



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 49

1st Session

36th Legislature

DRAFT BLUES

Monday, October 26, 2026 — 1:00 p.m.

Whitehorse, Yukon

Speaker: The Honourable Yvonne Clarke

NOTE

This document, referred to as the "Blues", is the preliminary issue of the Hansard of the Yukon Legislative Assembly and has not been edited fully. It may be used as a reference only with the understanding that it will be superseded by the final, edited version, entitled "Hansard", at a later time.

Draft Segment 002-011

Monday, October 26, 2026

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

Visitors introduced

Speaker: Tributes.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Statement — Operation Nanook-Tatigiit

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Today, I would like to give a member statement on Operation Nanook. From October 19 to 23, the Yukon hosted Operation Nanook-Tatigiit. Organized by the Canadian Armed Forces every three years. Operation Nanook brings together territorial, municipal, and First Nation governments, and many partner agencies for a joint exercise. The goal is to practise decision-making and crisis response in our northern environment and to learn lessons for the future. The 2026 scenario focused on public safety concerns, threats to critical infrastructure, and the effects of misinformation on northern communities. These exercises are critical as they strengthen coordination, clarify roles and responsibilities, and improve preparedness for complex emergencies in the North.

I extend my gratitude to everyone who participated last week, making the North a safer, more resilient place, and I'd like to offer my thanks to the EMO for helping assemble everyone for the exercise.

Statement — Remembrance Day poppy symbolism

Kate White: Today, I rise in celebration and recognition of the first poppy ceremony that happened on Friday at the Commissioner's residence in Whitehorse.

In the days leading up to Remembrance Day, we recognize the real important symbolism of the poppy. I want to remind folks that it is not a symbol that supports decisions that are political and made by politicians as to whether or not to participate or not participate in conflict, but they are a symbol of remembrance for those people who took that ultimate step and sometimes paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Poppies right now are available throughout town. You'll see people at tables, and I remind everyone that poppies are not for sale. If you do not have cash in your pocket, you do not need to worry about that exchange, but donations are gratefully accepted. I think about the work at the Whitehorse Legion that has happened for a very long time and how it continues.

Thank you, everyone, and please wear your poppy.

Statement — Yukoner Appreciation Week and Small Business Week

Debra-Leigh Reti: Last week was Yukoner Appreciation Week and Small Business Week, two very popular annual traditions celebrating our local businesses and the Yukoners who support them. Unfortunately, I was sick last week, so I missed many of the events, but I still wanted to speak on this as it means a lot to me. Year-round, I love to see local support for our businesses that help to create a vibrant and creative business community. There are so many wonderful places throughout Whitehorse and the communities for Yukoners and tourists to enjoy.

I just want to give acknowledgement today to a very special Old Crow business, Josie's Old Crow Adventures, owned and operated by Paul and Bree Josie. They provide dog sled rides, Saturday kiddie rides on the lake, boat rides to historic sites along the Porcupine River. Every outing ends with banter around the fire and good old Gwich'in stories passed down to Paul from his grandma and other elders.

I also want to thank the chambers of commerce across the territory, which work hard to support our local businesses year-round and always make for an exciting and eventful Yukoner Appreciation Week.

Statement — Remembrance Day poppy campaign

Doris Anderson: On October 23, the Whitehorse Legion marked the 2026 national poppy campaign by presenting the first poppy to the Hon. Adeline Webber, Commissioner of the Yukon. As part of the ceremony, the legion raised the poppy flag at Taylor House, where it will remain until Remembrance Day.

From October 24 to November 11, Yukoners will once again wear the poppy as a symbol of remembrance. We honour those who served, the families who supported them, and the sacrifices they made. We also want to recognize the sacrifices of Yukon First Nations and the thousands of Indigenous people who served Canada over generations and those who continue to serve today.

