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NEEDS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN FOCUS OF NEW HOUSING INITIATIVE

WHITEHORSE – Elaine Taylor, Minister Responsible for the Women’s Directorate announced today a government initiative to increase access to affordable and secure housing for women and children in need, and for victims of violence.

“Women with dependants make up the largest percentage of persons on the Whitehorse social housing waitlist. With this initiative, we will work to address these housing needs as soon as possible,” Taylor said. “Access to affordable and secure housing helps to reduce the incidence of violence against women which is a key priority for me.”

“Safer communities and protecting the family are priorities for our government and ensuring that women and their children have safe and affordable housing is an important part of that,” Taylor stated. “Between now and mid-December officials from the Women’s Directorate will consult with women’s organizations, transition homes and women living in social housing.”

“The consultations will inform government of the needs of women and their families,” Taylor added. “I would expect a report on the consultations early in the new year.”

A study commissioned by federal, territorial and provincial status of women ministers entitled *Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends 2006*, shows that the rates of violence experienced by women in the territories are much higher than national averages. As well, 74 percent of all single parent families in Yukon are headed by women, according to the 2006 census.

“This new project is intended to enhance the economic security of Yukon women through improved housing options,” Stace Burnard, Yukon Advisory Council on Women’s Issues Chair, said. “This initiative is meant to address a range of immediate housing needs for women raised at our recent meeting.”

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