



**Government of the Northwest Territories Response to
Motion 30-20(1): Maintaining Northwest Territories Housing Stock**

Motion

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by Member for Yellowknife North, that the Government of the Northwest Territories immediately provide funding grants to Indigenous governments that wish to complete home inspections in their region.

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories provide financial support to Indigenous governments to assist in data collection to support opportunities to leverage federal government funding;

AND FURTHERMORE, the Government of the Northwest Territories provide funding to Indigenous governments in alignment with the Mandate of the 20th Legislative Assembly to ensure sustainable financial resources for housing programs and projects;

AND FURTHERMORE, to facilitate this financial support, the Government of the Northwest Territories enter into a memorandum of understanding with all interested Indigenous governments and bring forward necessary appropriations by the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year;

AND FURTHERMORE, that the Government of the Northwest Territories respond to this motion within 120 days.

GNWT Response

Housing is one of the key mandate priorities of the 20th Assembly. As part of that, the GNWT acknowledges that no one organization alone will be able to solve the housing crisis that exists in the NWT. Partnerships will be key to finding success.

In the 19th Assembly, Housing NWT focused on a Renewal Strategy and part of that included renewing our partnerships with Indigenous Governments. That focus continues in the 20th Assembly and we envision it remaining as a focus for many years to come.

Housing NWT is working collaboratively with the NWT Housing Forum to advocate to Canada for more housing funding to come to the Northwest Territories. Housing NWT has also entered into MOU/MOAs with four Indigenous Governments that will help chart a pathway to jointly address the housing needs of those governments. It is important to note that any sort of agreement is not mandatory for Indigenous Governments to work with Housing NWT. Housing NWT is committed to working in partnership with all Indigenous Governments in NWT, should they wish to, to work towards improving housing conditions and addressing core need in their communities.

Where Housing NWT and an Indigenous Government agree there is a need, Housing NWT will work with Indigenous governments on formal arrangements that specifically address housing. The content of these arrangements is tailored to each Indigenous government and will build on any existing intergovernmental agreements in place between the Government of the Northwest Territories and that Indigenous Government.

Housing NWT is working on ways to address core housing need in the territory. One major initiative in the 20th Assembly will be the completion of a Territorial Housing Needs Assessment. The HNA is intended to identify the type and amount of need across the various types of housing in each NWT community. For example, do they need supportive housing, more public housing, or a larger amount of market and private homeownership to meet the needs of clients.

Housing NWT also understands that there are many existing private homeowners who require additional assistance to repair and update their homeownership units. Housing NWT is also aware, through the delivery of its home repair programs, that many of those homeowners are not in core financial need and are above the Core Need Income Threshold used by Housing NWT in its program delivery.

Housing NWT does offer small repair programs that focus on health and safety repairs required by private homeowners. A number of the Indigenous Governments have created home repair programs utilizing their Distinctions Based funding for housing and they supplement the programs offered by Housing NWT where the clients are eligible. Some indigenous governments have indicated that they require better data on the condition of the private homes in their region to help them create and deliver programs with their funding. The Akaitcho communities have discussed this need with Housing NWT in the past and Housing NWT has suggested a similar approach to what is recommended in this response.

Unfortunately Housing NWT does not have the financial capacity nor the mandate to complete inspections and estimates on the repairs required for all private homes in communities. What Housing NWT has suggested is that it could provide funding through the Community Housing Support Initiative to allow an Indigenous Government or other community partner to prepare more complete estimates and a business case to include completion of all inspections in their region and possibly also funding required to complete certain types of repairs. This business case could then be used to apply on one of the many federal funding programs currently available.

In addition to providing seed funding to allow for the development of the business case to access funding, Housing NWT also suggested that if there are specific private homes requiring repairs and if a community organizations or Indigenous organization wants to support the completion of repairs to those individual units, they could also submit a proposal to the Community Housing Support Initiative to complete repairs required to a small number of homes to ensure that the remain in service and remain healthy and safe for their owners to occupy.

By working together to gather data and build a business case, Housing NWT feels that it can then support Indigenous Governments to access other federal housing dollars and continue to support the overall improvement to the housing situation here in the NWT. The proposal required by Housing NWT is not overly complicated, and Housing NWT simply needs to know what the organization intends to achieve and how much funding is required to achieve their objective. Housing NWT would be pleased to communicate with all Indigenous partners about the availability of the Community Housing Support Initiative for this purpose and others as part of tabling this response.