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STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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Tuesday, January 31, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.

Chair: Currie Dixon

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

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Members: Hon. Jeanie McLean
Scott Kent
Hon. Nils Clarke (substituting for Hon. Richard Mostyn)
Emily Tredger (substituting for Kate White, Vice-Chair)

Clerk: Allison Lloyd, Clerk of Committees

Witnesses: **Office of the Auditor General of Canada**
Glenn Wheeler, Principal
Tammy Meagher, Director

Department of Health and Social Services

Ed van Randen, Deputy Minister (Social Services Programming)
Jennifer Gehmair, Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services
Sharon Specht, Assistant Deputy Minister of Continuing Care
Kaila deBoer, Director of Social Supports

Yukon Housing Corporation

Justin Ferbey, President
Philippe Mollet, Vice President of Corporate Services
Colin McDowell, Vice President of Operations
Laura Lang, Director of Policy and Communications
Kristine Carruthers, Director of Tenancy Supports

EVIDENCE**Whitehorse, Yukon****Tuesday, January 31, 2023 — 10:00 a.m.**

Chair (Mr. Dixon): Thank you, everyone, for joining us — everyone in the gallery and those witnesses here on the floor of the Legislature as well. I will officially now call this meeting to order. This is a hearing of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. The Public Accounts Committee is established by Standing Order 45(3) of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. This standing order says: “At the commencement of the first Session of each Legislature a Standing Committee on Public Accounts shall be appointed and the Public Accounts and all Reports of the Auditor General shall stand referred automatically and permanently to the said Committee as they become available.”

On May 17, 2021, the Yukon Legislative Assembly adopted Motion No. 11 which established the current Public Accounts Committee. In addition to appointing members to the Committee, the motion stipulated that the Committee shall “... have the power to call for persons, papers, and records and to sit during intersessional periods...”

Today, pursuant to Standing Order 45(3) and Motion No. 11, we will be discussing a performance audit entitled *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Yukon Legislative Assembly — Yukon Housing Corporation — Independent Auditor’s Report 2022*.

I would like to thank the witnesses from the Department of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation for appearing. I believe that Deputy Minister Ed van Randen and Yukon Housing Corporation President Justin Ferbey will introduce these witnesses during their opening remarks later, after I have completed this here. Also present are officials from the Auditor General’s office, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada. They are: Glenn Wheeler, principal, and Tammy Meagher, director.

I will now introduce the members of the Public Accounts Committee. I am Currie Dixon, the Chair of the Committee and the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Copperbelt North; to my left is Emily Tredger, Member for Whitehorse Centre, substituting today for the Committee’s Vice-Chair, Kate White; to her left is the Hon. Jeanie McLean, Member for Mountainview; to her left is Scott Kent, the Member for Copperbelt South; and finally, in the back row is the Hon. Nils Clarke, the Member for Riverdale North, substituting for the Hon. Richard Mostyn.

The Public Accounts Committee is an all-party committee with a mandate to ensure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in public spending — in other words, accountability for the use of public funds. The purpose of this public hearing is to address issues of the implementation of policies, whether programs are being effectively and efficiently delivered, and not to question the policies of the Government of Yukon specifically. In other words, our task is not to challenge government policy but to examine its implementation. The results of our deliberations will be reported back to the Legislative Assembly.

To begin today’s proceedings, Glenn Wheeler will give an opening statement summarizing the findings of the Auditor General’s report. Following that, the Yukon Housing Corporation president will make opening remarks, and then the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services will make opening remarks on behalf of Health and Social Services. Committee members will then ask questions. As is the Committee’s practice, we have devised and compiled these questions collectively. The questions that each member will ask are not necessarily their personal questions on a particular subject, but those of the entire Committee.

After the hearing, the Committee will prepare a report of its proceedings, including any recommendations that the Committee wishes to make. This report will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Before we start the hearing, I would ask that questions and answers be kept brief and to the point so that we may deal with as many issues as possible in the relatively short time allotted today. I would also ask that Committee members and witnesses wait until they’re recognized by the Chair before speaking. This will keep the discussion more orderly and allow those listening on the radio or the Internet to know who is speaking. It will also help with our Hansard recording of today’s hearing.

We will now proceed with the opening statement. Again, just as a quick reminder for witnesses, if you could give me some sort of physical — a wave or something like that, so I know to introduce you prior to speaking. Given that there are so many of you today, it would be especially helpful to know who will be responding. That way, I can introduce you properly.

Without further ado, and recognizing the relatively short time we have, we’ll get into opening statements. Mr. Wheeler, please.

Mr. Wheeler: Mr. Chair, we are pleased to be in Whitehorse today to discuss our report on the Yukon Housing Corporation, which was presented to the Yukon Legislative Assembly on May 25, 2022. I am accompanied, as you mentioned, by Tammy Meagher, the director who was responsible for the audit. I would like to respectfully acknowledge all Yukon First Nations and acknowledge that this meeting is taking place on the traditional territories of the Kwanlin Dün and the Ta’an Kwäch’än Council.

In this audit, we wanted to know whether the Yukon Housing Corporation provided Yukoners who had the greatest housing needs with adequate, affordable, and suitable housing. We also wanted to know whether the Department of Health and Social Services supported Yukoners who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless by facilitating their access to housing.

This is important because housing is a cornerstone of individual, family, and community wellness.

Stable housing enables the growth of healthy, resilient citizens who can contribute to a thriving economy, society, and environment. Overall, we found that little progress had been made by either the corporation or the department to fix long-standing issues affecting housing programs and services. The corporation and the department did not provide adequate and

affordable housing for Yukoners in greatest need, such as those who are homeless. The two organizations did not work together or with their housing partners to effectively manage housing for those who needed it most.

In our examination of the corporation's activities, we found that Yukoners in need faced barriers when they tried to access social housing. These barriers related to both the design and the delivery of social housing. For example, the corporation's process does not differentiate between the applicants who could live independently and those who need additional supports. Furthermore, the corporation has not updated its list of priority groups since 2007 to reflect Yukon society.

We also found that, between 2015 and 2021, the waiting list for eligible social housing applicants grew by 320 percent. We reported that, as the demand for housing for vulnerable Yukoners continued to exceed supply, an average of 75 households receiving social assistance were staying in hotels each month between August of 2019 and August of 2021. In 2014, the average wait time to access housing was a little over a year. By 2021, the number had increased to almost 17 months. In addition, it took almost twice as long to provide homes for individuals from priority groups such as victims of violence than for non-priority groups.

While the number of available social housing and rental units increased by 20 percent between 2014 and 2021, maintenance costs increased as housing units aged. The problem was compounded by deficient systems and practices that were used to identify and monitor the status of major repairs. This is a problem because the longer a repair is delayed, the higher the cost.

I would like to now turn to the Department of Health and Social Services. We found that the department worked to increase emergency shelter capacity and transitional and supportive housing; however, the effectiveness of these efforts suffered because the department did not first assess what was needed, and it did not collect data to monitor progress and inform its decision-making. The department last completed a needs analysis in 2017.

Transforming programs and services to deliver housing to vulnerable Yukoners requires the corporation and the department to work together and with their partners. This did not happen, and those with the greatest housing needs suffered consequences. It is imperative that the department and the corporation work together to overcome the gaps and barriers we noted in this audit to help vulnerable Yukoners find the adequate and affordable housing that they need.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my opening statement. We would be pleased to answer any questions that the Committee may have.

Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Wheeler, and on behalf of the Committee, of course, welcome to the Yukon; we are happy to have you back in person. Next up, I believe, is Mr. Ferbey with the Yukon Housing Corporation.

Mr. Ferbey: Good morning, Mr. Chair. I would like to acknowledge that our discussions today are occurring on the

traditional territory of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

With me today I have Phil Mollet, our vice-president of Corporate Services, Mr. Colin McDowell, vice-president of Operations, Kristine Carruthers, behind me, director of Tenancy Supports, and also behind me is Laura Lang, director of Policy and Communications.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here today to speak to the report of the Auditor General of Canada and the Yukon Legislative Assembly for the Yukon Housing Corporation. The audit made nine recommendations addressed to the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services on how we must respond to vulnerable Yukoners' needs for housing and related services. Broadly, the audit found that the corporation and the department did not provide Yukoners most in need, including those who are homeless, with adequate and affordable housing. There is incomplete identification of housing needs, there is a long list and growing wait-list for housing, there are problems with managing housing stock, and the corporation and the department did not work together or with housing partners to effectively manage housing for those in need.

The audit identified that their findings are long-standing issues and that the key to addressing the findings is through transformational change. The Yukon Housing Corporation agrees with the audit recommendations for addressing the issues listed and agrees that more must be done to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable Yukoners. The corporation has already started and will continue to incorporate the recommendations and the actions laid out in the December 2022 work plan and documents such as branch plans and our upcoming strategic plans to ensure that the changes that are needed are acted upon.

At the time of the audit, the corporation had many projects in the planning and construction phases which, while not part of the audit scope, will help to address the needs for adequate, suitable, and affordable housing for Yukoners. These initiatives include the overall reshaping of social housing into the community housing framework and the recently reopened community triplex in Mayo, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, and the building at 401.

Community housing will be integral to how the corporation will move forward with the audit's recommendations. Stemming from the 2017 objectives outlined in the national housing strategy, community housing will be based on a mixed-income and mixed-use approach. This means that people from different income bands and differing family situations will be allocated within the same building to create an environment that will result in higher quality housing and better access to services and amenities when compared to traditional social housing models. The community housing framework will reduce the prevalence of environments with concentrated poverty that is sometimes experienced in traditional social housing models.

Community housing can also result in safer neighbourhoods. The corporation acknowledges that this approach will take time to implement and require the patience

and collaboration of community partners for successful implementation. Whenever someone is in need of housing, it is a crisis for them and their families, and the corporation does recognize that. The corporation is seeking to facilitate the healthiest outcomes for existing and future clients. We believe that a more conscientious approach to tenant allocation that incorporates performance measures and evaluations will facilitate this outcome.

Building more stock is one part of responding to community needs throughout the territory. The larger tool at the corporation's disposal is to create better understanding of why our clients are coming to the corporation in the first place. From there, we can determine how the corporation can facilitate tenant movement along the housing continuum as described in the audit findings. There needs to be an ability to check the growth or decline of the waiting list against other factors in the environment so policies and programs can appropriately be tailored to the needs of Yukoners. Understanding these factors will also allow the corporation to forecast the housing needs for the most vulnerable with greater accuracy. We will be looking to understand in greater detail the reasons behind evictions, what supports our clients need, and what to do to create successful tenancies.

Housing is a key determinant of health, and the environment that the corporation and our partners create reflect in the outcomes of our tenants. Maintenance and accessibility are also critical to ensure that our housing supports the goals of community housing. Moving forward, the corporation is endeavouring to build a culture of evaluation into our programs and projects so it will be possible to determine what works and what does not work for tenants, our neighbourhoods, and the social system at large.

It will be important for the corporation to learn and adapt as community housing is implemented and as we discover more about the needs of our clients. Meaningful engagement will mean that some initiatives will take longer as we build time for our partners to provide feedback. Increased dialogue in the spirit of shared goals of providing housing to the most vulnerable is required both from the corporation and from our partners. These changes will take time.

Successful implementation depends on our ability to adapt, respond, and work with partners across the housing continuum and service agencies. The corporation will continue to work with the Department of Health and Social Services and our community partners, particularly for those on the front line who are serving the most vulnerable.

The audit focused on a subset of services the corporation provides; however, housing exists on a continuum. The impact of changes on part of the continuum will likely affect others, and this will be kept in mind as the corporation makes changes.

To conclude, the corporation will continue with the implementation of the community housing and we will look to the results of future evaluations to determine how to work with our partners to improve. We need to continue to improve our systems to better understand our housing wait-list, the needs of our clients, community needs, and the general housing

environment. It is through this improved understanding and renewed partnerships that transformational change will result.

Thank you.

Chair: Thank you, Mr. Ferbey — excellent pace.

Mr. van Randen: Good morning, Mr. Chair, community members, guests, members of the public, and colleagues. I would like to acknowledge that our participation the Public Accounts Committee public hearing on Yukon housing is taking place on the traditional territory of Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'an Council.

Mr. Chair and members, I am pleased to be here with departmental colleagues of the Yukon Housing Corporation to assist the Public Accounts Committee with its examination of the issues presented by the Auditor General of Canada with respect to housing and homelessness in the territory. I would also like to take a moment to thank the housing and services community which advocate for their needs and those of their clients to inform policy and program development and to hold governments to account.

Housing and housing support needs in the Yukon is a critical conversation throughout the territory, which is also the traditional territory of 14 Yukon First Nations and several transboundary Indigenous groups, along with eight municipalities. We are here today to talk about the department's and corporation's role in helping Yukoners access housing supports. The fact is that we can't do it alone and I appreciate that we are not. Community organizations, Yukon First Nations and Indigenous organizations, people with lived experience, and municipal and federal governments are all working toward this shared priority. Thank you; we can't do it without you.

Before we begin the question-and-answer process, let me share a little bit about the Department of Health and Social Services. The mandate of the department is to promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of Yukoners through a continuation of quality, accessible, and appropriate health and social services that eliminate inequalities and improve outcomes for all Yukoners.

The Social Services division fosters a person-centred, culturally appropriate environment to support Yukoners across their lifespan, including persons with disabilities, persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, persons in financial need, and seniors and adults with vulnerabilities.

Our mandate includes the provision of housing with services, which is why we were included in the scope of the Office of the Auditor General's housing performance audit. The department delivers and funds emergency shelter, transitional housing, and supportive housing services, collectively referred to as "housing with services". At the moment, these include emergency shelters and transition homes, such as 405 Alexander Street, which is also known as the Whitehorse Emergency Shelter. It is now run by Connective and the Council of Yukon First Nations. In Dawson, we have a women's shelter and we also have a men's shelter, which is run by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. There is a Yukon women's transition home; the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, which is specifically for youth between 17 and 23; the Watson Lake Health and Hope for Families, which is in Watson Lake and is

emergency and transitional housing for women and children; and Nts' äw Chua, four beds for youth, which is an innovative program to support young people transitioning out of care, an alternative to traditional group care in Whitehorse.

We also have supportive housing. There is the Housing First residence in Whitehorse, which is 16 units on Wood Street that provide low-barrier, permanent housing to moderate-to-high-need clients. It is also run by Connective and Council of Yukon First Nations. We have 20 Housing First residences at 405 Alexander Street. There is the Options for Independence, which is independent supportive living for those with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. We have Granger Haven, Max's Place, Aspen Group Home, Aurora House, and St. Elias Adult Group Home, which offer supportive housing for individuals with disabilities. Cornerstone community, which opened recently at the end of Main Street, provides affordable rentals, supported independent living services for tenants who require supports. Normandy just opened up in Takhini with 84 units to serve the needs of seniors who need support with day-to-day things like meals and assistance with other living needs.

The department is pleased to work with the Yukon Housing Corporation on a number of joint housing initiatives to increase our stock of supportive housing, and we are committed to doing more together. On the horizon, we are working together on Vimy heritage housing, which will be another seniors complex. We are going to tender soon a Housing First residence in Watson Lake for 10 units. The Safe at Home Society is converting the former High Country Inn into permanent supportive housing for women, youth, and Indigenous Yukoners. Council of Yukon First Nations announced a new Indigenous women's shelter in Whistle Bend with culturally relevant supports to assist victims of family violence, and the 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street housing project was opened just a couple of weeks ago. It will be a mixed-income model including seniors, families, and single people.