To the veterans with us today: Thank you; your service and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

Statement — Vuntut Gwitchin chief and council election

Lane Tredger: On behalf of the Yukon NDP, I wish to congratulate the new chief and council of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation. On September 15, Vuntut Gwitchin citizens cast their ballots and elected their new chief and council, and last week they were sworn in at the Darius Elias Community Centre just ahead of their general assembly. Congratulations to Chief Lance Nagwan and councillors Ciara Kakfwi-Frost, Brandon Kyikavichik, Ryan Newman-Kay, and Lisa Van Fleet. On Sunday at the GA, Chief Nagwan announced that Lisa Van Fleet will serve as deputy chief.

Stepping forward to serve your community is a daunting task, but your community is confident that you are up to the task. The next year will be full of challenges and successes, and we thank you for rising to the occasion. The Yukon NDP caucus looks forward to working with you in the coming years.

Statement — British Columbia provincial election

Tyler Porter: I rise today to acknowledge the results of the British Columbia provincial election. I would like to congratulate Lorne Doerksen and the Conservative Party of British Columbia on their election victory.

British Columbia is an important partner and neighbour to the Yukon. Our people, communities, and economies are closely connected, and a strong relationship between our governments benefits residents on both sides of the border. We look forward to working with Premier-designate Doerksen and his government to strengthen our partnership, advance shared priorities and support economic opportunities for Yukoners and British Columbians.

I recognize the outgoing Premier David Eby for his service to British Columbia.

Speaker: Are there any documents for tabling?

Are there any committee reports to be presented?

PETITIONS

Petition No. 3

Carmen Gustafson: I have for tabling a petition with well over 1,000 signatures that reads as follows:

“To the Yukon Legislative Assembly:

“This petition of the undersigned shows:

“THAT Yukon public utility customers have raised concerns about their electricity bills in the last year and are asking for greater transparency in billing by public utilities;

“THAT ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy Corporation are the two regulated public utilities that deliver electricity directly to customers in the Yukon and are responsible for billing at rates approved by the Yukon Utilities Board;

“THAT Yukoners are concerned about affordability of residential electricity rates (as approved by the Yukon Utilities Board) have increased;

“THAT billing practices of public utilities in the Yukon should be investigated for perceived or actual inaccuracy;

“THAT the Minister of Justice (the “Minister”) has powers under section 18 of the *Public Utilities Act* to request the Yukon Utilities Board investigate and make reports;

“THEREFORE, the undersigned ask the Yukon Legislative Assembly to urge the Minister to

“(1) request the Yukon Utilities Board

“(a) investigate billing by public utilities from July 2025 to July 2026 for the purpose of ensuring customers have been accurately and fairly billed for electricity;

“(b) include the following matters in the investigation: readability of utility bills; inconsistent billing periods; use of meter estimates versus actual consumption and the make up of differences between the two; accuracy and frequency of household electricity meter reading; consistency of rates charged with those set by the Yukon Utilities Board; and any other matter identified by the Yukon Utilities Board that may have or has caused billing inaccuracies;

“(c) provide an opportunity for public participation in the investigation; and

“(d) make a report of the findings of the investigation to the Minister; and

“(2) table the report in the Legislative Assembly.”

Speaker: Are there any bills to be introduced?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Patti McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT the Members’ Services Board review whether the first Monday in November should be the fixed election date in section 50.1 of the *Elections Act*.

Tyler Porter: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to work with the City of Whitehorse to advance the development of the Valleyview site for the construction of a new École Whitehorse Elementary School.

Brent McDonald: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT the Members’ Services Board examine options for recording and broadcasting video of the entirety of each Sitting day of the Legislative Assembly; and

THAT the board report to the Legislative Assembly on its findings and recommendations by April 19, 2027.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question — *Residential Tenancies Act*

Kate White: Madam Speaker, last week, when I asked how many Yukon households stand to be affected by the Yukon Party’s changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, the minister answered, “I don’t know the number of tenants in the Yukon. I don’t know the number of landlords in the Yukon, and I don’t know the number of private rental units in the Yukon.” When questioned, she admitted that she had not directed her department to find out. The April 2026 rent survey can help. It notes 2,347 rental units in the Whitehorse rent summary. When I asked if there was any concern at all about not having adequate information, she said — and I quote: “I’m not concerned that I didn’t have the information needed to make these big changes.”

