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YUKON AND FIRST NATION GOVERNMENTS DISCUSS KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, JUSTICE ISSUES AT YUKON FORUM

WHITEHORSE – The Yukon government and Yukon First Nation governments agreed on key elements to advance work on the Northern Strategy, the Targeted Investment Fund (formerly the Northern Economic Development Fund) and the corrections review at this morning’s meeting of the Yukon Forum.

Premier Dennis Fentie and Grand Chief Andy Carvill agreed that by working together, the three important projects will advance in the best interest of all Yukoners.

“We are extremely pleased that our collaborative, co-operative approach has allowed us to move ahead together on these important projects,” Fentie said. “The Northern Strategy and the economic development fund are two areas that are essential in our advancement in terms of building capacity and opening up opportunities in all of our communities. The corrections implementation plan will help us to improve programs and services in the correctional centre and in communities.”

“These are important projects involving approximately \$63 million to be allocated in Yukon during the next three years. We are advancing in a more effective way in our communities because we have worked collaboratively as governments on behalf of all Yukoners,” Carvill added.

The leaders have agreed on a Northern Strategy Trust Implementation Framework that was developed by a joint working group of First Nation and Yukon government officials. The framework sets out a process for allocating the \$40 million Northern Strategy trust fund announced last year.

Leaders also endorsed a draft investment plan, developed jointly by Yukon First Nation governments, Government of Yukon and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada officials, for the final three years of the federal government's Targeted Investment Program in Yukon. There is about \$23 million under this investment plan available from the initial \$27 million allocated for projects in Yukon. During the period in which the plan was being developed the federal government allocated approximately \$4 million to a number of Yukon projects, including First Nation and Government of Yukon projects.

The Yukon Forum also accepted the guiding principles set out in the Final Report of the Corrections Consultation Project Team, co-chaired by the Yukon government and the Council of Yukon First Nations, and endorsed the direction provided by the recommendations and priorities set out in the report. As well, they approved a “Framework for Action” for corrections in the Yukon which allows implementation of corrections reform to move forward.

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