Territories and going against the understanding and the partnership that we formed. I can bring it forward to the other territories but I'm a little bit confused. If the other territories say that they don't want to go there, that they're okay with how we're doing it with the base funds, is the recommendation that I go forward and become individual and advocate as an individual territory? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the Minister letting us know that there are some intricacies to working with the other two territories. I look forward to having a discussion at committee around that. You know, our submissions to the federal government for our needs don't always have to go within the federal budget. Even some of the infrastructure funding that might be made available is going to be wide open. We may be able to use that avenue to help fund core housing needs in the Northwest Territories. In any event, I understand how we need to work with Nunavut and Yukon, and I look forward to having a discussion with standing committee around that, but at the same time we need to have even a plan like that for ourselves so that we know strategically where resources have to be placed to get us out of core need. If we can get the feds to help contribute to that, even better. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We can work on that as well. I would like to meet with committee on that. We'll do the costing, bring it to committee. The biggest thing that I'm really conscious of when meeting with the Yukon Territory housing Minister who has been in her term for a number of terms, has said that this is the first time that we've got all three territories to come together on housing and actually agree to a partnership. I really want to be careful that we don't sabotage that because trust is really hard to gain and really easy to lose. We will do the costing and we'll bring it to Committee, but I want to make sure that we are strategic within our moving forward on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly is waving me off. Mr. McNeely, you were on my list earlier. Would you like to make any comments or questions?

MR. MCNEELY: Yes, I wanted to point out, Mr. Chair, that the comments around core need are actually on page 368 on the next summary underneath "Transitional Rent Supplement Program."

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Nothing further right now, I will now call a page. Oh, I'm sorry, Mr. Thompson. Continue.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to get some clarifications on this conversation that has been going on. First of all, I must say it's great that you guys have this work done. I guess my first question is in regards to Nunavut, Yukon, and ourselves working together what are the discussions and what do you present to the federal government? I know we're not talking per capita but what information do you present to them? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As committed, we will provide a copy of the document that we're working from and that actually provided the \$35 million. What do we talk about? What are we working on together? We talk about the high cost of food within the Territories. We talk about the inappropriateness that our small numbers within the territory or all three territories, our population base and the vast territory that we cover. We talk about because of the small population and the vast territory we talk about the high cost of infrastructure to be able to build houses, for example. To be able to transport; transportation costs; heat costs, you know, barging. We talk about commonalities that are addressed throughout the three territories. We try not to talk about things that differ from us but we try to pick out what makes us

all the same and advocate on that, such as the high cost of food and the infrastructure costs that we all face. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that clarification. The Housing Corporation has done a cost analysis that has broken down all this information? Have the other two territories done that and do you guys share this information with each other? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have no idea if the other territories have done at all. We haven't actually talked about what it would cost for all of us. The whole point is that we're trying to get the government to realize to change their funding structure is the advocacy that we're working on. Currently, the federal government funds per capita and we need to change that. The biggest advocacy that we're doing is about cost plus and so talking about for all of us it costs more. To be able to provide a house in Tuktoyaktuk is a lot more expensive than it is to provide a house in British Columbia. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the Minister's answer, and I understand what you guys are trying to do. I guess what I'm trying to understand is I know we have these commonalities but we've done some work and I'm assuming that these other two territories have done that. I would like to see you guys work together and share this information. You know, you talk about trust and if you're working together then it's more information. Can the Minister look at that opportunity when you're talking to your territorial counterparts as to tell them what you guys are doing and seeing if they're willing to share. Because I think if we're building trust and you want to talk about working together if we can show the federal government what our actual costs are for all three territories I think it would have a bigger impact. I understand what you guys are doing which is great, and like you said, we've got an extra, you know, \$35 million is what you said, so that's great, I mean, I'm not throwing that away. But I'm just saying if we could work together and share these costs and if they're willing to share that with the federal government I think it might have another impact with the government as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When we present to the federal government, we present as one entity, so within the tri-territorial business case, all of our issues are kind of in one. We looked at similarities. I will bring forward to the next tri-territorial meeting, the suggestion, if you are okay with it being a suggestion, from our territorial government asking that it would probably serve in the interest of all of us if we could actually do the costing and provide that in the report as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Minister. That is all I am trying to do. I want to make sure we continue to keep the trust going and the partnership with the three territories. If this works, it works. If it doesn't, at least we made that offer there. Maybe some people in Ottawa are listening to what we are talking about here, and it may have an impact on it as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Would the Minister like to respond to that?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will take that as a comment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Anything further, Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: No. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am done with this page. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Any further comments or questions on page 364? Seeing none, I will call the page. NWT Housing Corporation, executive, operations expenditure summary, total activity, \$1,391,000. Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Committee agrees. We will move on to finance and infrastructure services. We will defer the activity total on page 366 until we discuss the detail. Pages 367 and 368 are related. We can discuss these all at once here. Comments and questions? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am just looking at the two homelessness initiatives, transitional support of housing and Housing First model. In the Minister's opening comments, she mentioned that there would be an additional \$16.6