Will the minister explain why her government is ramming through legislation without knowing how many Yukon households these changes will affect?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: We’ve been very clear on our path for changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*. We made that known during the election, and we’re following through with it here in this Sitting.

We understand that supply has been limited due to the changes that were made recently to the act, and we’re looking to rebalance that in the *Residential Tenancies Act* between landlords and tenants.

Kate White: The Yukon Party platform says — and I quote: “The current, non-transparent processes, such as tabling massive legislation without prior consultation or not presenting critical details around regulations, undermines public trust and accountability.” In Opposition, they accuse the former government of having — and I quote again: “... a record of ramming things through and not doing consultation properly ...”. As Opposition, the Yukon Party went on to call this “... a colossal failure ...”. Then, last Monday in debate about legislative changes that will affect no less than 2,347 Yukon households, the minister told Yukoners — and I quote: “There was no engagement, as we have said, on the specific changes that we are talking about in the current amendment to the act.”

Why does the Yukon Party demand consultation from others and then refuse to do it themselves?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: While it is true that the changes that were made in the new *Residential Tenancies Act* — the one that was passed last year — were started several years prior to that with no consultation, and it is true that there was consultation done in 2024, the changes that are being proposed in the *Residential Tenancies Act* are very small compared to the ones that were done in 2021, at the time when there was no consultation as well.

Kate White: Small changes but massive consequences.

In 2024, nearly two years after rent control came into effect, more than 1,500 Yukoners took part in the review of the *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act* that led to the 2025 *Residential Tenancies Act* that the minister is currently amending. Over half of respondents said that rent control for tenants should be tied to CPI, and more of the landlords who responded agreed that inflation-tied rent increases are fair than those who opposed it.

When asked, the minister admitted that she was not familiar with that consultation and admitted that the Yukon Party had never considered any options other than scrapping rent control and bringing back no-fault evictions.

To those listening, it sounds like the Yukon Party is taking an ideological position on a major issue that will affect thousands of Yukon households. For clarity, are the changes being pushed through by the Yukon Party based on ideology or facts?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: The changes being made to the *Residential Tenancies Act* are to rebalance the market in private rentals. Market rentals are only one part of the housing continuum. There's work also being done on other parts of the housing continuum, as we've explained here already, but the changes being made and targeted are to bring supply back to the supply-demand equation in the private market rentals.

Question — *Residential Tenancies Act* impact on mobile home owners

Lane Tredger: The Yukon Party is making changes to allow unlimited rent increases. One group of tenants that will be affected is mobile home owners who pay pad rent each month. Because mobile homes are often fairly permanent structures, if they can't afford a rent increase, they may have to leave the trailer they own behind.

In debate, the Minister of Community Services was asked what would happen to a mobile home owner who couldn't afford a rent increase. The minister said — quote: "there are subsidies and supports available through the Yukon Housing." When pressed for details, she said to ask Yukon Housing. So, I'd like to do that. The Yukon Housing website only lists one rent subsidy program, the Canada-Yukon housing benefit, and mobile home owners don't qualify for it.

I would like to ask the minister for Yukon Housing for more information. Can they please tell Yukoners what subsidies or supports for rent are available to mobile home owners?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I did answer quite a few questions about mobile home sites previously, and we did recognize that mobile home owners are different. They have some different circumstances than regular tenants, and that is recognized in the *Residential Tenancies Act* currently. There's a whole section separate for residential tenancies, due to mobile home ownership, and there have been changes to separate them from different types of tenant situations.

Lane Tredger: When the Minister of Community Services says she can't answer a question because it has to be for Yukon Housing, and then I ask Yukon Housing and she doesn't let them answer, I don't know how we're supposed to get this information. It sounds like what she gave us is wrong. It's pretty concerning that the Yukon Party is moving forward without having the facts right.

