

**Northern Pathways to Housing in Behchokò**

Mr. Speaker, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has worked hard to meet the commitments made by this Government to advance affordable housing and address homelessness during the 18th Legislative Assembly.

In addressing this priority, we resolved to use northern solutions for northern housing. One example is the Northern Pathways to Housing Program, an innovative approach to addressing homelessness in small communities.

We know there is homelessness in our communities. We know there are overcrowded houses where people couch-surf because they do not have a home of their own. Research tells us that the chances of addressing the issues that lead to homelessness - mental health, addictions and other social issues - are better when you have stable housing.

The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation is working with community groups to develop, design and implement supportive housing for our residents through the Northern Pathways to Housing Program. The program involves providing four apartment-style single room units to community partners, along with funding support to pay for the additional costs associated with the operation of a supportive housing program.

The community partner works with the program participants to maintain their housing stability and respond to their particular needs. This support includes connecting them with available services and resources from community agencies. The community partner chooses the program participants through a committee. The program allows the community to prioritize the needs that they see as the most urgent.

Our experience with the Liidlii Kue First Nation and the Aklavik Indian Band is proving that this model makes a difference in peoples' lives. I want to thank those two groups for their dedication and vision.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that a third Northern Pathways to Housing Program is starting in Behchokò. Through engagement with the Tłıchǫ Government and the Community Government of Behchokò, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation has selected the Behchokò Friendship Centre as the community partner that will deliver the program in Behchokò. I anticipate being in Behchokò in June to celebrate the project with community residents, and, government leaders.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern Pathways to Housing Program is one-of-a-kind. It takes the philosophy of Housing First, an approach utilized across North America, but tailors it for the Northwest Territories. This truly is a northern solution for northern housing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.