Progress with housing and support services is a result of collaborative work between municipal, territorial, federal, and Yukon First Nation governments and community organizations. Over the last five years, new housing partners have joined our community. The Safe at Home Society and Connective are now both active and providing housing services. These two NGOs are working in close partnership with Yukon First Nations and are bringing a renewed commitment and energy to the question of how we as a community can work collectively to end homelessness and support Yukoners with their housing needs.

The auditor's report identified some hard truths, but we are committed to continuously improving access to housing services for Yukoners in need. Some examples of how we have improved over the last five years include a commitment to Housing First. We have now opened 60 Housing First units in Whitehorse, and we have 10 more planned in Watson Lake. Housing First is a philosophy and program approach. Its goal is to permanently house Yukon's most vulnerable people by shifting to a low-barrier, high-support model of service delivery.

We initiated the community outreach service in 2017. It provides intensive case management to vulnerable individuals with complex needs, and one of the core aims is to enhance housing stability. Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services runs a sixplex which is focused on supporting individuals seeking treatment for mental health diagnoses. Finally, seniors. As part of our commitment to aging in place, Continuing Care has increased its long-term-care capacity and adjusted its service delivery to support Yukoners to live at home for longer.

Normandy has recently opened and Vimy is on the horizon. Of course, Whistle Bend Place was opened in 2018 with 150 beds of intermediate, extended, and dementia care. Continuing Care also opened a reablement program in 2019 with six respite units and four reablement units, and Continuing Care continues to run the Yukon Home Care Program.

In closing, while the department has been trying to add new housing with services, we agree that more must be done to meet the needs of Yukoners. The by-name list continues to grow, which just means that we are not meeting everyone's needs. We need more housing inventory and we need to use the inventory we have more wisely.

Since I started this job a year ago, I have said many times that the department can do better, and I know our team is committed to continuing to work hard to get better and tackle the housing issues we face. Together with the corporation and all our partners, we need to better understand and meet the needs of our clients. What supports do they need to stay housed? What kinds of housing works best for them? We have to understand these complex questions and look for ways to resolve them.

Social housing in particular is an area of the continuum where we must get better if we wish to truly obtain our goal of keeping Yukoners housed. Without a home, it is pretty much impossible to attend to any other basic need like your job, family, health, or participation in the community.

In closing, I would like to thank the Committee for looking closely at the issue of how we can support low-income and vulnerable Yukoners most in need. I would also like to thank my government colleagues, community organizations, Yukon First Nations and Indigenous organizations, people with lived experience, the public, and the media for their part in addressing housing challenges in the territory. I know that we still have work to do and I know we need to get better in how we understand our clients and their needs, and we are committed to doing so.

We are pleased to be here today to answer your questions, but more importantly, I look forward to continuing our work in the months and years ahead toward housing solutions and programs that will continue to make a difference in the daily lives of vulnerable Yukoners.

Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. van Randen. Before we proceed with questions, for the purposes of Hansard, please introduce your team so that we know who is here.

Mr. van Randen: Yes, Mr. Chair. So, with me today is: Jennifer Gehmair, Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services; Sharon Specht, Assistant Deputy Minister of

Continuing Care; and Kaila deBoer, Director of Social Supports.

Chair: Thank you very much.

We will proceed with questions, and the first series of questions will come from MLA Emily Tredger.

Ms. Tredger: The first questions I have are for the officials from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

Could you please explain how the Office of the Auditor General of Canada selected housing as a matter for evaluation?

Mr. Wheeler: We last audited housing in the Yukon in 2010, and that audit identified a lot of serious deficiencies, and we were happy at that point in time that there were positive responses to our recommendations. Over the subsequent years, audits that we did in areas such as Corrections, Education, Mental Health Services — while they didn't focus on housing per se, it was always the theme underneath those audits. So, for example, looking at Corrections, how are people who are released from the Corrections facility integrated into the community when they don't have secure housing? That was an issue that came to the fore in a number of subsequent audits.

We also followed a lot of media reports that talked about issues such as drug and alcohol use and how that impacted housing and homelessness. Finally, we followed some of the reports or action plans that came out following our audit: the ten-year action plan for housing, the social housing transformation implementation plan from 2019, and the *Putting People First* report from 2020.

All of those issues and considerations led us to determine that it was time to take a second look at housing 10 years later.

Ms. Tredger: Did the Office of the Auditor General consult with any NGOs or other level of government?

Mr. Wheeler: Yes, we did. It is standard practice in our performance audits to not only interview the entities that we are auditing, but to speak with stakeholders, partners, and other individuals who are on the receiving end of government programs and services. So, for this audit, we spoke with the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, the Safe at Home Society, and the Council of Yukon First Nations, and that was to obtain their views on what is working in the area of housing and areas that may require improvement.

Ms. Tredger: Did the Office of the Auditor General look into the administration of federal or territorial funding programs for housing, such as Reaching Home?

Mr. Wheeler: The short answer is no. We did not look at detailed administration of those programs — for example, when applications are made for social housing, how that application was processed or on what basis it was accepted or rejected. However, we did look at some issues that relate to the administration of funding, such as the wait times for social housing, eligibility criteria for social housing, the income threshold for social housing versus the Canada-Yukon benefit, and we also, quite briefly, looked at progress made in implementing the HIFIS, the homeless individuals and family information system, which is part of the Reaching Home funding.

Ms. Tredger: Did the Office of the Auditor General speak with the Safe at Home Society to discuss their ongoing

work to inform the Yukon Housing Corporation's community housing transformation?

Mr. Wheeler: Yes, we did, on two occasions, in June and October of 2021. It's important to note that these were not audit interviews; they were interviews to gain the Safe at Home Society's perspective on housing and homelessness in the Yukon, what is working well, as I mentioned, and areas that needed improvement, and they were very helpful to us in the undertaking of our audit work, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Tredger: Thank you to Mr. Wheeler. The remaining questions are directed to the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services.

The first question is: How have the departments responsible for housing addressed turnover in key leadership positions?

Mr. Ferbey: Since 2015, there have been a number of changes in the leadership, and I submit that I think this is week 2 for me. What I would say is that, with the challenge of it, in each instance, the corporate history resides within the senior team and the rest of the staff. Of course, lots of the progress of the department is captured through branch plans, through business plans, and also the corporation board has succession planning. So, although there has been a lot of change, in each instance, the corporation does have the qualified people in place. I would say, when there are changes, often what is lost, at times, is personal relationships. One of the things that I'm doing in the first few weeks and months here is reaching out to all the partners. Of course, my staff have existing relationships, but I do recognize, at times, when senior leaders go, so do some of the relationships; so that's an important piece that we're all very cognizant of.

Mr. van Randen: Yes, I think I can relate to that sense that, when senior management changes and when there is a lot of change it can be destabilizing, but as Justin said, I think, by design, the government is sort of set up to withstand those kinds of changes. While the leader does bring a sense of culture and some relationships that they foster, the rest is sort of contained in our legislation, regulations, and policies and really dictates how our services are provided on the front line. Many of our services are handled through transfer payment agreements or third parties. They also remain consistent through these changes.

I want to say that our department has dedicated and professional front-line staff. They are exceptional. They are guided by the ethics and the standards of their trade, whether they're social workers, or nurses, or home care attendants, and I have a really dedicated leadership team, and they work hard to ensure the continuity in times of transition.

We have just come through a pandemic, which, I think, tested every part of our business continuity model. I think we are adept at staying the course through times of change.

I just want to acknowledge that — I know the audit pointed out that, while we have had plans and strategies regarding housing that we didn't always follow through on — I mean, it's a new day for me and for Justin, and I think we are committed to transparency and wanting to see those plans be something that we are going to continue to follow in the years ahead.

Chair: Before we proceed, I have just one follow-up question from Mr. Kent for the OAG.

Mr. Kent: So, just with respect to that second question that MLA Tredger asked on the consultations with NGOs, there are a number of NGOs obviously involved on the housing side of things, and you mentioned two that you consulted with. I am just wondering how you made that determination on which two to consult with.

Mr. Wheeler: Mr. Chair, those were two of the NGOs that we determined had the heaviest involvement in housing and homelessness, but we also followed — in the media, in particular, and other documentation — the viewpoints expressed by other stakeholders in the area of housing and homelessness. The media in the Yukon is quite active in terms of reporting on the issue, so that's a secondary method that we used to determine NGOs' perspectives on housing and homelessness.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Mr. Chair, I would like to start, of course, by thanking the members of the Office of the Auditor General. Welcome back to the Yukon, and I want to thank all of the officials here today who will be answering questions on this important work. I will continue on from questions from MLA Tredger, and I have a few that I will be asking.

Can you explain the new expanded scope of the Yukon Housing Corporation that now includes land and housing development? Further to that, how will this new scope allow the corporation to better respond to the concerns and recommendations outlined by the Auditor General's report?

Mr. Ferbey: The reference to land development is in regard to the recent order-in-council pursuant to the *Economic Development Act* creating the *Housing Unit Land and Infrastructure Development Assistance Program Regulation*. First Nation and private sector land owners have become increasingly involved in large-scale residential land development projects in the territory. However, there is a barrier in finding funding for the high upfront costs of land development. To support land development by First Nations and the private sector aimed at increasing the supply of serviced land for residential housing, the Yukon Housing Corporation acquired legal authority through the OIC to finance residential land development infrastructure projects.

Previously, the Yukon Housing Corporation only had authority to make grants or loans for the purpose of acquiring construction or improving housing. The new program will be administered as a loan stream under the existing developer loan program. The ability to finance private sector developers and First Nations in the provision of residential serviced lots may help in alleviating the overall demand for housing in the territory and therefore make housing more affordable.

The corporation's scope from non-market and affordable housing to one that includes financing for residential lot development will help YHC understand the full scope of developments in the housing continuum and could help it be more strategic in how to make the biggest impact with resources the Yukon Housing Corporation has.

Hon. Ms. McLean: What land development projects does the corporation have underway?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is now pursuing land development on its own, but is also using the expanding developer build program in partnership with First Nations. The corporation, through the *Housing Unit Land and Infrastructure Development Assistance Program Regulation*, can now finance First Nations and the private sector in upfront costs on land development. Chu Níkwän Limited Partnership, or CNLP, accessed the program to create 25 residential lots for phase 1 of the project in Copper Ridge on the Kwanlin Dün settlement land. All three phases should yield more than 150 lots for single detached homes and townhomes, and it marks the first project of its kind in the territory.

The corporation is administering the CNLP \$2.5-million loan through the developer loan program. This is a positive step toward increasing the housing supply for the territory, and in the case of CNLP in Whitehorse, the corporation looks forward to working with more First Nations and private sector interests in the future on these types of projects.

Hon. Ms. McLean: The Association of Yukon Communities has suggested the need for a rural land development strategy to help address the housing challenges in Yukon communities. How does the corporation respond to this suggestion?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation met with the Association of Yukon Communities in late December to discuss their concerns regarding the challenges of developing housing in the communities. From the corporation's perspective, there's an opportunity for the AYC to bring forward their concerns to the Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee, or HAP IC, as pillar 2 of the housing action plan is to increase access to adequate and affordable housing and non-market rental housing and support for tenants and landlords.

Pillar 3 of the HAP is to increase and diversify home ownership options. Community Services and Energy, Mines and Resources — which play traditional land development roles in the territory — are represented on the HAP IC, as well as the corporation. It is felt that this may be a venue to share concerns and ideas to determine a path forward using all tools available to Yukon government, municipalities, First Nations, the private sector, and NGOs. This approach also appears to align with AYC's housing availability and affordability policy discussion paper which was submitted to the Public Accounts Committee.

Hon. Ms. McLean: The Association of Yukon Communities has suggested that its involvement with government funding for housing, including through the CMHC, should be increased. Can you respond to this suggestion?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation welcomes the opportunity to work with the AYC to identify funding streams that can be most beneficial to communities. We recognize that municipalities are eligible for funding streams that perhaps the corporation may not be — such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities — and vice versa, such as the corporation's involvement with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. It is important that the corporation and the AYC, as well as other government departments and First Nations, work collaboratively to leverage funding for housing

developments in a manner that is most conducive to municipalities or communities achieving their priorities. The corporation is happy to continue these discussions with the AYC and will work with the association individually through communities on behalf of the AYC to further this work. I do know that the vice-presidents met with the AYC in December to discuss this very issue and I have reached out to Mr. Laking and hope to connect with him again next week to further these discussions.

Mr. Kent: Mr. Chair, I have some questions with respect to the current wait-list for housing. I guess the first one is: What is the current wait-list for housing? I think that I am looking for a number that includes those four housing options that are on page 3 here, which are the emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, and social housing.

Mr. Ferbey: As of January 19, there were 276 applicants on the waiting list for the corporation's housing units. The corporation does not track whether applicants on our wait-list currently live in emergency, transitional, supportive, or social housing; however, we know that 97 applicants are prioritized because they are currently experiencing homelessness, which means that they are likely in emergency, transitional, supportive housing, or other transitional or precarious housing situations.

The corporation is currently working on a survey of its wait-listed applications to better understand the current housing situations. Due to a return to normal procedures, the total number of applications on our wait-list has declined significantly in recent months. Over the past two years in an effort to provide flexibility and support to our wait-listed clients during the COVID pandemic, the corporation waived the requirement to submit yearly notices of assessment for all the applicants. The corporation reinstated normal pre-pandemic procedures in preparation for the tenancy of 401 Jeckell Street, the largest new capital project in years, by reaching out to the wait-listed applicants to resubmit their NOAs to demonstrate their continued eligibility and interest; 208 applicants did not resubmit their NOAs, leading to a significant reduction in the wait-list. Applicants who did not meet the timeline are now under another list and are being granted an additional six months to submit their documents for review. If they do, the wait-list status will be reinstated. Applicants previously on the wait-list have now had almost two months to submit their notices of assessment. To date, only two of the 208 removed have submitted the required documentation. Based on the current numbers from January, our wait-list has declined 12 percent since August 2020 and 46 percent since August 2022.

Ms. Tredger: I just want to make sure that I understood this correctly. What I understood was that all of the people on the wait-list for Yukon housing have been required to reapply? Is that correct?

Mr. Ferbey: Yes, they are on the wait-list and we reached out for them to resubmit their NOAs, so they ultimately would have to reapply.

Ms. Tredger: Can the witness tell us about the process for contacting the people on the wait-list and helping them to

resubmit their applications? I imagine that many people facing homelessness have frequently changing contact information and they would be difficult to contact and difficult to track down, and also the burden of submitting an application is not insignificant when you are facing many, many other challenges with your living situation.

Could the witness tell us about the process for those reapplications and how applicants were supported?

Ms. Carruthers: Basically, the process is that every person who is applying for our program does put down their requested contact details — so it could be a friend; it could be themselves; it could be an e-mail — and we obviously attempt to contact them successfully, but we do send a letter to their last known address, and it is their responsibility to update their application. So, while we do recognize that there are some barriers to being able to do that, it is part of the process and it's very clearly documented that this is a requirement. We do work with our partners as well to ensure that they are aware that we are doing this so that if they are working with any of our clients, our hope is that they are also reaching out to their clients to let them know about this requirement.

Mr. Kent: Mr. Ferbey, if you could just repeat that number that are on the wait-list right from the start; I don't think I heard it correctly.

Mr. Ferbey: As of January 19, there are 276 applicants on the wait-list for the corporation's housing units.

Mr. Kent: Thank you to the witness for that.

So, that would be for social housing, I take it — 276 for the social housing side of things? You don't track wait-lists for emergency shelters, transitional housing, or supportive housing? Or would that be done through the Department of Health and Social Services?

Mr. Ferbey: That is correct.

Mr. Kent: I think the witness answered my next question about the changes in the growth list being down 12 percent from 2020 and 46 percent from 2022. Is that correct?