All tenants in rental housing will soon have to live with the possibility of unlimited rent increases. When the Minister of Community Services was asked what would happen to them, she said — quote: "There are, as I had mentioned earlier, options for folks who aren't able to afford their rent through the Yukon Housing rental subsidy program. I would direct them to that program." She said to ask Yukon Housing for details. Again, the only rental subsidy program available through Yukon Housing is the Canada-Yukon housing benefit, which has strict limitations on eligibility. So, I'd like to ask the minister responsible for Yukon Housing, who that is an option for.

Does Yukon Housing have any rent subsidy programs that are available to people on social assistance, people on long-term disability, or people who don't have an income?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I would like to continue to say that we recognize that mobile home owners are different tenants than other tenants in the *Residential Tenancies Act*, and then there is a section in the *Residential Tenancies Act* that applies specifically to them. There are a variety of issues in every individual circumstance, as we talked about previously, that require people to check in with various different agencies to see what options are available.

Mobile home owners have a tenancy; they're also an owner. They can check in with the residential tenancies office. They can check in with various different subsidies and places to see if they're available.

We do understand that mobile homes are separate and we have carved that out. We've also left in the current changes that mobile homes would not be affected by the no-cause evictions.

Lane Tredger: That's twice that this government has referred to non-existent programs to justify their rent increases, and that's twice that they have refused to answer follow-up questions about those programs. Unfortunately, this has been typical of the Yukon Party's lack of knowledge or preparation for these sweeping changes to the rental market.

The minister was asked how many tenants there are in the Yukon. She said she didn't know. She was asked what other places in Canada do regarding evictions and rent increases. She said she didn't have that information. She was asked what she had heard from Yukoners, how many people she had talked to, what stories they had shared. She didn't answer and said — quote:

“I don’t think it matters anymore — the numbers, back-and-forth of the detailed numbers, who said what to who, different conversations that we’ve had, different conversations that other members have had.”

How can Yukoners have any confidence at all in this Yukon Party government when they can’t or won’t answer basic questions about their legislation?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Madam Speaker, what we’ve said is that we are making these changes to bring balance back to the private market rentals. We know that supply has reduced. We have seen rents continue to increase over the last few years, and that separation will just continue to create a housing continuum in the section that needs additional support. The support it needs is from investment. We need investors to re-enter the market. We need people to be landlords, and we want them to be comfortable in doing so. Currently, they’re not. Currently, they are leaving the market or no longer renting their units, and that is causing damage to the rental market.

Question — Whitehorse Emergency Shelter services and downtown core concerns

Debra-Leigh Reti: Madam Speaker, anyone who has driven by the downtown shelter in recent days has noticed a build-up of tents, somewhat permanent structures, and a general increase in volume and activity outside the building. As the cold weather approaches, it appears folks are living on the sidewalk outside of the shelter.

What plans, if any, does this government have to address this increase in camping outside of the shelter?

Hon. Brad Cathers: This issue has been raised with me by a number of people, including colleagues. I have raised it as well with the Department of Health and Social Services and asked them to engage with other departments, including Justice, HPW, and Yukon Housing, as well as with the RCMP and bylaw on dealing with it.

I understand some steps have been taken to get rid of tents that have come up there, but it is clear that more work is needed, and I have given the direction to the department to take the action that they can to crack down on this.

Debra-Leigh Reti: Recently, the government confirmed the building we are standing in will not be used as a warming shelter this winter. The minister of health also confirmed there are no additional shelter services being planned this coming winter.

As we approach the one-year mark of this government coming to office, it is clear that things outside of the shelter have gotten worse, not better. The situation isn’t safe for people trying to access the shelter, and it isn’t healthy for individuals who are outside of the shelter all day.

My concern as winter approaches is the situation for people living outside of the shelter becoming more precarious. What is the government’s actionable plan to address this issue before winter arrives, with minus 20-, minus 30-degree temperatures coming?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I would remind the member opposite that the use of a so-called “warming centre” in the Jim Smith Building was a very temporary thing that occurred under the previous government. It was also a duplication of services that were available at other locations. When we made it clear that we were not opening last winter, members opposite attempted to paint an image of catastrophic consequences. Yet, despite having one of the coldest winters in recent years in the Yukon, there fortunately were not the consequences they attempted to convince Yukoners would occur.