million in new federal social infrastructure funding, and one of the initiatives will be sending independent Housing First units. Trying to reconcile these two line items, one being Housing First model and the other being transitional support of housing. Core principles of Housing First are immediate access to housing with no housing readiness requirements, consumer choice, and self-determination, which is enabled through the provision of a rent supplement, individual, client-driven, and recovery-oriented supports, separation of housing and services harm reduction and community integration. We have heard this from the Minister before that there are many different approaches to Housing First and other things fit in the Housing First model. We do have specific funding available for the Housing First model in the amount of \$150,000 and then \$600,000 transitional supporting. Can the Minister reconcile this difference here? Why one appears differently, but the opening comments seemed to imply that they are both Housing First. What is the Minister's understanding and the department's understanding of Housing First at this point? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The difference in the budget items are because the \$150,000 for the Housing First model will be sustainable monies that will be provided year-in-year. That number is based on that because the mandate of the Housing Corporation is to really focus on housing. That money will be utilized for example, supplementary rent, if there is damages to the units, et cetera, so it has to be used for housing need. The reality is the City of Yellowknife, within this fiscal year, are looking at one person, perhaps up to five or six, but I haven't got confirmation on that from the city. I have only heard one person at this point. To budget more than \$150,000 for one person would probably not be necessary at this time. We would have to look at it later as the city's Housing First model moves on. The 30 units that we are looking at for the one-time funding is actually... We are looking at a maximum of \$600,000 because we are guessing that it would cost, at a maximum, \$20,000 per unit. That would be one-time funding and would not be carried in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps I didn't frame the question well enough. I am less interested in the funding or the principles of the funding, I suppose. For the semi-independent Housing First units that the department is committing to, are those included in that \$600,000

transitional support housing line item? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: That is the \$600,000 is just for the semi-independent units that we will be renovating. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. How did those semi-independent housing units fit with the Housing First model being that the Housing First model is driven by consumer choice? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This model also will be by consumer choice. Anyone that does not want to take those units does not need to. It is an option for people. Everyone in the community, based on my experience with managing homeless shelters, is not mandated to stay in the shelter. They have an option if they want to get into other accommodations within the community. The reality is, who will open up their doors to these people? The semi-independent living will be by choice, not by force. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding of consumer choice would be that there is a choice given. The purpose is to house people and they have a choice in where they are being housed, not forced into housing. I don't think that is one of the principles at all. By providing a rent subsidy, as per most established Housing First models, you give clients more choices than a handful of, I think the Minister previously provided, 30 semi-independent housing units. That is where I am finding the most difficulty with calling these Housing First units. I don't take issue with transitional supportive housing and semi-independent housing. It is just not Housing First. I think there is still a great deal of confusion about this. If we are going to do Housing First, let's do Housing First. The \$150,000 to support the city of Yellowknife's Housing First model, which is established under those principles, that is Housing First. Anything else deviates too far away from the principles of Housing First to be called that. Let's just be clear about the language that we use, but I will drop that for now. The other question I had was about the Transitional Rent Supplement Program. I have personal experience with this. It doesn't