Mr. Ferbey: Yes, that is correct.

Mr. Kent: What is the forecasted growth of the waiting list, and what tools are used to forecast growth, and are there changes contemplated to the way the growth of this list is forecast or the tools that are used? Just to follow up, are there plans to try to assess the wait-lists for these other three major housing options that we talked about?

Mr. Ferbey: Currently, we use several needs analysis tools or housing needs assessment, national census data related to housing and core housing needs, as well as population growth forecasts and other reports from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to form our capital development plans and broader policy-making. We do submit that our modelling forecasts do need to improve. That is one of our priority items this coming year.

Mr. Kent: Just to follow up on those other three housing options, are there plans for Health and Social Services to start tracking wait-lists or outstanding applications for those other three housing options that are identified here?

Mr. van Randen: Yes, that is one of the areas that I really hope will get better. I think one of the better things that

has happened over the last four or five years has been the interaction with the by-name list, which I think is a better way to track folks who are in vulnerable or precarious situations and are looking for housing. That is certainly where we have been putting our attention to look to. We have thought a little bit about comparing the by-name list with the Yukon Housing Corporation wait-list. We are trying to do that; there are privacy concerns, obviously, but I think the by-name list is a better tool for us at Social Services around figuring out who actually is precariously housed and who we should be attending to.

The only other thing I can say is we also now have a unit in our department called the “population public health evidence and evaluation group”, and we’re hoping we’ll be able to do a lot more rigorous forecasting through the knowledge of what we know about our population, but also just through the wisdom of the groups we work with, like the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and Safe at Home. We’re hoping the forecasting can get a lot better, as well, to help us really understand what’s going on — not only today, but 10 years from now.

Mr. Kent: Back to the Yukon Housing Corporation, of those 276 individuals who are currently on the social housing wait-list, can you give the Committee an idea of the breakdown between those who are seniors and non-seniors and also a breakdown of those who are in Whitehorse versus rural Yukon?

Mr. Ferbey: Forty-eight percent of the applicants, individuals and families, on the wait-list are seniors; 51 percent are non-seniors; 73 percent on the wait-list for housing are in Whitehorse, and 27 percent are in rural communities.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that. What is the overall inventory of social housing units that are available to the Yukon Housing Corporation, and how many of those units are currently occupied? Obviously, some would probably be under repair or transition, so I’m curious if you could provide those numbers.

Mr. Ferbey: As of January 19, the corporation owns 785 units, not including the 166 units for staff housing. Currently, 658 of these units are occupied, and 127 are vacant. Vacancy is due to: 51 units are under repair; 76 units are being allocated. The number of units currently being allocated is significantly higher than normal due to the recent addition of the 47 units at 401 Jeckell Street. Staff at the corporation are working hard to allocate the vacant available units to eligible applicants as soon as possible.

In addition, the corporation’s maintenance team is working to repair the 51 units currently unavailable for tenanting expeditiously.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Paragraph 12 of the report states as follows: “The gaps...” the Office of the Auditor General “... observed in providing adequate and affordable housing included incomplete identification of housing needs, a long and growing waiting list for housing, and problems in managing the existing housing stock. The corporation and the department have not worked together or with housing partners to effectively manage housing for those in need.”

The Office of the Auditor General previously examined Yukon housing. The February 2010 performance audit report

of the Yukon Housing Corporation highlights the lack of — quote: “... adequate analysis of the need for and supply of social housing in the territory...” This was on page 2.

The first question that I have is: What is the breakdown of unit size — for instance, bachelor, one-bedroom, two-bedroom, or other size units — of the 744 social housing units owned by YG?

Mr. Ferbey: The bedroom count is as such: bachelor is 37 units; one-bedroom is 323 units; two-bedroom is 228 units; three-bedroom is 177 units; four-bedroom is 20 units, for a total of 785 units.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Are you able to break down the housing wait-list by required unit size? If yes, can you please share those respective numbers?

Mr. Ferbey: The breakdown of the wait-list by required unit size, as of January 1, 2023, is: 48 people waiting for bachelor or one-bedroom units; 108 waiting for one-bedroom; 35 waiting for two-bedroom; 48 waiting for three-bedroom; 37 waiting for four-bedroom, for a total of 276.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: What specific actions are planned to address the incomplete identification of housing needs?

Mr. Ferbey: We do have a number of strategies. The Yukon Housing Corporation, in collaboration with partners, has several projects identified to provide a more complete picture of needs for both the Yukon Housing Corporation and for housing in general.

For example, we have a wait-list survey and analysis. First, the corporation, with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, is in the process of designing a survey for its wait-listed clients. The goal of the survey is to better understand the key factors driving demand for subsidized housing and the current housing situation of those on the wait-list and the demographic characteristics of those wait-listed clients to ensure that we are working with partners to meet the needs of identified groups, including First Nations.

Another strategy is the Housing Assessment Resource Tool, or HART. The corporation has been working in collaboration with the Housing Assessment Resource Tool — HART — to better understand the core housing needs and affordability challenges for specific income groups. The HART project is in the process of developing data to demonstrate the maximum rents that different income groups can afford and the number of units at that particular price point that are required to eliminate core housing needs.

The corporation is working with the Department of Health and Social Services to develop a forecasting tool to identify current and future needs for housing integrated with support services.

We are also in conversation around how to expand this tool to include forecasting for rent-geared-to-income housing and potentially the housing continuum more broadly.

As part of the implementation of community housing, the corporation is in the process of designing better ways to identify the needs for supportive services among our clients. For example, we now require support plans. We have support plans. We now require applicants from the by-name list or from a priority stream to submit a support plan before their lease is

signed. This plan is meant to identify what supports clients are to receive and how the Yukon Housing Corporation can better support the tenants.

The corporation will be hiring a housing support worker to better support clients struggling to maintain their housing. The corporation has completed eight needs assessments since 2019 and aims to conduct assessments in the remaining six communities in 2023 to 2024.

Finally, with evaluations — our understanding of housing needs will be informed through evaluation of our programs. For instance, the corporation is currently developing an evaluation framework and a key performance matrix to assess the implementation of our new mixed-income, mixed-use tenant allocation policy.

A key to these evaluations will also involve surveys and community engagement to identify what is working, what is not working, and adjust the programs accordingly.

Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Sort of as a follow-up question related to your most recent response, what steps are planned to address the growth of the current waiting list?

Mr. Ferbey: The Yukon Housing Corporation, in preparation for the tenanting of the 401 Jeckell Street building recently reached out to tenants on the wait-list to have them resubmit their notice of assessment to demonstrate their continued eligibility and interest. Given the recent reductions, the number should be interpreted with caution; however, even if the reduction is accurate, it remains the case that the wait-list has more than doubled since 2015, from 212 to 276 applicants.

The corporation has four broad levers for addressing the wait-list: (1) new capital projects; (2) new partnerships to lease units for rent-geared-to-income housing; (3) improve affordability in the private market to reduce demand for YHC units in the first place; and (4) improve our understanding of housing needs and promote movement along the housing continuum.

Chair: Over to me. The Auditor General's report found that while YHC and HSS have "...launched several initiatives and action plans to address housing in the last decade, they have not followed through on many of their commitments." In response to the Auditor General's report, the department and corporation have developed a work plan. What steps are you implementing to ensure accountability that action will be taken and followed through on?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation and department are taking several steps to ensure accountability moving forward. The first one that has been implemented is a memorandum of understanding signed between the corporation and the department as per the work plan item 79.1. The memorandum of understanding was signed in May 2022 and identifies ways in which the most vulnerable Yukoners can be supported with adequate, affordable, and suitable housing within the parameters of Yukon's legislative and policy environment and access to supportive services and housing that meets the needs of vulnerable Yukoners who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The memorandum of understanding also covers roles and assignments of responsibility of the department or corporation, a mechanism for engagement with partners, short- and long-term priorities and actions, a coordinated approach to inform management, and reporting and communication of progress and results. We have an ADM steering committee. To further work plan item 79.1, the department and corporation have established an ADM steering committee as part of the 79.5 work plan to agree on short- and long-term housing priorities and associated timelines.

The corporation's board is also currently working on a five-year strategic plan, which will be building on the recommendations of the OAG into this guiding document. The corporation's board also monitors and provides recommendations for overall strategic direction to the corporation, and our engagements with the housing community on our five-year plan still continues.

Chair: I will quote from paragraph 17 of the report: The audit "... found that barriers prevented residents in need from accessing social housing. These barriers existed in both the design and the delivery of social housing."

What work is begin done with NGOs and others to identify the barriers for folks applying for social housing?

Mr. Ferbey: YHC engages regularly with the following groups to share knowledge, discuss issues, and collaborate on addressing housing issues of all kinds relating to applicants, tenants, housing stocks, safety and security, and support. For example, the housing action plan. The implementation committee, or HAP IC, has monthly meetings. Partners include HSS, HPW, CS, First Nations, City of Whitehorse, CIBC, chambers of commerce, other NGOs, and CMHC.

There is a Reaching Home Community Advisory Board — CAB for short — monthly meetings. Partners include Health and Social Services, NGOs, the federal government, City of Whitehorse, and Council of Yukon First Nations. There is the housing and homeless task force — also monthly meetings. Partners include Health and Social Services, First Nation governments, and Indigenous Services Canada, the City of Whitehorse, and local NGOs. Yukon Housing Corporation staff regularly engage with specific organizations to help support tenants. This includes a Safe at Home stability worker — this is a position funded by the Yukon Housing Corporation — and Normandy Living community leasing coordinator, Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition senior engagement specialist — a fund that we provide support for — and Neptune Security Services — that is a contract responsible for nightly security patrols at multi-unit buildings in Whitehorse. There is SCAN and there is also the RCMP, among others.

Ms. Tredger: I have to admit that I got a little lost in that long list of committees. There are a lot of committees, and I appreciate that there is a lot of collaboration taking place. Do those committees have terms of reference and expected outcomes? I am wondering how the information that comes out of those committees gets integrated into the decisions made in the department.

Mr. McDowell: Yes, the committees referenced do have terms of reference.

Sorry — the second part of the question was — ?

Ms. Tredger: It was about how the information and, I guess, maybe decisions that come out of those committees get integrated into the decision-making by the department.

Mr. McDowell: The committees have a set of minutes that get recorded after each meeting. The minutes are distributed. We definitely consider the conversations and the types of themes that come forward at those meetings not only on a monthly basis, but as we plan the long-term strategies for the corporation — annual planning processes and those sorts of processes.

Chair: What work is being done to support housing navigators working within NGOs?

Mr. Ferbey: Over the years, different NGOs — such as Victoria Faulkner Women’s Centre, Blood Ties Four Directions, and the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition — have hired housing navigators to support clients finding housing with landlord/tenancy relations, education, connect with appropriate supports, and other interventions and assistance. These positions have no affiliation with the Yukon Housing Corporation, yet these are partners in helping people with successful tenancies wherever they live, including our units. The Yukon Housing Corporation provides funding to the Safe at Home Society for a housing stability worker. This person primarily works with Safe at Home clients who are Yukon Housing Corporation tenants to have successful tenancies.

YHC staff and housing support workers meet on a regular basis to discuss how to best support specific tenants if they are experiencing specific difficulties. YHC also provides the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition with funding for a senior engagement specialist who works primarily with YHC senior tenants to inform seniors of activities happening in their building and the community to support them in general to have successful tenancies. YHC staff engage with senior engagement specialists as needed throughout the year.

Chair: Thank you, I believe you answered the next question as well, so we will move on to Emily Tredger.

Ms. Tredger: Paragraph 20 references the rent supplement program and the Canada-Yukon housing benefit. How are applicants to these programs evaluated?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is no longer receiving applicants from individual households for the rent supplement program, as the program is being phased out and replaced by the Canada-Yukon housing benefit program. The rent supplement program was for applicants already approved for the rent-geared-to-income program. To be eligible for the program, applicants must have incomes below established thresholds, called “housing income limits”. These income limits are based on (1) the size of the household and (2) whether the applicant resides in Whitehorse or the communities. Similarly, eligibility for the Canada-Yukon housing benefit is based on applicants having income below established thresholds. These thresholds are also based on household size. It might be useful for me to point a few more program differences.

There are a few differences in eligibility criteria for the RGI and the housing benefit programs, and these differences

are largely due to differences in program objectives. First, the income thresholds used for the Housing Canada benefit are slightly higher. As a result, the program is available to both low-income households and moderate-income households who require support, but are not eligible for social assistance or rent geared to income. As described in our agreement with CMHC, the goal of our program is to make rental housing costs in the private market more affordable for low- to moderate-income Yukon households that are not receiving shelter allowance or live in community housing, but nevertheless are in core housing need.

Another key difference is that, unlike RGI, the income limits set for the housing benefit program are the same for all Yukoners regardless of whether they live in Whitehorse or in the communities.

Ms. Tredger: How are those income limits or household needs calculated?

Mr. Mollet: The Canada-Yukon housing benefit is part of the national housing strategy, and then we are working on another parameter of the national housing strategy. As indicated, as the income ability is different from the rent-geared-to-income program because it is meant to provide subsidy for people who are experiencing affordability issues, then we are within the [inaudible], which is different, and these income limits are also used for other programs that have a similar objective. It means to have to provide some affordability component for households that are dealing with affordability issues.

Ms. Tredger: Has an audit of all available rental units recently been completed in the Yukon?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation only provides a portion of the total rental units available in the Yukon’s rental housing stock. According to the latest rental market survey by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, completed in April 2022, there are an estimated 2,386 rental units in the Yukon. As noted, the corporation currently supports 137 households through the Canada-Yukon housing benefit and 81 households through the rental supplement program. These are subsidies designed to support affordability in private markets. The corporation does not regularly audit the units provided to confirm whether the units provided by private landlords are adequate. However, within the agreement signed through the program, the corporation reserves the right to view the rental units to ensure that they are adequate and comply with the agreement and program framework, and we provide sufficient notice given to the clients.

Ms. Tredger: What is the annual budget for these programs? Is there a pattern for these programs being oversubscribed before the end of the year, and is there a wait-list?

Mr. Ferbey: The annual budget for the Canada-Yukon housing benefit changes every year and is based on the Canada-Yukon bilateral agreement between CMHC and the corporation. The total amount of funding allocated over this period by the federal government is about \$9 million. The amount is a cost matched by the Government of Yukon. During the lifetime of the housing benefit program, there have been

periods when the program has been fully subscribed. Currently, there are spaces in the program, and there is no wait-list.

The corporation regularly promotes housing benefits to raise awareness through regular, online ad campaigns and by sharing information with the community groups. The corporation is currently running a marketing campaign to raise awareness throughout the Yukon.

The annual budget for the rent supplement program is approximately \$500,000, and this includes individuals and corporate rent supplements; however, as mentioned, we are phasing out the rent supplement program for individuals, and it is being replaced by the Canada-Yukon housing benefit.

Hon. Ms. McLean: In paragraph 23, it notes that the corporation used a point system to prioritize five groups: victims of violence, people needing medical accommodations in or outside their community, homeless individuals, mobility-challenged households, and all other non-priority applicant households.

My first question is: Is there an intention to maintain priority for these individuals named in paragraph 23? That was the first part of the question. To expand the list — is there a plan to expand the lists of priority applicants? If yes, how? If not, why not?

Mr. Ferbey: Under the new tenant allocation model, the corporation priority groups are as follows: victims of violence, people needing medical accommodations in or outside their community, mobility-challenged households, and homelessness. These priority groups are based on understanding the specific needs within the Yukon. Our list of priority groups is different from those identified under the National Housing Strategy, which offers a more expansive list reflective of the diverse needs across Canada, including those experienced in larger urban centres.