There continue to be a number of warming centre services operated by a number of partners throughout Whitehorse. As well, as I’ve reminded members, there are a number of buildings, including this one, that are open to the Yukon public every day, as long as people are not doing anything that is creating a disturbance. This very building has been open to the public five days a week since 1976.

Debra-Leigh Reti: It’s pretty obvious that the government doesn’t have a plan to address the activity on the sidewalk outside of the shelter. They have let it go on for the better part of a year and have taken no meaningful action. They have not decentralized services as promised on their platform. They have broken their promise to improve downtown safety. They have not expanded funding to address the substance use health emergency. They have not expanded access to addiction treatment options. They have not delivered new prevention initiatives where they are most needed. They have not established effective enforcement measures against the illicit drug trade going on right in front of us. Last week, the minister tried to blame the Government of Canada for this government’s lack of action.

Does the government plan to address the makeshift shelters on the sidewalk, or does it plan to leave them there for the winter, where minus 20- and 30-degree temperatures will be coming soon?

Hon. Brad Cathers: I have to again correct the member and remind her that the only reason that we extended the contract with Connective, the current operator, till the end of March was at the request of Yukon First Nation leadership, including the chief from the member’s own community. That request was made in a united manner by all of the First Nation leadership who attended the summit in July to talk about it, as well as the 405 Alexander Advisory Committee. We listened, and for that reason, the contract was extended until the end of March to give us time to work together on developing the model for the expression of

interest that will go out to select the new operator or operators for all of the services that are currently at the shelter, including housing, including food, and including shelter services.

As I've indicated to members previously, one of the options that we are considering is relocating shelter services from 405 Alexander Street to a different location or locations. As I indicated in my previous response, we've heard from people about the disturbance, including tents outside 405 Alexander Street, and I have given clear direction to the department to do what we can to crack down on that, including working with the RCMP and bylaw on dealing with that.

Question — Gender-inclusive diversity analysis on *Residential Tenancies Act*

Linda Moen: Evictions and rent increases are not felt evenly across demographics. Women and 2SLGBTQ+ people are vulnerable to no-cause evictions that determine people's ability to live and thrive in safe, stable housing. A 2025 report from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation stated that women experience increased financial strain, and women of colour are more likely to be evicted, while all are less likely to appeal.

Last week, I asked the Minister of Community Services if a gender-inclusive diversity analysis — or GIDA — was applied to the *Residential Tenancies Act*. I did not get a clear answer, so I'll ask again today.

Was the gender-inclusive diversity analysis used in developing the *Residential Tenancies Act*?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I do believe that I told the member that I would try to find that information and return it when I can.

But I just wanted to talk generally about the housing continuum. We do know that there is work needed and underway across the housing continuum. This is right from shelter services, transitional housing, supportive housing, low-income housing, market rental, home ownership, and land development. We know that this is a whole continuum and work is needed in all these areas to support Yukoners, and that work is currently underway.

Linda Moen: For women and gender-diverse people faced with an eviction or unmanageable rent increase, there are few options and supports. Many in desperate situations turn to emergency shelters and transition homes. However, the number of beds cannot keep up with demands; they couldn't even before the changes. In 2023, the Yukon Women's Transition Home reported they often double bunk women who access their services and frequently get requests to extend their 30-day stay. Meanwhile, the shelter prioritizes those fleeing gender-based violence, and therefore, evicted women may not have access. If these changes go through, the few housing options and supports available for women and gender-diverse people will be even more strained.

What steps is this government taking to support and strengthen housing organizations as Yukon faces the removal of rent control and introduction of no-cause eviction?

Hon. Laura Lang: Madam Speaker, as the member opposite asked earlier about the GIDA application to the changes to the *Residential Tenancies Act*, I can confirm that any decision that is made by Cabinet has not only a GIDA analysis applied to it, but it has other variables that are also assessed. While I appreciate that the Minister of Community Services will receive a far more detailed explanation on that, I can confirm that GIDA is applied.