appear to me and the people who I know who have used it to be geared towards middle-class income earners. Those are people who may apply for the program and receive five to 10 dollars off their rent bills. But it is not helping those middle class move toward things. I know there is also the PATH program. What is the income threshold, really? Who is the TRSP really geared towards helping in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Transitional Rent Supplement Program is based the same as public housing. It depends on the region that you do. We have to recognize that, although we do provide as many programs as we can to accommodate the needs of many people within the territories, we do have to prioritize. We have huge core needs. We have to prioritize on the lower income families within our territories. We do provide supports, not only to middle income earners, but also to higher incomes, programs that anyone can access. But addressing our core need is our priority. I hate to say it, often lower income families are struggling within those core needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that the TRSP has some difficulties with uptake. What is the current usage rate of the program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have about 150 people actually taking advantage of the Transitional Rent Supplement Program at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Are those 150 clients receiving the full amount of the allocated funding? The \$900,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, no. Again, we have just started our fiscal year. The bigger thing is, like I said, within the needs survey that is going out, we will be looking at every single program that the Housing Corporation provides to make sure that they are still meeting the needs and that they are addressing the needs within the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Minister said, if the focus on the program is on lower income earners and to address poverty issues, shall we say, then perhaps the program is working. What it is not doing is helping middle-class or middle-income earners, who are perhaps single parents or individuals renting. It is not doing much to help them. My concern is that affordability remains high, and if you are a young person coming back to start your life in the North and you don't have two incomes and you are renting and your rent is very high and your cost of living increases to grow, you can't find affordability in your home situation. You may be given very few choices. Finding a spouse so you can add an extra income to your household is probably too much a choice for most people to make. The other choice is leaving. The more people we lose to our high cost of living, the fewer resources this government has to provide services and benefits to Northerners. I would strongly recommend we take a look, maybe not through this program, but another program, to help those middle-income earners, who are young people struggling to make ends meet. They might have well-paying jobs, but it is just not well enough for our high cost of living. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Your time is expired. We have about five minutes left. I will let Mr. McNeely ask his question. He was next on my list. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is on page 368 underneath the Transitional Rent Supplement Program. It seems to me there, with the whole issue of core need, we have over the years since the SHAG and HAP programs of years and years ago have created this industry, which is a 100-per-cent liability to this government through the Housing Corporation and then on to this program. With the limited amount of funds that we receive, my suggestion is if a review of that program could happen because there are other support programs, we have heard over the last four months here, to address anti-poverty such as the soup kitchen program, the shelter program, the income support program. I just bring that forth as a comment, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Would the Minister like to respond to his comment?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are in agreement that we do provide some programs that maybe we shouldn't be. That is part of the survey and trying to see, again, which programs are still relevant or not, being conscious, though, that right now, with just trying to address

the amount of people that are paying more than 30 per cent of their income to the cost of living or to suitability, to core needs within the community, we are still way behind the gun. We need to be really careful when we restructure programs that we don't try to make it too broad and that we can address the core needs. Programs will be reviewed, but being conscious of what our goals are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Noting the clock, I will now rise and report progress. Thank you to the Minister and her witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort the witnesses from the Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report. Member for Hay River North.

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 50-18(2), Main Estimates, 2016-2017. I would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do I have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. The motion is in order. To the motion. Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried. Masi.

---Carried

MR. SPEAKER: Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Schauerte): Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedures at 7:30 a.m. tomorrow morning. Orders of the day for Thursday, June 16, 2016, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgements
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions

9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Tabled Document 50-18(2), Main Estimates, 2016-2017
21. Report of Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. The House stands adjourned until Thursday, June 16, 2016, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.