Hon. Ms. McLean: So, stakeholders have identified a multiple list of housing needs as an obstacle when trying to tenant buildings. Have the responsible departments explored the possibility of aligning the lists of housing needs and updating them simultaneously?

Mr. Ferbey: As the question points out, there are multiple lists that identify Yukoners in need of housing. The two primary lists are the corporation's wait-list and the Safe at Home's by-name list. The corporation keeps a wait-list of potential tenants for the corporation's community housing buildings, and the Safe at Home by-name list identifies people who are experiencing homelessness or are precariously housed.

As part of the community's housing mixed-income/mixed-use approach, both the corporation's wait-list and the by-name list will be used to tenant buildings, as 20 percent of the tenants will be from the by-name list. There is also a point-in-time count organized by Safe at Home, which aims to count or enumerate the number of people experiencing homelessness in a particular singular night. While this is important to understand homelessness, it is not used to draw tenants from. There have been discussions about aligning the corporation's wait-list and the by-name list more closely. Due to privacy considerations, there are differing objectives of the list, which has not yet become feasible. In the meantime, the corporation agrees that

for other organizations working with the most vulnerable to provide housing or housing-related services, the ownership of the two primary lists by two separate organizations may provide statistical challenges to tenancing, particularly while there isn't a close relationship with the organization. One way to remove the barriers is maybe through the coordinated access-to-housing team, CHAT. This group is made up of government and non-governmental officials. Although the corporation is not a member, we have access to the by-name list and can coordinate with the appropriate services for those experiencing homelessness.

Where possible, the corporation would be happy to facilitate the introduction of organizations not currently members of CHAT to further support coordinated access in the use of CHAT's expertise.

Hon. Ms. McLean: I think you started answering this, but how is the integrated housing strategy currently identifying needs and gaps in housing, and what kind of progress has been made in making these identifications?

Mr. Ferbey: The integrated housing strategy rolls up information related to our wait-list, needs assessments, statistical information from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, community engagement, and the Housing Assessment Resource Tool — HART — to create an overall picture of housing needs in the territory. It is intended to identify housing needs, compared to other existing supply, and describe the actions to fill identified gaps over a planned period of time.

The tools were developed in 2017-18, but in recent years have not been used as priorities switched to addressing immediate needs during the pandemic. However, the ability to identify community needs in an evidence-based approach will be key to the corporation's success moving forward. The integrated housing strategy is currently being updated and revised and is anticipated to be completed in the winter of 2024, as per 40.1 of our work plan.

Mr. Kent: In paragraph 25 of the Auditor General's report, it found that — and I quote: "... the corporation did not have recent data to determine the extent to which various priority groups were able to remain in housing ..." I am hoping that the corporation can discuss this finding. If recent data is not currently available, how is the corporation's eligibility system being applied, and what changes are being contemplated to the way that data is collected?

Mr. Ferbey: I will talk first about the priority groups housed. The identification of priority groups is meant to inform the housing allocation process. The corporation does not, however, track whether its tenants are in a priority group after they are housed. As a result, the corporation does not have recent data to determine the extent to which various priority groups are able to remain in housing. However, under the community housing framework, the corporation will be asking each applicant in the priority group to submit a support plan before their lease is signed. This plan is meant to identify what supports clients already receive and how Yukon Housing Corporation staff can better support tenants to remain housed.

I will talk a little bit about eligibility. Staff are currently working to update information systems related to evictions to

include data on evictions for priority groups. The corporation also is working with our assistant provider to better understand what the capabilities are currently and what else may need to be built in so Yukon Housing Corporation is positioned to generate comprehensive data reports required for planning and evaluation. By adequately tracking and reporting on the support needs of our tenants and priority groups, we hope to improve outcomes. Those are to reduce evictions and promote movement along the housing continuum. Tracking eviction data from priority groups will also become a critical performance metric to evaluate the success of the community housing transformation.

Ms. Tredger: For clarification, is the plan only to track that data for tenants who come off the by-name list, or are they planning to track that data for people who are identified as priority groups regardless of which list they come from?

Mr. McDowell: The plan would be to track the data for all of those groups.

Mr. Kent: So, in paragraph 27 of the report, it states that — and I will quote again: The OAG had “... analyzed applicant data from 1 April 2018 to 31 October 2021 that the corporation provided to determine how long it took from the date people applied for housing to the date they received it. The average time for priority groups to be housed was 276 days, while the average time for non-priority applicants to be housed was 141 days ... The corporation was not able to provide an explanation as to why this was the case.” So, my question is: Could you please now provide an explanation as to why it took longer for priority groups to access housing, and what changes are being made going forward to ensure that this does not continue to happen?

Mr. Ferbey: During the time frame of April 2018 to October 2021, the corporation partnered with a First Nation development corporation and offered the opportunity to house 50 clients from the corporation’s wait-list; however, the preference from our partner was to house applicants with affordability challenges but without a specified priority. Therefore, those in the priority group were not housed as quickly as those in the non-priority group during this period. Ultimately, the corporation’s goal is to provide housing to as many households in need as possible. For this reason, we seized on the opportunity to work with our partner.

Under the community housing framework, we have adopted a tenant allocation policy that is moving away from a points-based system that provides housing in order of highest priority.

The goal of the new allocation model is to balance needs with outcome and provide housing in a way that leads to fewer evictions; safer, better quality housing; more socially mixed housing; mixed buildings and neighbourhoods; and closer integration of housing and supportive services.

Mr. Kent: I have just a quick follow-up on that. Since that October 31, 2021 date, have you seen the gap closing in the average wait time for priority groups versus non-priority applicants?

Mr. McDowell: I don’t have up-to-date data on the question you are asking, but we can certainly get back to you on that.

Mr. Kent: I appreciate that. My final question of this grouping is — we solicited input from a number of different groups, and some of those groups have told us that it takes an inordinate amount of time to find housing for women and children fleeing violence — much higher than non-priority groups. I am interested in what your response to that comment is.

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is committed to supporting women and children fleeing violence. We include victims of violence as a priority group. We are currently working with CMHC to explore the possibility of creating a specific stream within the Canada-Yukon housing benefit that would provide support to women and children fleeing violence.

In addition, the corporation has also supported the Council of Yukon First Nations’ project to create a new shelter in Whitehorse specifically for Indigenous women and children fleeing violence.

Chair: Just a quick follow-up — does the Housing Corporation acknowledge that there is a disparity between women and children fleeing violence in terms of the wait times and other applicants?

Mr. Ferbey: Yes, we understand that the wait time across the spectrum is inadequate. Women and children fleeing violence is absolutely a priority group for us for housing. In the new strategy on community housing we are talking about, this group continues to be a priority. Ultimately, in this area, we absolutely submit that we can do better; that’s our intention.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: In 2010, the Auditor General recommended a review of how the corporation and the department set the rent for tenants who receive social assistance. That is found in paragraph 29 of the 2022 report.

My first question is: Why has a problem that was identified in 2010 not been addressed prior to this recent audit?

Mr. van Randen: I think there are probably a lot of reasons that I could offer you, but I think that ultimately this is one where the department and the corporation just have to take ownership — that this remains unresolved. We are taking steps — Justin and I — to work through the complexities of this issue. We have been working to identify where our respective policies don’t align and where our teams were applying different definitions when determining eligibility criteria. It is in the memorandum of understanding between the minister and the corporation, and we acknowledge that we have to provide access to affordable, adequate, suitable, and sustainable housing, and it must be available to all Yukoners in need.

I guess all I can say is that this principle is going to form the basis of our collective work together. We have charged the ADM steering committee with getting back on top of this, looking at our legislation and our policies, and we are going to do that work in the year ahead. So, I look forward to that, and I want to do a better job on this one and document how we progress on it.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The department’s response to the Auditor General’s report includes a commitment to — and I

quote: "...implement the new Community Housing Tenant Selection Policy, including eligibility criteria, and the subsequent removal of the current prioritization system..." That is on page 4 of the work plan. The first question arising is: Has this happened? Is the new tenant selection policy in place? Finally, if yes, how was it developed?

Mr. Ferbey: The Yukon Housing Corporation's new tenant allocation policy has been developed and is being implemented with the tenanting of the new 47-unit building at 401 Jeckell Street. The policy will be adopted more broadly through the Yukon Housing Corporation buildings in Whitehorse as units become available over time. It will not initially apply in the Yukon communities.

It is based on a more deliberate selection of tenants from different parts of the income spectrum and includes buildings shared by single people, couples, families, and seniors. The model has three different streams of tenants: 20 percent of tenants are from the by-name list managed by the coordinated housing access table, CHAT; 20 percent of the tenants are from Yukon Housing Corporation's priority group and include individuals who have experienced violence, require medical accommodations, or have mobility issues, and 60 percent are from the affordability stream.

This model was informed by consultation with NGOs, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee. Several meetings occurred with a few key NGOs and the Department of Health and Social Services in late summer and fall of 2022. These meetings helped inform the policy writing. The draft policy was then presented to the HAP IC meeting and was subsequently circulated to members, who were given the opportunity to provide feedback. Members of the coordinated housing access table, some of whom are at the HAP IC, shared concerns. These are instrumental in shaping the final wording of the policy, specifically, the details around the support plan required by individuals in the priority groups.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: In a follow-up to that response, the committee has heard from some groups that have expressed significant concern about the new tenant allocation policy and claim that the most vulnerable Yukoners — for instance, survivors of violence and individuals who are currently homeless — will receive less access to Yukon housing units than in the previous model. Can you please respond to this claim?

Mr. McDowell: A central objective of our community housing transformation is to balance needs with outcome to provide housing in a way that leads to fewer evictions, is safer, is better quality housing, is in more socially mixed buildings and neighbourhoods, and is a closer integration of housing and support services.

As noted in the answer to question 31, the new allocation model will mix tenants from different household types — seniors, families, couples, and singles — as well as tenants with different income levels all in the same building. The model is meant to promote a social mix and avoid the concentration of those with high needs all in the same place. This mixed-income, mixed-use approach has been adopted by housing providers

across the country and the world as a central tenet of a smarter, more socially and economically sustainable way of providing subsidized housing.

As we implement this new model, the corporation will no longer be providing housing based on the previous system, which provided housing in order of the highest priority. Nevertheless, the Yukon Housing Corporation will continue to provide a significant portion of its stock — 40 percent — to those with the greatest need, 20 percent of units to priority groups, and 20 percent to the by-name list. Furthermore, YHC will continue to work its partners, such as Opportunities Yukon, the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Safe at Home Society, Blood Ties Four Directions, and the Vimy Heritage Housing Society, to name a few, to provide housing with dedicated supportive services to those with high needs.

Finally, the corporation is developing an evaluation framework, including performance measurements, to assess the success of the community housing framework.

A key performance result will focus on whether the implementation of community housing is helping those with the greatest need to remain in their housing. Further evaluations will include surveys of tenants and engagement with partners on what is working and what is not to improve the model over time.

Ms. Tredger: I have a couple of points I want to discuss on that. The witness just said that one of the purposes of this was to reduce evictions, but earlier, the Housing Corporation said they don't actually track whether or not people have longer stays or more evictions or faster turnover based on whether they belong to a priority group. It seems to me that the implication of this policy is that people with high needs are being evicted more often, but the Housing Corporation said they don't have evidence to support that. Can they tell me a bit about why these conclusions were reached?

Mr. McDowell: We do have anecdotal and ongoing administrative evidence that those with particularly high vulnerabilities are subject to higher eviction rates. While we don't necessarily have data to support that, we do have years of experience with that theme.

What community housing proposes to do is look at our clients, our tenants, to dig into the types of needs that they have and then to support those needs with the intended outcome of better client outcomes — better tenant outcomes — and fewer evictions and those sorts of goals.

Chair: I have a follow-up as well. We have heard from groups that the most vulnerable Yukoners now have less access to the housing units that are available through the new policy. Does the YHC dispute that? Do they disagree with that or do they concede the point that vulnerable Yukoners now have less access to Yukon Housing Corporation units?

Mr. Ferbey: I think you've seen a movement, and it came from the National Housing Strategy across the country. They are looking at these buildings now that are having diversified groups in them, including the most vulnerable and including mixed income. It's moving away from the model where you have a building where everyone is vulnerable. I think we have found, not only with the wrap-around services,

that it is difficult to provide the kind of support needed. I think we have seen evidence that it isn't as successful of an outcome as you are seeing in other models, which is looking at this community housing model. It's proven in other areas, and it is a model that we are looking at.

Of course, our real concern is homelessness and putting the most vulnerable in houses, and we have other strategies to try to ensure that people do get a house. I would take one thing — I saw in a quote on the wall, as I was reading one of these things, that said that the only solution to homelessness is a house. We entirely get that, but this is a model that we are looking at, and we are doing it with our initial building. Of course, as we mentioned, we are going to be tracking the data and seeing if that is a more successful model. I think what we have talked about is looking at the evidence and then looking at the data, and, of course, we would always look to pivot if this, in fact, wasn't successful. But I think in other areas it has shown to be a very successful way to house people in communities and ensure that it is the best outcome for all.

Ms. Tredger: I think the major concern about this is that when people do choose to identify themselves as one of the priority groups or choose to access the by-name list, they are now going to be relegated to only 40 percent of the units. Are you worried that people will stop identifying themselves and that this is discriminatory against those groups of people?

Ms. Carruthers: I don't think that they will necessarily stop identifying themselves. I think there could be people who are seeing it that way. With the work with our partners — and I think our intention here is to really look at the outcomes, and I think that, when people are starting to see that we are having fewer evictions and we are having more successful tenancies, people are wanting the help and the support. We see a demand in our non-profit organizations that are supporting people, so I think they are going to see an opportunity here to really be supported in having a successful tenancy. So, I do think that they are going to recognize that this is a benefit to them and that they then will have access to our units and hopefully essentially a better outcome.

Ms. Tredger: I certainly have nothing against supporting tenants. I am really worried about making people choose between accessing a support plan and accessing the support of NGOs or having access to 60 percent of the units.

Mr. Ferbey mentioned before that they will pivot if this is not a successful plan. At what point would you look at that to make the decision of whether you are going to pivot or continue with this plan?

Mr. McDowell: We intend to evaluate it as we adopt it in the next months and certainly at the end of the first year. Those percentages that we talked about are things that we could pivot on as well if those percentages don't seem to be producing the types of outcomes that we had anticipated.

Chair: I have some questions with regard to the department's work plan that was submitted to the Committee and is available online. Action 31.1 of the work plan commits to a review of Yukon Housing Corporation's rent assessment and eligibility by fall of 2023. Is this work underway? What consultation has occurred with affected stakeholders?

Mr. Mollet: What we can say is that the work has not started yet, but it is a priority. The lead will be the ADM steering committee on housing between the Department of Health and Social Services and ourselves. The work is planned to start in the first quarter of 2023. What we can say about the eligibility piece — and we just discussed it — it is about the point system to calculate the eligibility for the rent-gear-to-income program. It has been revised and modernized under the new community housing framework. Another element around eligibility is the YHC asset cap policy which stipulates that tenants are not eligible under RGI units if they have assets over \$100,000, and it was updated in December 2022 to also include seniors. However, the new policy doesn't apply to seniors who are currently living in our housing units.

Chair: Just a quick follow-up to the question about the review. It has not started yet, but the Housing Corporation is committed to having it completed by the fall of 2023?

Mr. Mollet: The work will start with the ADM steering committee in the first quarter of 2023. It is a priority for this committee.

Chair: And you anticipate to have that work done by the fall of 2023?

Mr. Mollet: Under the work plan, we have committed to completing a review by the winter of 2024.