I'm also thankful to the federal government for continuing to finance the NAPGBV funding to all provinces and territories. That is going to allow us to do not only a continuation of some of the work we have underway but also be far more targeted in what it is that we want to see, particularly related to violence and gender-based violence outcomes in the Yukon, and how we are going to work with community on that.

Again, I'm thankful for the federal government's ongoing funding for this, and I look forward to working with community members.

Linda Moen: Madam Speaker, 2SLGBTQ+ Yukoners deserve to live free from any form of discrimination. That is something all Yukoners fundamentally deserve. One's gender identity, expression, or sexual orientation should not play a role in the process of securing safe and stable housing.

The Yukon *Human Rights Act* states that it is discriminatory to treat transgender and gender-diverse people adversely in matters surrounding housing. However, no-cause evictions allow a landlord to evict a tenant without ever stating why. This leaves tenants with no protections and no opportunity to dispute an eviction.

Does the minister recognize that no-cause evictions could disproportionately affect transgender and gender-diverse Yukoners?

Hon. Laura Lang: Madam Speaker, I couldn't agree more. Everyone deserves to feel safe, to feel respected and included in their communities, and I appreciate the work that the Minister of Community Services has undertaken to ensure that there's far more choice available in the rental market.

As previously stated, rental units are but one part of our continuum. Ensuring that we have more available stock on the rental side of the continuum will enable many Yukoners, regardless of their sexual orientation, to be able to have an opportunity to leave situations that perhaps they're not feeling safe in or that they simply would like to change. I'm looking forward to seeing these measures, to see more stock come online, and to see our rental stock rebalanced.

Question — Build Canada Homes housing agreement

Adam Gerle: Madam Speaker, housing affordability and housing supply continue to be important issues for Yukoners. Meeting those challenges requires strong partnerships and sustained investment from all orders of government. Earlier this year, the Yukon secured additional federal funding to help increase housing supply and support housing development across the territory.

Can the Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation update the House on the additional federal funding recently secured and how it will help increase housing opportunities for Yukoners?

Hon. Scott Kent: I appreciate the question from the member. Our government continues to work closely with Canada to secure investments that help address housing needs across the Yukon. Earlier this year, as mentioned, the Yukon Government secured \$10 million in federal funding to help address increased housing supply and support the delivery of housing projects across the Yukon.

This funding will help Yukon Housing and its partners advance housing initiatives that increase the number of homes available to Yukoners and support the development of affordable housing options. These investments complement the work already underway to increase land availability, support housing construction, and create more housing opportunities in communities throughout the territory.

By continuing to work with Canada, we are helping ensure Yukon has the resources needed to address housing challenges and support future growth.

Adam Gerle: Securing new funding is important, but partnerships can also help deliver housing at a much larger scale. Earlier this year, Yukon Housing Corporation announced a new partnership with Build Canada Homes that has the potential to significantly increase housing supply across the territory.

Can the minister update the House on this new agreement and what it means for housing development in the Yukon?

Hon. Scott Kent: In May, the Yukon Housing Corporation entered into a new partnership with Build Canada Homes that will support the delivery of up to 500 affordable and deeply affordable homes across the Yukon. The final details of the agreement are still being negotiated. However, the partnership is backed up by up to \$100 million in federal funding and up to \$93 million from the Yukon Housing Corporation. This partnership reflects a significant commitment by both governments to increase housing supply and affordability throughout the territory.

The initiative will support both Yukon Housing Corporation projects and projects delivered in partnership with community housing developers across the Yukon. These homes will focus on affordability and include rent-geared-to-income housing, employee housing, and projects delivered through Yukon Housing's partnership programs. This partnership will help accelerate housing construction, increase housing supply, and create more housing opportunities for Yukoners in communities throughout the territory.

Adam Gerle: Announcing a new partnership is an important step, but Yukoners also want to know how these commitments will be translated into homes on the ground. The Build Canada Homes agreement represents a significant opportunity to increase housing supply and support affordable housing across the territory.

