

**Housing Delivery Status Update**

Mr. Speaker, as I said in my statement yesterday, over the last four years I have consistently advocated to the federal government for funding to address housing needs across the NWT. This advocacy resulted in a significant expansion of the capital delivery program for Housing NWT since the 18<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, to an extraordinary annual capital delivery plan of approximately \$136 million in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. In the 2023-2024 fiscal year alone, this annual capital delivery plan will include the construction and repair of approximately 500 housing units.

The capital delivery program in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly included a commitment to build an additional 100 new homes for the public housing program which are all either completed or under contract for construction in the current fiscal year. This 100-unit public housing expansion represents the largest increase in public housing units that the territory has seen in decades, with units being built in communities across the NWT.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned earlier this week even through significant schedule disruptions caused by evacuations from floods and fire, through low water levels affecting barging season, and through other various supply chain disruptions, this 100-unit roll out is still on track for construction in the 2023-2024 fiscal year as originally planned.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the 100-unit delivery, over my term as Minister, Housing NWT has invested over \$29 million in homeownership programming that has assisted numerous private homeowners across our territory with the purchase and repair of their homes, as well as providing much needed programming to assist seniors aging in place. With the funding, NWT homeowners were able to address needed home repairs before they became much more extensive and costly.

Over this same timeline, a further \$50 million was invested by Housing NWT in repair projects to preserve and maintain Housing NWT's existing housing stock. We have supported new construction and renovation projects for approximately 100 seniors units throughout the NWT and has provided 1,012 senior applicants across the NWT with funding to improve their homes and support aging in place since the beginning of my term as Minister.

Over the past four years, Housing NWT has provided 1,018 residents with support for emergency repairs, 198 residents with funding to support Fuel Tank Replacement and 1,510 residents have accessed our Preventative Maintenance Program, allowing homeowners to do minor servicing or repairs, dealing with issues before they become more costly.

To support small communities in developing skilled tradespeople, Housing NWT has leveraged every opportunity to help build and maintain this capacity. To ensure the success of the Apprenticeship program, Housing NWT introduced a requirement in 2020 for general contractors to hire at least one NWT apprentice in new construction contracts. Since this time, Housing NWT's new construction contracts have supported 47 apprenticeship work assignments. Housing NWT also continues to work closely with Local Housing Organizations to provide up to 12 apprentice opportunities within their staffing opportunities each year.

To further promote increased employment and skill development opportunities in small communities, Housing NWT negotiated contracts with Indigenous governments and businesses seeking to build capacity. Since the beginning of the 19th Legislative Assembly, Housing NWT has entered nine negotiated contracts increasing regional capacity in the residential construction sector across the territory.

These negotiated contracts have resulted in Indigenous governments, businesses and contractors developing innovative programs to attract, develop and retain Northern workers to meet the commitments set out in negotiated contract proposals and defined within contract commitments.

Mr. Speaker, inspired by Housing NWT's commitment to renewed ways of working together, Indigenous governments have had opportunities to participate in planning, design, and site selection and have been engaged in numerous construction contract opportunities over the life of this government. We continue to ensure that Indigenous governments are informed about current and upcoming delivery plans and continue to be engaged in key initiatives such as the development of community housing plans. These partnerships help ensure that local housing priorities and needs are considered during the planning process.

Mr. Speaker, while I have highlighted some of this government's housing successes, I want to be clear that this was not without difficulty. As I mentioned, the last four years have presented extraordinary challenges for the residential construction sector including disruptions to material supply chains, the movement of skilled labour between construction sites, and rising fuel and construction material costs. The reality for remote Northern communities has been even more challenging, which has required a high degree of creativity on our end.

I am so proud of the efforts of Housing NWT staff, Indigenous governments, and partners at the community level who have worked tirelessly throughout a pandemic, natural disasters, and supply chain issues to support our work of building a better tomorrow for NWT communities. I would like to thank the staff of Housing NWT for their continuous creativity to enhance programming and address our housing crisis.

While I am celebrating the construction of 100 new public housing units, and supports that have been provided I want to emphasize to my colleagues and residents of the NWT that there is still more work to do to sustain these successes. Housing NWT will continue to promote a culture of partnership, innovation, and continuous improvement well beyond the life of the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.