Chair: Next question. Some groups have expressed concern that the rent assessment will tighten eligibility and may negatively affect women and children in need of safe and suitable housing that the private sector may not have available. Can the corporation respond to this concern?

Mr. Mollet: What we can say is that there is no indication that a review of rent assessment by the corporation and the department would lead to a tightening of eligibility for any group, including women and children fleeing violence. We already include victims of violence as a priority group with our new allocation system. What we can also say — and it has been mentioned — is that we are working with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on a new stream under the Canada-Yukon benefit specifically targeted for women and children fleeing violence.

In addition, the corporation has provided support to the Council of Yukon First Nations to create a new shelter in Whitehorse for Indigenous women and children fleeing violence. The review of the rent assessment is meant to ensure that government assistance for housing is provided in a way that is equitable for all clients.

Under the RGI program, tenants of the corporation pay 25 percent of their gross income to rent; however, if tenants receive additional income support such as social assistance, the payment is based on a shelter allowance set by the income support program.

Chair: The corporation's response to recommendation 31 mentioned improvements that will continue to be made under the 2021 community housing framework alongside actions named in the work plan. Are there other aspects of the framework that the corporation feels would be helpful for us as the Committee to understand that they have underway right now?

Mr. Ferbey: Many of the programs offered by the corporation were not within the scope of the audit but nevertheless are important features of our community housing framework. Our community housing framework is aligned with the key objectives of the national housing strategy and include the goal of creating new opportunities for the federal government to innovate through partnerships with the housing sector cooperative movement, private sector, and research community.

Our government has taken the same approach. We are forming partnerships with many private sector organizations, non-profits, and First Nations. Indeed, a key part of the community housing framework — beyond improving outcomes within the stock of housing provided directly by the corporation — is to work with partners to develop and maintain the community housing stock more broadly and to better understand the key drivers of housing needs and implement best practice solutions.

From our perspective, the community housing stock does not simply include units in our rent-g geared-to-income program; it includes all housing that offers subsidized rent or sale through partnership with government, whether it's operated by a government, the private sector, NGOs, or our First Nation partners. We support these partners directly by providing funding opportunities through the housing initiative fund, the builder development loan program, and the municipal matching rental construction program. We also support them by identifying other opportunities for funding within the national housing strategy and facilitating connections with our federal colleagues.

Beyond organizational partners, YHC also supports individuals living in the private market through the rent supplement program and housing benefit program, as well as through the home-repair program to help Yukoners to remain in their houses.

While many of these efforts were not included in the scope of the audit, they form an important part of the work that the corporation is doing to advance the vision of community housing.

Ms. Tredger: The Auditor General's report found that the number of social housing and rent-supplement units administered by the Yukon Housing Corporation grew by 20 percent between the 2014-15 and 2020-21 fiscal years but that the demand exceeded the supply. That is in paragraph 32.

What is the current trajectory of supply and demand of units? Does the YHC have a plan for the development of units that is commensurate with the current demand?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is collaborating with the Department of Health and Social Services to develop a tool to forecast the need for housing and services as well as rent-g geared-to-income housing. To understand the current demand of our units, we rely on a variety of indicators, including our wait-lists, community needs assessments, census data and population forecasts, community engagement, and the Housing Assessment Resource Tool — HART — which helps to identify the extent of affordability by needs by income groups.

As identified in the work plan, action 40.1, the corporation is currently rolling up these indicators of needs to develop a new integrated housing strategy which will provide an overall picture of housing needs to inform planning.

The current trajectory of future supply involves efforts to increase YHC stock as well as new opportunities to grow the community housing and maintain community housing through partnerships and rent subsidies. Since the audit was completed, we have already helped to grow supply by completing three triplexes and completing the new 47-unit building at 401 Jeckell. We secured 50 units in the Da Daghay development and secured 10 units in Normandy Living.

Moreover, as noted in our answer to question 15, the YHC has several new capital builds currently underway or in the planning phase. This includes a tenplex in Old Crow — Highways and Public Works is managing that project — a Housing First in Watson Lake, and a 34-unit multi-family community housing building at the Korbo site in Dawson. We also have duplexes in Carmacks, Dawson, Faro, and Mayo.

We also have several new partnerships in the pipeline. Notable examples include: the Yukon Housing Corporation is seeking 16 units from the Normandy Living facility for seniors with support needs. We are exploring options on how to support the Vimy Heritage Housing Society and plan to build the Rowan House 75-unit supported housing facility, which Vimy is looking at.

The Yukon Housing Corporation has preliminary agreements with the Da Daghay Development Corporation to access 75 units in the DDC's second phase of the current development. Ultimately, the current trajectory of future supply of YHC units is largely based on our five-year capital plan. Our plans to increase supply are designed to prioritize investments, given budgetary constraints, to best meet our identified needs.

Ms. Tredger: The Auditor General's report found that, between 2019 and 2021, the corporation conducted a needs analysis in five out of 18 communities, but there was limited evidence of links between the results of these analyses and the capital asset management plan. That is in paragraph 38. In which five communities has the corporation conducted a needs analysis?

Mr. Ferbey: At the time of the audit, the corporation had completed five community needs assessments and has since done three more. The community needs assessments have been completed in: in 2019, Whitehorse; in 2020, Watson Lake; in 2021, Carcross, Mayo, and Dawson; and in 2022, Carmacks, Pelly Crossing, and Ross River. These assessments are a key tool to understanding demographic trends, housing needs, and supply gaps across the housing spectrum. Findings from recent needs assessments inform capital investments and housing solutions in several communities, including the Watson Lake Housing First project which is slated for construction in 2023 and the recent Yukon Housing Corporation triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse. Hearing from the communities is critically important, and this is an area that we clearly need to improve upon to continue our housing investments in the rural areas and Whitehorse.

Ms. Tredger: What is the schedule to complete the needs analysis in the 10 remaining communities now? Or perhaps it is 13 — but in the remaining communities?

Mr. Ferbey: I think you are right in reading the question as you did.

At the time of the audit, the corporation had completed five community needs assessments and has since done three more. YHC plans to complete the remaining six communities in 2023-24. Needs assessments are a key tool to understand demographic trends, housing needs, and supply gaps across the continuum.

Chair: A quick follow-up before we move on. The Auditor General found that there was limited evidence of a link between these analyses and the capital asset management plan. Has the corporation addressed that in any way? Is there evidence of linking these analyses to their planning?

Mr. McDowell: I think we have begun to link those data with capital plans in a more significant way since the audit was completed. I think I will stop there.

Hon. Ms. McLean: The Auditor General's report noted that the corporation has prepared a five-year capital plan, as I have heard mentioned here today — an asset management plan that includes plans for building new units over the next five years. Is the plan public? If not, can the witness please talk about whether you can submit a copy of the plan?

Mr. Ferbey: The 2019-20 capital plan was submitted to the Public Accounts Committee. This document was the most recent version of the document provided to the OAG, as the corporation provided versions going back to 2016-17. The document is used to guide the capital projects. The corporation also submitted the 2017-18 capital asset management plan, as this was the most recent plan of this type submitted to the OAG. The capital asset management plan details repairs that are required by the corporation's unit.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Does this plan align with the government's five-year capital plan?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation's capital plan aligns with the Highways and Public Works capital planning process and plan done by the capital planning office. The capital plan reflects what is approved to proceed for that fiscal year and what the corporation may have been planning.

The corporation submits proposed capital plans to the CPO — the capital planning office — for inclusion in the larger Yukon government five-year capital plan. These projects that are included in the resulting five-year capital plan are considered to have planning phase approval. Should the project be able to proceed, the plan goes back to Management Board for the implementation phase and approval. For this reason, there is a discrepancy between what is prepared by the corporation to the CPO for planning process approval and what receives approval and ultimately goes forward for construction.

One of the barriers that the corporation faces in moving proposed capital projects forward include lack of available land for zoning in communities. YHC has very limited inventory of land to build, and municipalities, First Nation, and other government departments secure land for projects. Availability

of funds is balanced between the Yukon government priorities through the CPO processes.

Hon. Ms. McLean: How many new units will be constructed over the next five years? In what communities will they be constructed, and what type of units are you planning to build?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is planning to build over 140 net new units over the next five years — some in 2022-23 to 2025-26. Projects are planned with information from housing needs assessments, building condition assessments of existing stock, wait-lists, Yukon Bureau of Statistics statistical data, and consultation with municipalities, NGOs, and community stakeholders. Each year, projects are reassessed as they go forward through a planning process related to capital development and feasibility based on community factors.

Projects are planned or are currently underway in the following communities: Carcross, Carmacks, Faro, Dawson, Teslin, Watson Lake, Ross River, Pelly Crossing, Mayo, Destruction Bay, Haines Junction, Whitehorse, and Old Crow. As these projects are largely in the planning phase, it is important to know that some may not proceed as planned or may be delayed, as land available to the corporation for building is scarce at times in certain communities. To proceed with projects in communities where the corporation does not own land involves negotiations with municipalities, First Nations, and Yukon government departments to secure appropriate parcels for these discussions. The type of units planned for construction include duplexes, triplexes, multi-unit buildings — Housing First residence in Watson Lake. Duplexes and triplexes will also be accessible if lot grading permits and multi buildings will have a minimum of 20-percent accessible units.

The new stock will be a mix of bachelor and one-, two- and three-bedroom units, depending on the needs analysis and stakeholder feedback.

Hon. Ms. McLean: You have probably covered a little bit of this, but just to go a bit further — does the number of units planned for construction over the next five years align with the needs analysis conducted — I know that you have done eight and you have six more to do. I am just wondering if there is alignment there.

Mr. Ferbey: The needs analysis is one part of the information when planning projects. The other information that is considered is derived from the building conditions assessment of the existing stock, the wait-list, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics data in consultation with municipalities, First Nations, and community stakeholders with the Yukon Housing Corporation. Feedback is also sought with engagements through the corporation's board of directors' quarterly alignment. All of this is to say that, yes, there is alignment.

Chair: Before I move on to Mr. Kent, I just wanted to note for Committee members and for witnesses that the time is 11:47 p.m., so at some point in the next 10 minutes or so, I will interject and call a recess for lunch. This is just a warning that I may interject while someone is speaking.

Mr. Kent: I have some specific questions about projects that are in the capital planning documents that were tabled with last year's budget. Before I get into those, I have a couple of questions with respect to projects that have emerged since we developed these questions. The first one is with the old High Country Inn property, which is now owned by the Safe at Home Society. Yesterday, there was a news release on 20 units being made available, and in that, there was a reference to a capital contribution from the government as well as work on an operation and maintenance portion, but there were no numbers associated.

Do the witnesses have the capital contribution amount that was given to upgrade those 20 units and what the estimate is for the operation and maintenance for the 24/7 supervision portion?

Mr. McDowell: I don't have exact numbers. It is in the range of \$140,000 for the upgrades that are required for that temporary shelter.

As for the operation and maintenance, I don't have that information at this point.

Mr. Kent: The capital, I would guess, would be managed by the Housing Corporation, but would the operation and maintenance be managed through Health and Social Services?

Mr. van Randen: I can confirm that we are working on what the operation and maintenance supports will be for the proposed 20 units that Safe at Home is opening. We are not in conclusion at this point, but we are talking about 24/7 supports and some of the overhead costs that they face. So, that is the current context of the conversation.

Mr. Kent: There is one other housing issue that has emerged since we developed these questions, and that is with respect to the Macaulay Lodge property and the rezoning application from the Yukon government that is before the City of Whitehorse right now to rezone that to mixed commercial and then a plan, I believe, in local media reports, to sell that land after it has been rezoned.

I know there have been a couple of groups — the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and the Yukon Council on Aging — that have expressed concerns with potential use. From as much as you know, I am curious if the plan is still to sell that land if the rezoning application goes through.

Mr. McDowell: Yes, that's the plan — to make it available through a tender to the private sector for development, subject to the zoning that applies on the lot. You mentioned mixed commercial. As I understand it, the current zoning allows for some commercial and residential as well — so I think commercial on the bottom and residential on the top.

Mr. Kent: I will turn my attention back to the questions that we submitted to you for consideration.

On pages 8 and 9 of the five-year capital documents that were tabled last March as part of the overall budget, there are a number of housing projects identified for the next five years. I just wanted to ask some specific questions about some of those projects.

For Carcross, there is planning money in the current budget for a sixplex. Is that project underway, and can we expect it to be under construction in the 2023-24 fiscal year?

Mr. Ferbey: The project has been deferred until a suitable lot can be selected. Last week, we had the opportunity to sit down and talk with the deputy, Haa Shaa du Hen, Ms. Darla Lindstrom, and one of the clan leaders around land. This is a consultation that is ongoing. We are working with the Carcross community to identify, either settlement land or otherwise, where they would like to put the building. It's one of our priorities in the communities and we are working closely with the First Nation to determine where the best location is from their perspective.

Mr. Kent: Is there an estimate as to when that project may begin? As I said, in the planning documents, it said 2022-23 for an expenditure that looks like it's for planning and design and then construction and completion in 2023-24. Do you have any information?

Mr. Ferbey: We are looking at a deferral of one year as we are working with the community for land and planning.

Mr. Kent: Thank you very much. Also, in that project list for social development projects in that five-year planning budget, there is \$13 million to \$18 million identified over the next five years for what is called "community housing development". Can you explain for us what that is for and how many units you anticipate that it would create?

Mr. Ferbey: The funds associated with the community housing development refer to the funding for partnership projects. At the present time, there are no funds committed to projects and therefore no estimates on anticipated units. The work currently underway through data and research, the community needs assessment, as well as our ongoing conversations with stakeholders within the housing sector will help determine future priorities in the funding allocation.

Mr. Kent: So, the breakdown of that for this fiscal year, for instance, is \$1 million to \$2 million being expended, but will that not be expended in this fiscal year?

Mr. Ferbey: No. In this current year, we are in the planning stage and working with our partners. In terms of expenditure for this year, the vice-president tells me that we are not expending money this year.

Mr. Kent: Thank you. The Old Crow 10-unit housing project, according to these documents, is expected to be completed in this current fiscal year, so before the end of March. Can you tell us if it is on budget and if it will be completed and what the total estimate is for that project?

Mr. Ferbey: The Old Crow tenplex and budget are being managed by Highways and Public Works. It is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2023. The corporation will have a role in operating the building, and the current approach to tenant allocation will be determined with the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and other Yukon government stakeholder departments. One of the units that the tenplex would provide is to Vuntut Gwitchin for their use. I believe that Highways and Public Works is going up for further discussion on allocation of units with First Nation leadership, I believe, in a week or so or two weeks.

Mr. Kent: In this current fiscal year, 2022-23, there is \$3 million to \$4 million budgeted for renovation and rehabilitation of existing housing units. That amount is

\$19 million to \$24 million over the five-year cycle. For this current fiscal year, will that level of expenditure be met, and how many units are affected?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation is on track to fully expend the budget amount of \$3.8 million on renovation and rehabilitation. As of January 16, 2023, 368 units were affected and expected to receive some type of renovation or rehabilitation. Renovation and rehabilitation activities include: interior retrofits, furnace upgrades, water and sewer upgrades, appliance replacements, re-shingling, deck upgrades, fuel tank replacements, drainage, and mechanical and electrical upgrades. Renovation and rehabilitation activities are identified through the annual inspections, tenant and household manager requests, and who received inspections and prevention maintenance. The corporation takes the issue of renovation and rehabilitation seriously as it relates to the needs of core housing being adequate, suitable, and affordable housing.

Mr. Kent: Again, with respect to the replacement of existing units, there is \$3 million to \$4 million in the current fiscal year's budget. Again, over the five-year horizon, \$19 million to \$24 million is expected to be spent on replacing existing units. I'm curious if the witnesses can tell us if that expenditure will be met and how many units will be replaced as a result.