Can the minister update the House on the next steps being taken to advance this partnership and deliver new homes for Yukoners?

Hon. Scott Kent: The focus now is on moving projects from planning to construction as quickly as possible. Through this partnership, Yukon Housing Corporation will work closely with Canada and community partners to identify and advance shovel-ready housing projects across the territory.

The agreement uses a portfolio approach, meaning it will support a range of projects rather than a single development. This allows us to move forward with projects in different communities as they are ready. The homes delivered through this initiative will focus on affordability and include both Yukon Housing projects and partner-led developments. The partnership will also provide long-term funding certainty and help expand Yukon's capacity to deliver housing over the coming years.

By working collaboratively and advancing shovel-ready projects, we are positioning Yukon to deliver up to 500 new affordable and deeply affordable homes and create lasting housing opportunities for Yukoners no matter where they live in the territory.

Question — Residential tenancies office services

Carmen Gustafson: The residential tenancies office does a lot of important work. They can educate landlords and tenants on rights and responsibilities, and they have powers under the *Residential Tenancies Act* to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants, including through mediation or a hearing.

When the minister was asked about what tenants with shared accommodation who receive an eviction notice should do, the minister replied — quote: “...my best advice would be to contact the residential tenancies office based on your tenancy agreement that you have...”

Can the minister explain to Yukoners the jurisdiction of the residential tenancies office and what its limitations are?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: What I can say here is that many of the questions are very specific examples of what could or could not happen to individuals, and like I said before, there are many variables in a situation on both the landlord and tenant side, and we can't know all the details of all the variables of every specific situation.

I would encourage people who do have issues to contact the residential tenancies office. They are the experts. They understand all the pieces of the legislation and how to help that individual specific circumstance at any given time.

Carmen Gustafson: Last week, when asked during debate about the function of the residential tenancies office, the minister said that the RTO — quote: “provides the supports to both landlords and tenants if there are issues happening within their tenancy agreement and works hard to resolve those disputes equitably and in a timely manner.”

One of the limits of the RTO is that it cannot apply the *Human Rights Act*. This means that if a tenant believes they are being evicted due to discrimination, the RTO cannot decide that aspect of the dispute. The tenant may need to file multiple disputes to address the same eviction notice, as the complaint must go through the Yukon human rights process. There may not be resolution before time runs out on the eviction notice, as there is a long backlog of cases with this decision-maker.

So, if human rights disputes cannot be asked accessed in a timely way, someone may still lose their housing while they wait. How will the minister ensure that without cause eviction is not used as a cover for discrimination prohibited under the *Human Rights Act*?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I do appreciate all the good work done at the residential tenancies office. There are many different circumstances and situations that they deal with quite often, and it is true that they are limited in Human Rights Commission decision-making. That is not their role. The role for people who feel that they have been discriminated against is to file that with the human rights office.

Carmen Gustafson: The minister and I agree that the staff at the residential tenancies office does important work for the landlords and tenants across the territory. During debate last week, the minister said — quote: “While we do anticipate that potentially the RTO may temporarily become busier following these immediate changes, they do not anticipate that the changes will have significant implications for their timelines.”

Under proposed changes to the RTA, on December 1, a tenant who receives a no-cause eviction will have 14 days to file a dispute. There may be mediation with the parties, and then a hearing can occur. Once the hearing is over, the act gives the RTO 30 days to issue a decision on the dispute.

Can the minister tell Yukoners what the RTO's current service standards are, how long parties wait for a hearing, and how long it takes on average for a dispute to be resolved?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: Yes, the good folks at the residential tenancies office deal with a lot of these situations on an ongoing basis. I understand that evictions do bump to the top of the list of things that are looked at to make sure that they try to meet the timelines.

I did say that the RTO may become temporarily busier because of these changes. They have been busier than they were before due to the changes introduced recently. We do feel like they will eventually reduce just because of the provisions — for example, related to rent increases, it may lead to a reduction in timelines. But currently, we do anticipate a bit of a busier situation at the residential tenancies office as people understand what the rules will be going forward.

