

Northern Pathways to Housing Pilot Program in Fort Simpson

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

Mr. Speaker, we know that some of our residents experience homelessness in communities outside of Yellowknife. Meeting their needs helps us to address the issue of homelessness throughout the territory. The Housing Corporation is working with community groups to develop, design and implement supportive housing for these residents through the Northern Pathways to Housing Program.

Research indicates that providing social supports alone is often not enough to change an individual's circumstances. The provision of housing plus supports has been documented as an effective method to stabilize a person who is homeless and then start to address needed life changes.

Mr. Speaker, the first of four Northern Pathways projects is now being implemented in Fort Simpson. Through the vision and commitment of the Liidlii Kue First Nation to support this vulnerable population, three people have been housed and supported, and one other homeless person is expected to be housed shortly. Indigenous and local governments know their communities best. The Housing Corporation supports their aspirations to address homelessness through this community-led housing approach.

Under the Northern Pathways to Housing program in Fort Simpson, the Housing Corporation provided four apartment style housing units and land to support the project. The Housing Corporation also has a three-year funding agreement for participant housing support. This funding supports the community partner to pay for costs associated with the operation of a supportive housing program and to respond to needs of tenants.

The community proponent also provides assistance to program participants in accessing services and available resources from community agencies.

Another Northern Pathways project is starting soon in Behchokò. The Housing Corporation has been meeting with the community government and other community stakeholders to finalize the delivery approach there. In Aklavik, promising work continues with the Aklavik Indian Band and community stakeholders to develop a program that suits the needs of their community. The fourth project, which is in Fort Good Hope with the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society, is currently planned as part of their larger shelter project.

Mr. Speaker, the Northern Pathways program is intended to house people first and then to improve their housing sustainability by addressing the issues that contributed to their homelessness. Northern Pathways seeks to improve participants' social and economic well-being and independence, and to create new service pathways and working relationships with community service providers to address and end homelessness for these residents.

Mr. Speaker, partnership with Indigenous governments is an ongoing part of how the Government of the Northwest Territories does business. The Northern Pathways program is one more example of the kind of success we can have when we work together to meet the needs of Northwest Territories residents and implement northern solutions for northern housing.

Mr. Speaker, this is an exciting time in the Housing Corporation's history. Northern Pathways is just one of the new initiatives under the Corporation's Strategic Renewal, but it shows the progress we are making toward fulfilling our Mandate commitments and putting people first. I know how important housing is to our residents, and I pledge to work with all Members to meet our remaining commitments during the life of this Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.