Mr. Ferbey: For the 2022-23 year, \$2.4 million has been allocated for two duplexes in Mayo and Carmacks, for a total of four units, and these projects are currently under construction.

The Mayo and Carmacks duplexes are expected to be completed in the spring of 2023. In addition, the corporation anticipates that a tender will be issued in January 2023 for a duplex to be constructed in Faro with the current budget of \$1.2 million. The Faro duplex is estimated to be completed by the end of the 2023-24 fiscal year. These three projects will add an additional six units of stock to Yukon communities. These projects are funded through the corporation's aged-out assets fund. The corporation has identified aged-out units that were out of service, beyond feasibility for repairs or upgrades, or have been damaged beyond repair by fire, flood, or other means.

Chair: I think we will take this opportunity to break now. The Committee will break now until 1:00 p.m., and I will call us back to order at 1:00 p.m.

Thank you very much.

Recess

Chair: We will call this hearing back to order and jump right back in where we left off. I will turn it over to Hon. Mr. Clarke.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: There is between \$200,000 and \$500,000 budgeted in this fiscal year for temporary emergency housing. How much has been spent on that line item and in which communities?

Mr. Mollet: The budget is currently \$450,000 for this year for temporary emergency housing and it is unlikely that it will be spent in total for the projects identified. There is the Safe

at Home project in the amount of \$142,630 committed to the Safe at Home renovation project to provide temporary and partial accommodation for up to 20 individuals in response to winter housing and homelessness in Yukon. The other project that is currently underway is in the planning and feasibility stage for providing shelter accommodation in communities in the event of an emergency situation like a Yukon Housing Corporation unit experiencing a fire, for example. We are currently working on this project and the same issue may be to find a lot but it is part of the project.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Chair, there is a Mayo community housing project slated to start next fiscal year. The estimated budget is between \$5.2 million and \$6.5 million. Is this project on target to begin in 2023-24, and how many units are contemplated to be built?

Mr. McDowell: The Mayo community housing project is in the preliminary stages of development. The project is on target for design in 2023-24 and has a budget of \$300,000 allocated for this portion of the project.

The corporation is currently in the process of negotiating for the necessary land, and we anticipate that this will be done along with the design in 2023-24. We are currently working with the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to assess Commissioner's land options. Construction is planned for 2024-25, and the current budget is a preliminary one and will likely have to be revised as estimates for construction come in. The current planning is for 10 units to be built.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Can the witnesses give us a status update on the construction of the Watson Lake Housing First project?

Mr. McDowell: The design of the Watson Lake Housing First project was awarded to Kobayashi and Zedda Architects in the fall of 2021. A construction tender is scheduled to be issued next month, in February 2023. Development and building permit applications are underway. The corporation is working with Highways and Public Works procurement on a community development agreement with Liard First Nation at their request under the Yukon First Nation procurement policy.

Programming will be delivered using Housing First principles, with Health and Social Services overseeing the provision of on-site support services on a 24/7 basis, similar to the way in which the Whitehorse Housing First residence is currently operated.

The building site for the Housing First complex is the former Lakeview Apartments, which was previously owned by the Liard First Nation Development Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Mr. Chair, the 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street development had an original construction budget of \$18 million and was designed for a diverse group of tenants with a range of income levels.

There are three questions arising: What is the current cost estimate for this building? The second question is: Is the building finished and ready for occupancy? If so, are there currently any units occupied? Finally, with respect to the flooring issue that delayed the opening from this summer, what

is the cost of those repairs? Who is responsible for paying for those — the contractor or the Yukon Housing Corporation?

Mr. McDowell: I will answer the first one. What is the current cost estimate for this building? The current budget for the 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street project is \$21,710,000. The difference between the approximate \$18 million original budget and the current budget is reflective of the challenges of building during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as supply chain and related labour challenges that were unforeseen at the time of tendering.

As for the building completion, an occupancy permit was issued by the City of Whitehorse on December 29, 2022 and substantial performance was granted on December 31, 2022. As of January 18, 2023, we do not have any units occupied; however, the corporation is working to identify individuals and families from the current wait-list, based on the units that are available for moving in. We are working through some final deficiencies, and once we get through that — we do have a number that are available now. We expect the balance to come in the next week or two, but we can start tenanting right away, subject to the timelines of individual tenants.

With respect to the flooring issue, the cost of this and the responsibility for it is still being resolved and determined through some ongoing evaluation of that problem. The corporation has identified the issue as a deficiency with the flooring. The cost and the responsibility for the repairs will be handled by the contractor and subcontractors as a result of the contract terms. The corporation will endeavor to move tenants into the units where the flooring will not impede tenants' use and enjoyment of their homes. The corporation will work with the contractor and subcontractors to develop a schedule for remediation of the floor. Once we have a resolution between the supplier and installer, the corporation will ensure that there is as little inconvenience to tenants as possible during this process.

Chair: How is the Housing Assessment Resource Tool project helping to integrate Yukon's housing needs data into the corporation's broader understanding of needs in the territory?

Ms. Lang: The Housing Assessment Resource Tool is a tool that is being developed through the University of British Columbia and is funded through the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. The group of people who are doing this are working with 13 governments across the country, including our government, to develop standardized ways to measure and address housing needs. Over coming years, the HART tool will deepen our understanding of needs by providing detailed data on how core housing needs break down by segmented income groups and the number of units required at different price points to address the affordability gap for each group. We are currently waiting for updated numbers from HART, which is processing data from the 2020-21 census. The results will be used to inform our updated integrated housing strategy. In addition to increasing our understanding of housing and affordability needs, we are working with HART to develop a land-based assessment tool to identify well-located land and buildings in the City of Whitehorse that could be utilized to help meet identified needs. This tool will also be replicated for

community discussions on what is available for well-located land.

Chair: What is the corporation currently doing to increase accessibility and energy efficiency in the territory's housing stock?

Mr. McDowell: The corporation is working on increasing accessibility through barrier-free design in our new units. We strive for a minimum of 20-percent barrier-free in multi-unit buildings. For example, in recent buildings, eight of nine units in the recently completed rapid-housing initiative triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse were barrier-free. Nine units in the 47-unit building at 401 Jeckell Street are barrier-free. Six of eight units in our new duplexes in Mayo, Carmacks, Faro, and Dawson are barrier-free.

To the energy efficiency portion of the question, as part of our commitment to the *Our Clean Future* plan, we are also continuing to update the energy efficiency of our buildings. The corporation's design criteria include energy modelling to a minimum of 25 percent above current National Energy Board of Canada standards, and that applies through our HIF funding as well — our housing initiative fund — so there is a requirement to meet those standards. The corporation retrofits between seven and 10 units per year under the local carbon economy fund.

Chair: The Auditor General found that the Yukon Housing Corporation was unable to demonstrate that social housing was adequate, although the number of bedrooms per household was suitable. Can the corporation tell us what constitutes a major repair or a minor repair? Are units requiring major repairs inhabited or vacant as they wait for repairs? How many units are currently vacant awaiting repairs? I do note that the corporation has provided some of this, but I will ask them to respond anyway.

Mr. Ferbey: Minor repairs are typically emergency repairs and work orders that are handled by the corporation's internal building maintenance workers or service contractors, and they fall within the allocated budgets or maintenance. Examples of minor repairs would include a plugged toilet, broken handrails, appliance repair or replacement, bed bug treatments, broken windows, furnace repair, or water leaks. Major repairs are identified and assessed by the Yukon Housing Corporation technical officers through annual inspections. These projects require tendering and project management. Examples of a major repair would include a new roof, interior renovation, deck upgrades, water and sewer upgrades, tub replacement, and furnace replacements. We mentioned earlier the number of units under repair. As of December 31, 2022, there were 44 vacant units requiring major repairs.

Chair: How many units are owned by the Yukon Housing Corporation versus ones that are owned by the private sector, NGOs, et cetera — for example, Normandy Living or Opportunities Yukon?

Mr. Ferbey: The inventory for the Yukon Housing Corporation, including rent supplements and leases, is as follows: 783 units, including 47 units at the new 401 Jeckell Street building owned by the corporation; 10 units leased for 20 years from a third-party provider in the private sector — this is

Normandy Living; 81 rent-supplement units; 50 to Da Daghay Development Corporation; five to the Whitehorse Housing Co-Operative society; 26 to individuals; and 166 Yukon government staff housing. The corporation does not lease any units from Opportunities Yukon, but we did provide funding support to the project from design through construction. The corporation is open to building partnerships with those organizations that can assist in providing housing. Where it is expedient and cost-effective, the corporation will lease other units from other organizations.

Ms. Tredger: In paragraphs 50 to 51 of the report, it says that the audit — and I quote: “... found limited needs analyses, unaddressed housing demand, and gaps in oversight by the Department of Health and Social Services with respect to its portfolio of housing with services ... The analysis supporting this finding discusses the following topics: Limited needs analysis and unaddressed housing demand; Lack of oversight for funding agreements with third-party providers”.

NGOs have highlighted that, although they agree with the additional oversight, they are facing the burden of completing additional work without additional resources. How do you respond?

Ms. Gehmair: We do fully recognize that there is an additional burden that is put upon NGOs when it comes to responding to funding agreements, which is why we have worked closely with funding recipients to support this work and the necessary requirements to enable us to monitor and evaluate the deliverables. In the event that reporting or administrative functions continue to be onerous or creating unnecessary burden, we have reached out and worked with NGOs and would encourage them to request additional resources, if and when necessary.

Ms. Tredger: Paragraph 57 references the use of hotel rooms and issues with that practice. Are there any protections for tenants in hotels under current legislation, including the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* or the *Hotels and Tourist Establishments Act*? In your opinion, is the current legislation sufficient to protect your clients?

Ms. deBoer: To better understand and support the needs of Yukoners residing in hotels, the department is currently participating in discussions with the housing and homelessness task force, which was previously called the “hotel-motel task force”. The hotel-motel task force was first struck this summer to explore and respond to the needs of Yukoners staying in hotels as accommodation and explore ways of better supporting those Yukoners. These discussions are ongoing, and Health and Social Services is a regular participant.

The department is also committed to addressing the needs of clients as they arise. Our social workers and other staff are equipped to support clients in the event of a myriad of situations that arise, including in the event that someone is informed that they can no longer stay at a certain hotel. For example, a client who has resided in the location for over six months has rights under the Yukon’s *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*. Social workers offer support to evicted clients with accessing the residential tenancies office if necessary.

Overall, the department is committed to social determinates of health, of which access to appropriate stable housing is an important factor for well-being. As stated in the response to the OAG’s recommendations, we are committed to assessing and addressing housing with service needs for Yukoners, including those staying in hotels.

Ms. Tredger: As a quick follow-up, the task force you mentioned — I believe it was a task force — does it have terms of reference, and how will the decisions or recommendations that come from that task force be incorporated into policy?

Ms. deBoer: The hotel-motel task force, which has just been renamed to be the “housing and homelessness task force”, has become a subcommittee under the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board. It is finalizing their terms of reference right now and will be bringing their recommendations back to the community advisory board of the Reaching Home funding.

From our end as a participant — if there are actions we can follow up on, we would certainly incorporate that into our plans and processes moving forward, and standardly would report up on what we are hearing in trends and how that might influence worker needs going forward.

Ms. Tredger: Does Health and Social Services track the number of evictions given to social assistance clients in hotels? I will name a number of things and ask if they are tracked: evictions given to social assistance clients in hotels, the number of security deposits held, and the number of agreements made for individual rooms in single months.

Ms. deBoer: The department delivers social assistance to eligible Yukoners, some of whom use their shelter allowance to stay at hotels. The department’s Social Supports branch, which is responsible for the Yukon’s social assistance program, has an information management system to support the delivery of the social assistance program.

With that, we can run reports on a range of data and content fields. This includes information on data deposits and payments made to hotels on behalf of clients. Security deposits are paid for rental housing where there is a rental agreement. I can say that, in December 2022, we paid out 22 security deposits.

Tracking for the deposits that are held would be held within client notes. So, we could do it, but it is manual to go back through all of the notes; it is not like a field that we could report out on.

There were 36 households consisting of 41 individuals who received payment to stay in hotels in December, 24 of which were in Whitehorse. The average amount paid to hotels in December 2022 on behalf of clients was \$1,067.71. Tracking evictions can be done by reviewing client service notes in the system. In the month of December, one client was asked to leave a hotel. This individual secured a place to stay in a different location.

Beyond the date available from the system, the branch monitors trends in client experience so that staff can respond in a timely manner. The Social Supports branch is currently improving the use of its information system to ensure that staff and management can make informed decisions. An evaluation of income support services will soon be initiated to ensure that

the department is meeting the financial assistance needs of Yukoners.

Ms. Tredger: What is the average length of hotel stay per client?

Ms. deBoer: We have tabled a copy of our quarterly housing report, and as you can see in that, from July to September 2022, an average of two percent of social assistance clients stayed in a hotel for a month or part of a month. Seasonal fluctuations in Yukon's hotel availability and affordability commonly occur due to increased tourism in the summer. This means that analysis is best to consider not just the length of stays but repetition of stays. As part of *Putting People First* and closing the gap for low-income Yukoners, we are preparing for an evaluation of income support services to assess the extent to which the program is meeting intended objectives. To support this, we are currently exploring trends in social assistance provision over the past five years.

As I noted previously, our information management system reports on the amount paid in a particular month to a hotel on behalf of a given client. We don't report on nights in a given hotel.

In December 2022, as the most recent month of complete data, there were 36 households consisting of 41 individual people who received payments to stay in hotels, 24 of whom were in Whitehorse. The average amount paid to hotels was \$1,067.71, which falls below the shelter allowance and fuel and utilities allowance amounts that an individual would be entitled to.

We have further analysis for the hotel-stay trajectory of those 36 households that were in a hotel in December 2022. Looking back through the period of January through November 2022, 12 of those 36 households — one-third — did not stay in a hotel any other month from January through November 2022; seven of the 36 households stayed in a hotel every month from January through December 2022; four of the 36 households stayed in a hotel only one month, other than the December reference point; and the remaining households in hotels in December 2022 had between two and 10 additional months in hotels in the 11-month period of January through November.

Hon. Ms. McLean: I just wanted to say that I am having a bit of difficulty hearing over on this side. If you're going to be answering the questions, it would be great if you could be a little bit louder. Thank you for all of your answers so far.

When can we expect the Department of Health and Social Services to produce the first supports branch quarterly housing report? What information can we expect to see covered within it, and how will it help inform future actions to meet the needs of the territory?

Ms. deBoer: The department's first quarterly housing report reflects data from October to December 2021. We have issued a quarterly report for every quarter since that time, with the report for October to December 2022 expected soon. We have tabled a copied of our Q2, July through September, report for you. If it is with the Committee today, you will see that the quarterly housing report provides information about the department's housing with services programs delivered

through its Social Supports branch. These include emergency shelters, transitional and supportive housing, upcoming initiatives, and the housing data for social assistance clients. The quarterly housing report communicates the results of the Social Supports branch's ongoing monitoring of trends and housing needs for vulnerable Yukoners and informs decision-making. For example, the July through September 2022 report shows the decline in social assistance clients staying in hotels and an increase in emergency shelter use.

Ms. Tredger: Are those quarterly housing reports on the yukon.ca website, or where can they be found?

Ms. deBoer: We currently have been sharing those internally and then we have walked through them with community partners, but they haven't been something that we have made a practice of publishing.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: I would echo Hon. Ms. McLean's comments; I am having difficulty hearing the witness.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Paragraph 63 notes that the department did not provide sufficient oversight of third parties — and I quote: "This means that the department did not know if vulnerable residents were receiving the services and supports they needed." What organizations are captured under these third-party agreements? Which six organizations are referenced in paragraph 63?