Question — Housing support programs

Brent McDonald: Madam Speaker, the Yukon Party tells us that six months' notice will give tenants time to find another home after a no-cause eviction. That may sound reasonable in a larger rental market but it does not reflect the reality in Dawson City. The 2024 rent survey found no vacant rental units in Dawson City. An early 2026 survey found only two.

Six months of searching will not help if there was nowhere else in the community to live. Losing a home can mean leaving Dawson City, changing jobs, moving children, separating families, or turning to a shelter. Rural tenants need to know what help will be available to them.

If a tenant in Dawson City or other rural Yukon communities receives a no-cause eviction and cannot find another home in their community, are there government programs or services they can turn to for help?

Hon. Scott Kent: Through the Yukon Housing Corporation, we're very proud of the investments that we're making across the Yukon when it comes to housing opportunities. We're increasing supply of affordable housing through two major capital projects. One is in Whitehorse, and the second one is in Dawson City, with completion anticipated in the fall/winter of this year. The Korbo project in Dawson City will be available early in the 2027 calendar year. There will be 34 community housing and

rent-gear-to-income units in Dawson, and as I mentioned, expected completion is in the winter of this year. These are some of the investments we're making in Dawson City to assist people.

There's also the Canada-Yukon housing benefit which has rent supplements available as part of it to assist people with paying their rent. We made some changes to that program earlier this year to expand it and offer additional funding on a sliding scale rather than just up against specific lines.

We'll continue to make investments in communities like Dawson City when it comes to the housing continuum. Those 34 units that are coming online in Dawson will essentially eliminate the wait-list that is there right now for social housing in that community.

Brent McDonald: The Yukon Party says that removing rent control and allowing no-cause evictions will encourage investment and create more rental housing; however, there are no targets for the number of new homes these changes are expected to produce. Dawson City already faces a serious shortage of long-term rentals. That shortage makes it harder to recruit and retain teachers, health professionals, tradespeople, and other workers that our community depends on.

Dawson City residents deserve more than a general promise that private investment will eventually appear. They deserve to know what differences these changes are expected to make in rural communities. How many new long-term rental homes does the minister expect will be created in Dawson City and rural Yukon because of these changes, and when are those homes expected to be available?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I do look forward to seeing new residential homes and rental homes built across the Yukon, in Whitehorse as well as in rural communities. Certainly there is a need, especially in communities such as Dawson City, for increased rental and long-term homes as the population changes, people become less transient over time and wish to make it a longer term stay. Dawson used to be sort of a summer-only type of place, but now they have seen more people who wish to stay long-term, so I do look forward to seeing those.

We are working on land development projects in the rural communities as well as in Dawson City, and we hope to see people come on board and build homes there in the near future.

Brent McDonald: The Minister of Community Services agreed that the government needs good, reliable information to understand what happens after these changes take effect. The Yukon currently has no way to know how many no-cause eviction notices will be issued, or the number of large rent increases in each community.

Territory-wide averages will not tell the whole story. In Dawson City and other rural areas, one or two vacant homes can represent all of the available rental market. The government needs to monitor rural communities separately and be prepared to respond if its policy is not producing the predicted effect.

How will the minister monitor rural communities? And if rents rise or rental supply does not improve, what action will the government take?

Hon. Cory Bellmore: I do think that monitoring is an important piece for these changes that are being made. Currently, you're right — there is not great monitoring and great information available. The folks at Yukon Bureau of Statistics are doing what they can to provide the information that they currently collect, but we'd like to work with them to expand what they're collecting so that we can know. If working with them to expand what we need to collect in rural Yukon is something that we feel is necessary and would help understand what these changes are doing to the *Residential Tenancies Act* and folks in the Yukon, then we can do that.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speaker: We will proceed to Orders of the Day.

Hon. Scott Kent: Madam Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 8, *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is continuing general debate on Bill No. 8, entitled *Act to amend the Residential Tenancies Act (2026)*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

[This is the DRAFT BLUES. The complete REVISED BLUES of the day's proceedings will appear online by 6:00 p.m. the following day.]