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AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDS ALLOCATED

WHITEHORSE, AUGUST 23, 2006 – The Governments of Canada and the Yukon today announced their commitment to a six-unit seniors' housing complex to be constructed in Haines Junction. Funding is provided under the Canada-Yukon Affordable Housing Program Agreement.

Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) officials have been working with key stakeholders in Haines Junction towards the development of a seniors' housing project which could include independent living suites, common areas, as well as sufficient space for other programs of interest to seniors. The building will provide six single bedroom units with a living room and modest kitchen. Generous storage closets, entry systems, and complete barrier free design are also being incorporated into the building design.

The planning phase is also considering options to include in the pre-design to accommodate other additions to the building for future needs. For instance, if the seniors themselves want to operate a 'meals on wheels' service for others in the community, the pre-design will include plans for a small commercial kitchen area in the basement, with consideration of venting, noise, and fire code requirements.

"Canada's new government is proud to support this innovative approach to help address seniors' housing needs in the community of Haines Junction," said the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development. "The flexibility of the building's design means that it can adapt to future needs, allowing seniors to remain active in their community."

"Seniors in Haines Junction want affordable and suitable housing. Our new building will not only be affordable for the tenants, it will be designed to the corporation's Accommodating and Green Home standards," explained Jim Kenyon, Minister Responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation. "I am pleased that we have been able to partner with Canada to respond to the real needs of rural Yukoners."

"The proposed \$1.8 million building project is made possible as a result of the Canada-Yukon Affordable Housing Agreement," said YHC Board Chair, Rudy Couture. "Based on community demand and our analysis, we determined Haines Junction to be a priority community for development of a seniors' building."

The site for the building was recommended by both the Village of Haines Junction and the St. Elias Seniors, and is located close to the community nursing station. The topography lends itself to a full walk-out basement. The plan is to allow the local seniors to be involved in its finish and then potentially using it to serve the larger senior community in the area.

The project will receive \$350,000 in new funding from the federal government and approximately \$1.4 million from activities undertaken by the territorial government under the Affordable Housing Program Agreement.

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