Ms. Gehmair: At the time of the audit, the organizations that were funded by the Department of Health and Social Services to deliver these services were: Skookum Jim Friendship Centre and the emergency youth shelter; Connective; the Housing First on Wood Street; Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's men's shelter in Dawson; Help and Hope in Watson Lake; Dawson Women's Shelter; and the Yukon women's transition home.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you for that answer. What housing is supplied — and also the number of units?

Ms. Gehmair: The department's provision of housing with services, excluding long-term care, currently includes — under shelter beds, we have 100 beds in the territory funded in full or in part by the department. These include: 54 beds at 405 Alexander Street; 15 beds by the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society; 11 beds at Skookum Jim Friendship Centre's youth emergency shelter in Whitehorse; 11 beds at Help and Hope for Families in Watson Lake; five beds at Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in; and nine beds at the Dawson Women's Shelter in Dawson City. Under transitional housing, there are 19 units for second-stage transitional housing for women and their children fleeing violence in the territory. These are 15 units by Yukon Women's Transition Home Society; four units by Help and Hope for Families in Watson Lake; and Nts' äw Chua, with four beds for youth and four semi-independent suites.

Under supportive housing, there are 57 supportive housing units in Whitehorse, operated under Housing First principles. These include: 20 units at 405 Alexander Street; 16 units at the Wood Street Housing First location; and 21 beds that recently opened at Cornerstone. Additionally, there are 31 approved caregiver homes for adults with disabilities and 41 supportive housing beds available in Whitehorse for those with disabilities. These include: three beds at Max's Place; four beds

at Granger Haven; 14 beds through Options for Independence; three beds at Aurora House; five beds at Aspen group home; 10 beds at St. Elias group home; and two residences for Yukon Review Board clients.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you for the answer.

Since Normandy Living has come online, what is the agreement between that organization and the Yukon Housing Corporation and the Department of Health and Social Services for the 10 units secured by Yukon government?

Mr. Ferbey: Normandy Living is owned by KBC developments, a partnership between Borud Enterprises, Ketz Construction, and Northern Vision Development. Ten units in Normandy were secured in 2020 by the Yukon Housing Corporation capital investment of \$3.5 million. This funding secured the rent costs for 10 units for a 20-year period. The service costs are separated and paid monthly to Normandy by the Yukon Housing Corporation. The Yukon Housing Corporation signed a lease and supportive service agreement with KBC on December 6, 2022 that outlines the details regarding payment and services, tenant selection, insurance, maintenance, and repairs, all pertaining to the 10 units secured by Normandy in 2020.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you for that answer. How are Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services working together to support the folks within those 10 units? Further, how many of the 10 are currently occupied? How is the tenancy for these units determined?

Ms. Carruthers: Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation worked together to determine tenant eligibility for a unit at Normandy. There are two eligibility criteria. One is that the applicant must be eligible for Yukon Housing Corporation's rent-g geared-to-income program, and the second is that they must score between a 4 and a 6 on the clinical frailty index. From there, Yukon Housing Corporation determines the eligibility for the RGI program, receives the applicant's frailty assessment score, and, if both criteria are met, then we go for a viewing and have a unit offer. I should go back a little bit — if they are interested, they may be put on a wait-list and then an offer is made. If an offer is made, we sign a lease with the successful applicant. We liaise with Normandy on the move and details and collect payment from the clients for both rent and services. Health and Social Services provides home care services to all Yukon citizens, including those living at Normandy. As of today, 10 successful tenants have been identified for the Yukon Housing Corporation units at Normandy, three leases have been signed, and we are on track to have all of them signed in the coming weeks, and there are five people additionally on the wait-list.

Mr. Kent: I just want to follow up on some additional questions with respect to the Normandy Living facility. In December 2022, there was a news release on the opening of the privately owned Normandy Living facility, and it mentioned that there were 26 below-market homes available, with 10 available immediately, so this is a change, obviously, from that initial announcement in 2020.

The news release suggested that clients would pay 65 percent of their income for rent and the services provided by

the owner. I am curious; what is the estimated funding gap between that and what is paid to the owner, and who will be responsible for making up that difference? Will it be Health and Social Services, or is it the Housing Corporation?

Mr. McDowell: Yukon Housing Corporation tenants at Normandy will pay 65 percent of their gross annual income toward fees; 25 percent of it goes toward the rent, and 40 percent goes toward the services, which include things like meals, housekeeping, laundry, utilities, cable, Internet, TV, shuttle service, and 24/7 staff in the building. It's fairly comprehensive.

The Yukon Housing Corporation has already paid for the rental portion for 20 years on the 10 units, with a \$3.5 million capital investment, as has been mentioned. The Yukon Housing Corporation will pay Normandy for the full cost of the services, which is \$2,990 a month per tenant. The Yukon Housing Corporation will then recover 65 percent of the tenant's gross annual income, which is estimated to be — and this is, of course, arranged — approximately \$1,420 a month. The average funding gap per tenant per month is \$2,879.

The Yukon Housing Corporation has secured 10 units at Normandy. There are an additional 16 units that Normandy must offer at affordable rental rates, based on their funding agreement with CMHC. The affordability clause does not apply to the services portion of the fees at Normandy. Those additional 16 units have been earmarked for Yukon Housing Corporation clients. Management Board has requested that the Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services continue to work together to show that there is a need for these additional 16 units before funds will be confirmed in the budget.

The need for these units exists in practice in our community, based on the current senior population, the number of seniors accessing home care services, and the number of seniors entering long-term care prematurely. I will stop there.

Mr. Kent: I think Mr. McDowell answered my next question with respect to what the arrangement is for the additional 16 units in the facility, so I will just move on to that final question on Normandy Living and seniors assisted living.

As mentioned by the president of the Yukon Housing Corporation off the top, Vimy Heritage Housing is on the horizon. It's a non-profit and is a seniors assisted-living facility similar to Normandy Living. Will there be a similar funding model and rental option for that project as well, with some of the units being assigned for affordable housing? I guess that would be the question.

Mr. McDowell: The short answer is yes. Should Vimy get through the funding hoops that it is currently working through with Canada and a number of other funders, yes, the model would be for a similar funding approach, although the services are slightly different — fewer meals per day — I think two meals per day. So, all of those things, on a pro-rated basis — I think we want to make sure that any future proponent of a facility like this is treated equitably based on services that they are providing.

Mr. Kent: Just a quick follow-up on that. Assuming that Vimy gets through the funding hoops, as you mentioned, there

would be some sort of a capital contribution based on the 20 years of rent, similar to what happened to Normandy Living?

Mr. McDowell: That is correct.

Mr. Kent: I am just going to move on to item 64.1 in the work plan. It commits to the development — or an independent review, I guess — of the department's agreement to management process. In the report that I have in front of me, it says that the timeline was for completion in the winter of 2022. Can the witnesses give us a status report on that commitment?

Ms. Gehmair: Yes, we have been working to fully implement all of the recommendations out of that report, which we have since tabled here today. Throughout the renegotiation of funding agreements initiated between January and March, the department's Social Services branch implemented the recommendations and received an external contractor to enhance the accountability in renewing all funding agreements. The work was then led by an informal task group, which included the contractor who did the work as well as the director of Social Supports and the director of Finance. It continued to execute and enhance agreement management oversight practices, and they are currently working to finalize the guidelines for agreement management, which will support staff in managing agreements — and based on the recommendations of the OAG and the third-party review completed. The department is also finalizing the role of the manager of transfer payment agreements as a direct response to improving standardizations and proper management of TPAs. As part of this role, internal financial monthly reporting on individual TPAs will be introduced, and performance reporting is being built into the TPA agreements so that both financial accountability and performance accountability can be managed together. TPAs will also include a tool that will allow us to assess performance on outcomes.

Mr. Kent: My final question of this batch is: How does the Department of Health and Social Services currently monitor their agreements and deliverables with third-party providers, and in what way has the department begun to address recommendation 64 in the OAG report?

Ms. Gehmair: Some of the changes reflected the recommendations from the NGO agreement — current state and review suggested next step report — which, like I said, has been tabled — and completed independent consultant in December 2021.

So, program areas work closely with the department's corporate finance branch to ensure appropriate oversight on both the program deliverables and outcomes and financial accountability and oversight. This includes maintenance and tracking documents to ensure that reports are delivered as expected and regular follow-up with funding organizations. In addition to these steps, the department is finalizing the role of the manager of TPAs as a direct response to improving our practices. As a concurrent step to the financial and management TPAs, performance reporting is being built into the TPA agreements so that both financial accountability and performance accountability can be managed together.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Paragraph 67 of the report notes that no significant progress was made to fix long-standing issues to

transform housing programs and services, despite the various plans and initiatives identified in previous years.

The first question is: As of the writing of their submission on December 22, 2022, the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition raised several concerns around how the work that they and other NGOs do is not reflected in YG's answers. How do you respond?

Mr. van Randen: I just want to say that, as part of my opening remarks, I emphasized how much we value the excellent work of the NGO community, and so I did take those comments quite seriously from the society and from YAPC when they put them into their letters. We agree with them on many fronts. It is true that we have not kept up with housing in the territory and that we need to get better coordinated access, but I think that what I would like to say about the work plan is that it is not intended to be the full scope of work that we are doing; it is not intended to be everything that is going on. It is intended to be very much a response to the OAG and a way to track our commitments to what was identified in the OAG report. It is necessarily focused around the work of the corporation and the department because that is, of course, what is in scope for the audit.

I appreciate those comments, but I just want to assure both the YAPC and Safe at Home that it is not the full scope of everything that we are doing; it is simply an accountability tool, and that is why it is reflected the way it is in the work plan.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and the Safe at Home Society have highlighted concerns that the work done in 2019 on housing transformation that has been — quote — “dusted off” does not reflect today's realities. How do you respond to these concerns?

Mr. Mollet: The corporation doesn't feel that the work regarding the housing transformation has been simply dusted off, but that we are now implementing community housing. A community of housing represents a large change — the development and implementation — and it takes time. We recognize that it can be frustrating, particularly for those who are working to see individuals and families housed as quickly as possible. While some realities have changed since 2019 and the initial development of the housing transformation, the corporation believes that the fundamental concepts expressed as necessary for improvements remain the same.

This has been best described as “better client outcomes and fiscal responsibility”. I will provide here a little bit of history. We recognize that the types of tenants today aren't the same as the ones when the corporation set out to initially provide social housing. The previous approach was to allocate vacant units based on those individuals from the wait-list who were the most vulnerable and had the lowest incomes — or at least this was the intention. However, as the model was originally set up as an independent living model, the individuals who were receiving the highest priority often didn't have the supports they needed to lead to a successful tenancy once housed.

When the 2017 national housing strategy was released, the corporation saw this as an opportunity to reconsider how community housing is best provided today. This includes broadening our approach to house the most vulnerable tenants

with support plans, as an example, and support the larger community housing with the mixed-income and mixed-use approach by not creating poverty environments. Where realities have changed and where our partners have raised concerns, the corporation has tried to adapt and accommodate. I will give two examples here. The first one is about the mixed-income model that was to be implemented with a new housing income limit called the “affordable housing income limits” — AHILs. I will refer to it soon as the “Canada-Yukon housing benefit”. This income limit is higher than what is currently used under our rent-geared-to-income program — the HILs.

The decision was reversed in October 2022 based on feedback received from local NGOs regarding the acute housing shortage, the increased inflation and interest rates, as well as the general economic climate.

The specific example that I will give is the feedback on the support plan required for tenants in priority groups. We received this feedback from stakeholders, including those that participated in the coordinated housing access table. The issue was discussed in detail with partners at three different meetings in December 2022 and January 2023. In addition to former communications, the feedback was used to amend both support plans and timely requirements. Then we are looking forward to learning from our partners how to implement community housing and how it can be improved. We anticipate this work will continue as community housing is implemented and evaluated over the coming years.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Both the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and the Safe at Home Society highlight concerns that individuals with lived experience are not being engaged in a valued way. Will the Yukon government recognize people with lived experience as experts and as equal stakeholders in the housing continuum?

Mr. Ferbey: In short, yes. The corporation and the department recognize people with lived experience and their families as experts. The participation of people with lived experience is important to the design of successful programs and projects, both for the corporation and the department. To date, the corporation and the department have relied on the participation of people with lived experience, their involvement on committees and through the work of other organizations, such as the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition and Safe at Home.

The corporation and the department are open to looking at ways in which voices of people with lived experience can be elevated so their input and time in helping solve homelessness are known and valued. The corporation and the department look forward to discussing the most effective approaches to incorporating the expertise of people with lived experience in a more direct fashion than we have in the past.

Ms. Tredger: Is there a plan or a timeline for doing that work to incorporate the direct input from people with lived experience?

Mr. Ferbey: I don’t believe there is a deadline. This is a practice that we want to do going forward. I know that we have through partnerships with other organizations. We are really looking, over the next little while, to see if we can do this better.

Can we engage in a more direct fashion? These are some things that we are exploring.

One of the things that has been discussed is payment, and that, for us, of course, gets a little more difficult as we start needing to collect banking information and things like that. There are privacy issues. These are some of the things that we are working through internally

Hon. Mr. Clarke: That is precisely what this next question is, but will a compensation strategy be developed so that persons with lived experience are fairly compensated for the work that they do on these committees? That may have been substantially answered.

Mr. Ferbey: Yes, this is something that we are looking into. I know it has been a common practice on other files, maybe this one included, where you do use non-profits and other third-party entities to assist in the payments. Again, we are looking into this option. What I am being told is that there are privacy issues around collecting banking information and things like that, so it’s an issue that we are live to and we are looking at what is possible. Of course, our non-profits are highly valuable in this area.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: Safe at Home Society highlights that the action plan developed by the Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services does not list their — and I quote — “community partners”, nor do they identify how relationships will be different this time around. How do you respond?

Mr. Ferbey: It is correct that the work plan does not identify community partners specifically. We recognize that housing is a complex system that takes the work of many groups to facilitate housing, particularly for those who are homeless or precariously housed. However, the audit focused on the corporation and the department’s role in providing housing to the most vulnerable. It did not closely examine the role of partnerships or other organizations that also provide services along the continuum, although some organizations were interviewed as part of the audit. The term “partners” is not a formal one, but is one that is used to identify these groups that we do not have formal agreements with — for example, Safe at Home, Connective, or Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition — as they are funded by the corporation and departments to provide services along the housing continuum. Organizations such as Normandy Living and Da Daghay Development Corporation have lease or rent supplement agreements. The term also applied where we were actively working on projects or initiatives such as current work with interested First Nations on the multi-unit residential build, or MURB, project. This is an example of the corporation trying to facilitate the acquisition of funding through CMHC projects targeted at housing with services. “Partners” is also a term that identified those who are actively working through committees such as the Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee, the Reaching Home Community Advisory Board, and the Open Forum on Homelessness.

The corporation and department are committed to working with partners on moving forward with many of the actions in the work plan. Examples of how the corporation is trying to

enhance collaborative efforts include invigorating the HAP IC to become more than an information-sharing body through the development of subcommittees and more strategic targeted actions, the current development of the five-year strategic plan being produced by the corporation's board, and its engagement with partners on the corporation's mandate going forward, inclusive of working with partners. The corporation also identifies a need to build time into future projects to allow for discussions and feedback on initiatives important to the partners. Overall, the corporation is looking to have more dialogue in the spirit of shared goals and cooperation with our housing partners across the housing continuum.

Hon. Mr. Clarke: This is my final question and I'm not sure if it was answered, but I will ask it: Will a public list of community partners be made available?

Mr. Mollet: Yes, the corporation and the department are supportive of working toward developing a list where community partners are captured so as to reflect the breadth of organizations, governments, and communities involved. We would first want to do so with the consent of community partners so as not to make any assumptions and respect that the decision to be a partner with the Yukon government rests with each entity.

The memorandum of understanding that has been developed commits to enhance our community working relationship with community partners while respecting responsibilities and financial and budgetary parameters. If a public list helps us reach this state, we will work with partners to find the right approach.

Chair: Thank you. A finding of the Auditor General was ineffective coordination and cooperation between key partners. Paragraph 25 highlights ineffective coordination and cooperation between key partners, and I will quote the OAG, which first identified this issue in its 2010 audit report. In that report, the corporation agreed to complete within nine months "...a review of processes regarding clients on the social housing waiting list." What progress has since been made on this 2010 recommendation?

Mr. Ferbey: The 2015 housing action plan triggered a territory-wide effort to implement a more coordinated, action-oriented approach to how housing needs are addressed. Shortly after that, additional plans, like the federal national housing strategy and the multi-party territorial plan *Safe at Home: A Community-based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness* came online.

Also, recent plans and services like *Putting People First* and the Canada-Yukon housing benefit continued to position housing as a key wellness cornerstone for the Yukon, with great opportunities to transform the delivery. However, we recognize that addressing the rental rates for individuals receiving social assistance has not been finalized. More work needs to be done, which the corporation sees as including a reporting-out structure with performance measures and evaluations to hold ourselves accountable to the stated outcome — in this case, the audit.

Chair: What coordination exists between Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation to ensure rent payments?

Ms. Carruthers: Some of the tenants in Yukon Housing Corporation units receive social assistance. These tenants do not pay 25 percent of their income, but rather pay a set amount based on shelter allowance rates as set out by regulation for social assistance recipients. It is the tenant's responsibility to submit the appropriate paperwork to the income support office, which then pays the rent on behalf of the tenant through direct deposit with the corporation. If the rent is not provided, the corporation will follow up with the tenant by sending a notice. It is ultimately the responsibility of the tenant to ensure that the rent is covered. If, however, tenants provide a release of information, then staff at the corporation are permitted to coordinate with staff at the income support office to try to resolve late rent payment issues. We respect the right of the tenant to consent to the sharing of information between offices. Staff at the corporation work hard to avoid the last resort option of pursuing evictions. We provide two late rent notices and strive to support tenants to resolve the issue.

Chair: Paragraph 76 of the audit states the following: "Committees were formed to offer advice and oversight on providing housing, but we found they were ineffective." Can you explain why the Yukon housing implementation committee evolved into an information-sharing body rather than one that provided advice, solutions, and recommendations for implementing the housing action plan for Yukon as per paragraph 76 of the audit?

Ms. Lang: The Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee, or HAP IC, was developed to oversee the implementation of the 2015 to 2025 housing action plan for Yukon. We agree that the HAP IC has evolved over time into more of an information-sharing body as opposed to one that provides advice, solutions, and recommendations for implementing the HAP, but we believe that a number of factors may have influenced this evolution. Capacity participation to provide meaningful input — the corporation is aware that many organizations are faced with capacity limitations. This could be influencing both availability and degree of participation in a way that helps to create actions as opposed to information-sharing.

There is a lack of clear roles and responsibilities for committee members. The reason we say that is that there may be a perception at the corporation as the chair is the leader of the HAP IC. The corporation does not have this leadership role as the HAP does not belong to any one organization as identified in this strategy. However, we do recognize that, without a clear leader to direct the HAP IC, it is hard to identify actions and to assign responsibility for those actions which could ultimately lead to meaningful change.

We also see that there is a turnover of individuals within member organizations. Over the last eight years, the members of the HAP IC have experienced significant turnover. This influences the committee work plan priorities and perhaps the desire for greater information-sharing.

Finally, there is the matter of the pandemic. The pandemic created additional barriers to meeting in person. A reliance on technology solutions may have changed the dynamic of the HAP IC. So, going forward, there are just under two years left in the current HAP time frame, and within the findings of the auditor's report, there is a desire to see the HAP become a much more action-oriented plan. This is being addressed by the formation of HAP IC subcommittees, which are conducting a review of the work plan to determine what items to focus on for the remainder of the HAP term and a data working group to understand information gaps and identify the information itself so that the organizations within the HAP IC have the same housing-related information.

Finally, the housing action plan concludes in a year and a half, meaning that there is an opportunity for tangible leadership function by any HAP IC member to lead a much more action-oriented committee.

Chair: In paragraph 77, the audit references a commitment to — and I quote: "... conduct a jurisdictional scan to learn about practices across Canada." Was this cross-jurisdictional scan completed? If yes, when, and what were the results? If no, why not?

Mr. Ferbey: The paragraph in question relates to the Canada housing benefit, a federal partnership program with provinces and territories that came online for the Yukon in November 2020. As mentioned in question 21, the corporation approached this bilateral agreement by providing a housing subsidy to Yukoners in rental housing who can't afford rent. The Canada-Yukon housing benefit has been successfully implemented in the Yukon through its provision for low- to moderate-income Yukoners. These are Yukoners not eligible for community housing, nor can they afford to rent or buy in the private market without assistance. Moving forward, the corporation will conduct a jurisdictional scan on the current application of the Canada-Yukon housing benefit to see if there are any approaches that may align with the corporation and the department.

This issue will be considered in Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services' broader effort to evaluate options that would address the OAG recommendation on social assistance and the rent-gear-to-income program.

Chair: I have just a quick follow-up. You said that it will be conducted moving forward. When will that happen?

Mr. Ferbey: We will be conducting this within the next six months — so Q1 and Q2 of this following fiscal year.

Ms. Tredger: This is in regard to the recommendation 79 response. Can the department and corporation provide an update to action items 79.1 and 79.2 in the work plan?

Mr. Mollet: Item 79.1 talks about the establishment of a multi-year memorandum of understanding for funding between the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation, which was signed in May 2022.

The overall proposal of the memorandum of understanding is for Health and Social Services and the Yukon Housing Corporation to collaborate to support the most vulnerable Yukoners — including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness — with adequate, affordable, and suitable

housing within the parameters of the Yukon legislative and policy environment and access to appropriate supportive services and housing.

The memorandum of understanding covers the roles and assignments of responsibilities of the department and the corporation, a mechanism for engagement with partners, short- and long-term priorities and actions, a coordinated approach to information management, and reporting and communication of progress and results. The implementation of the memorandum of understanding will be supported by the joint corporation and department ADM steering committee on housing.

Item 79.2 talks about conducting a review of the partnership framework to ensure alignment with the memorandum of understanding and to support recommendations for future partnership agreements. It is forecasted to be done in the spring of 2023. The partnership framework is intended to be a guide to the process of forming and maintaining strategy partnerships in the Yukon housing continuum.

There is currently a partnership framework in place; however, it now needs to be reviewed and revised due to the completion of the memorandum of understanding between the department and the corporation and the implementation of community housing. Implementation of the community housing model will involve additional service providers working with the corporation's tenants to foster successful tenancies, and these relationships need to be taken into account in the framework.

Ms. Tredger: Have the department and corporation considered including housing partners in their assessment of capital and maintenance needs, as suggested by the women's transition home in their submission?

Mr. McDowell: The corporation does currently consider the input of our housing partners in the assessment of capital needs. This takes place through: bilateral discussions with partners and committees such as the HAP IC, where the corporation's plans and projects are shared and discussed; specific community engagements on proposed projects; quarterly board meetings in the communities, including Whitehorse, where there is the opportunity to hear community feedback and concerns; and through community needs assessments.

The current Watson Lake Housing First project is an example of a project that was brought forward as part of the needs assessments and discussions with community partners. The corporation is open to looking at additional ways in which we can work with community housing partners to identify housing needs, and that includes working with NGOs or First Nation development corporations to manage some of YHC's stock, potentially.

Maintenance needs — the corporation does not currently share maintenance needs of the corporation with housing partners in a meaningful way. The priority is ensuring that the maintenance needs of tenants are met. Where the corporation owns the building and a housing partner operates a service — such as is the case with Connective and Housing First in Whitehorse — the corporation would work with Connective to

ensure that maintenance requirements are met for the successful operation of the Housing First program.

Ms. Tredger: Can the department and corporation provide some insight into which community partners and housing partners they have begun engagement with and perhaps list some of those with which future engagement is planned?

Mr. Ferbey: The corporation has continued with the existing engagement with community partners and is looking to expand and enhance the current approach as described earlier. Examples of current and continuing engagement activities include: working with the department, Safe at Home, and the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition on implementing the community housing; working with the department and the Town of Watson Lake on the Liard First Nation's development of the Watson Lake Housing First project; engaging with the Kluane First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Teslin Tlingit Council, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, and Champagne and Aishihik First Nations on a multi-residential build project to facilitate the funding from the CMHC for a building with services in these communities. Moving forward, the corporation will continue with these organizations and governments to further these projects.

Other examples include individual engagements with municipalities and other government departments and First Nations on the building of community housing projects. That probably answered the question.

Hon. Ms. McLean: It has been suggested that, before new data or data systems are developed, an audit or review of the existing data collection effort should be done. Can you respond to this suggestion?

Mr. Ferbey: Many of the corporation and department's work plan activities related to having a better understanding of information that is already available or would be made useful to make required changes moving forward. The corporation and the department have not termed this to be an audit or review. The audit had self-identified many areas in which the corporation needs to better understand the needs and outcomes of tenants. However, these efforts will involve greater collaboration internally between the department and corporation on certain aspects such as projections as referred to in previous answers.

It will also involve the corporation and department reaching out to our community partners to see that they are already collecting the relevant information. The corporation and department will also have to share greater information with our housing partners to avoid the duplication that our partners are concerned about. The corporation and department feel that this relates to work plan activity 87.2, and the Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee can be a venue for these activities as well. As mentioned previously in one of the responses, in 69, the efforts that the corporation and the department do value the work carried out by our partners, and we are not trying to minimize it through the work plan but to frame the work plan in terms of actionable items by the corporation and department based on the scope of the audit. This includes information- and data-gathering.

Hon. Ms. McLean: Thank you for the answer. Can the department and corporation provide an update to action items 87.1 and 87.2 in their work plan?

Mr. Ferbey: Item 87.1 of the work plan is for the corporation and the department to establish an interdepartmental housing working group to work with other Yukon government departments to better understand and respond to the housing system from land development to community housing. Historically, both have been members of the internal Yukon government housing action plan. The corporation and the department will be making efforts to re-establish this committee based on the work plan and the recognized need for greater internal collaboration. The corporation and the department will also continue with bilateral housing-related discussions with relevant departments.

Mr. Kent: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and this is the last question of the day, and I want to thank the officials from the Yukon Housing Corporation and Health and Social Services and from the Office of the Auditor General for joining us here today. I should also just quickly mention that, just prior to us reconvening, I did ask the president of the Yukon Housing Corporation if they would provide us with the breakdown of those vacant social housing units by community, and I believe he agreed to get that information to the Committee, so I thanked him.

The final question is with respect to lack of performance measurement frameworks and limited reporting on results, which is recommendation 91. So, the question is: What is the quadruple aim, as referenced to in *Putting People First*, and how are the department and corporation already using this? What will it do to improve the territory's response to housing?

Mr. van Randen: So, the quadruple aim is a framework that seeks to simultaneously improve outcomes on four things. Those are: patient and client experience; health outcomes; managing costs and system effectiveness; and providing better experiences for care and service providers. We are using the quadruple aim at the department as a framework to guide our program development and the delivery and the monitoring of them.

We have started to frame our public engagement initiatives using the quadruple aim by focusing participant input on how to achieve the elements that are in the quadruple aim. Our work plan commits us to doing a needs analysis for housing with services, to require key deliverables when we provide funding to housing providers, and to better track the use of our housing, as we have been doing with the quarterly housing report. Those are all examples of how we are trying to put the quadruple aim into practice.

If we use the quadruple aim well, we will continuously improve our housing with services so that our clients are suitably housed and experiencing stability. Housing is a foundational determinant of health. If you have a home, you are going to have a chance to pursue your full participation in society.

Enhancing performance measurement is an ongoing commitment of our department, as demonstrated through the role of our Population Public Health Evidence and Evaluation

branch. In relation to housing with services, the Social Services programming area supports efforts in establishing and using performance management.

Chair: That concludes the predetermined questions that we had, but, of course, as always, we have an opportunity to ask questions. I will look to my colleagues — if there are any further follow-up questions. Seeing none, I have a couple, so I will sneak them in here.

The first one is in follow up to the president of the Yukon Housing Corporation's comments about the loan to the CNLP in Copper Ridge, the development there. Can the corporation simply provide what program that loan is provided under, what the loan conditions are, what the loan amounts are, and what the status of that project overall is?

Mr. Mollet: The loan that was provided to CNLP was delivered under the developer build loan program, which was a program extended to not only include housing development but lot and infrastructure development.

Then the CNLP and the Yukon Housing Corporation entered into a loan agreement in September 2022 for the first phase of the project. We provided funding to CNLP for that stage, and this phase is meant to take place in the summer of 2023. The first phase was more for CNLP to purchase all the materials that were needed for the second phase of the project.

Chair: Thank you, Mr. Mollet. Is that project the only one under that program for land development, or are there other land development initiatives under that same program?

Mr. Mollet: This is the only project related to land development.

Chair: The final question I had was in follow up to the initial question regarding the announcement that was made earlier this week or last week about the additional funding to the Safe at Home project for the 24/7 services. I believe that Mr. McDowell had said that funding negotiations were underway and that we hadn't determined a final amount of O&M funding that the YHC will provide to Safe at Home. Is that correct, Mr. McDowell?

Mr. McDowell: Yes, there are actually two parts to this. One is the emergency winter housing project that is foreseen to be lasting until — we have provided funding to last through the winter. The second part is the longer term use of the facility. What I was referring to as the capital expenditure was for those capital upgrades for the temporary use of the facility. I think that Health and Social Services had provided some context around the operation and maintenance portion of that question.

Chair: Okay, so the amounts that have been provided have not yet been determined?

Mr. van Randen: Yes, that is correct. We are working with the Safe at Home Society to sort out what exactly the final details of that will be, but we are talking about 24/7 guest services, so we imagine that to be in the range of \$400,000 or \$500,000. Then the other parts of it are some overhead costs that they have faced around sewer, water, and those sorts of things for which we have to figure out the exact offset because, of course, they will be getting rent from clients as part of that. We are working through the details and are going to sort that out very quickly here.

Chair: I had noticed that in the City of Whitehorse tax lien summary, Safe at Home was owing approximately \$70,000 in back taxes to the city. Is the department working with Safe at Home to address that as well?

Mr. van Randen: Yes, the specifics of back taxes or forward taxes — the point is that there is overhead of keeping the building and that includes its participation in paying city taxes. That is the part we are looking at — what is the offset with rents they will get and what are they paying on that front?

Chair: Before we conclude, I have a few closing remarks on behalf of the Committee. First of all, I would like to thank the witnesses from the Department of Health and Social Services, the Yukon Housing Corporation, and, of course, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

I would like to thank the organizations that provided written submissions to the Committee and to all of those who participated in and helped organize this hearing.

Today's hearing does not necessarily signal the end of the Committee's consideration of these issues raised in the Auditor General's report on housing. The Committee may follow up further with the department and corporation, and this could include subsequent public hearings at some point in the future, but we will leave that for the future.

So, at this point, I will now declare this hearing adjourned. Thank you.

The Committee adjourned at 2:13 p.m.