

Engagement needed on housing policies: YP

The Yukon Party is again highlighting what it calls "Liberal mismanagement" of housing in the Yukon.

"The new allocation policy that reduces priority access to housing for women and children fleeing violence is an unacceptable step backward for the most vulnerable Yukoners," the party said in a statement last Wednesday.

"This follows the office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) report that found it took twice as long to provide homes for vulnerable Yukoners, such as those fleeing violence.

"Compounding the issue is the staggering growth in the social housing waitlist. The OAG revealed it has grown by 315 per cent between 2015 and 2021."

The Yukon Party believes that the new allocation policy "should be revised to improve, not restrict, housing options for women and children fleeing abuse," said housing critic Yvonne Clarke.

"I encourage the deputy premier (Jeanie McLean) to use her influence with the premier to ensure the Women and Gender Equity Directorate use their expertise to review the changes.

"In addition, there should be engagement with non-government organizations so that women and children fleeing violence and other vulnerable Yukoners get priority on the wait list," Clarke said.

"The latest misstep in housing continues the trend of delayed, late, and undelivered commitments," the party said.

"Early last month, the premier took part in a media event at Fourth and Jeckell where he 'opened' the building. However, at the time, there was no official move-in date."

The official Opposition said it has continually pointed out how delays in getting residential lots to market has restricted the private sectors' capacity to build more housing, especially in Whistle Bend.

According to the December 2022

Investment in Building Construction from the Yukon Bureau of Statistics, seasonally adjusted expenditures in residential construction are down 24.1 per cent year-over-year.

"These delays are adding to the social housing waitlist, denying both NGOs and the private sector from providing increased social housing opportunities," the party said.

Cabinet communications staff said in a statement they are unsure where the Yukon Party is getting its information from.

"Tenants have begun moving into the 47-unit housing development at 401 Jeckell St.," the statement said.

The Yukon Housing Corporation's new Community Housing approach regarding tenant allocation represents a more sustainable way of providing subsidized housing, the statement added.

"This social mix, or mixed-income mixed use' approach has been adopted by housing providers across the country – and

the world – as a central tenet of urban revitalization projects," the statement said.

"This model was informed by consultation with NGOs, the Department of Health and Social Services and the Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee."

A percentage of units will continue to be allocated to people experiencing homelessness who are on the By-Name List, as well as individuals who have experienced violence, have a medical accommodation or mobility needs, the statement added.

"Community Housing is about more than just providing housing to those in need. It is about fostering social integration and networks of support.

"It is about building high-quality housing and amenities in good locations that is available to all Yukoners."

The government continues to make "historic investments" to increase housing options, the

statement added.

This includes work in partnership with the Safe at Home Society and the adaptation of the Safe at Home Community-Based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness, the implementation of a Housing First philosophy, and the opening of affordable housing complexes in Dawson City, Whitehorse and Watson Lake.

Additionally, according to the statistics bureau, investment in building construction in the Yukon for December 2022 rose 20.8 per cent compared to December 2021, in contrast to a national increase of 6.2 per cent over the same time frame.

"Fixing the territory's housing shortage is not something one government or organization can accomplish alone," the statement said.

"We continue to work in partnership to increase housing options, and we are committed to working so that all Yukoners can access safe, affordable housing."

Survey about policing priorities continues

Whitehorse RCMP are looking to the public for recommendations on policing priorities for 2023-2024, through a survey that's available until this Friday.

This is the second year the detachment has used a survey to seek input from the public.

The questionnaire allows those who live in Whitehorse to have a say in the detachment priorities and annual performance planning activities.

The Justice minister identifies policing priorities for the Yukon

RCMP on a yearly basis, with the choices based on the work provided by the Yukon Police Council and the Department of Justice.

The Whitehorse detachment uses the policing priorities along with consultation from the Whitehorse community, local leadership, governments, and stakeholders to ensure that police officers in the city focus on issues of identified importance.

"Last year, with our first survey available to the Whitehorse public, we were pleased to hear from

so many people, and gain a new perspective in setting out priorities this year," Sgt. Dustin Grant, the acting Whitehorse detachment commander, said Tuesday.

"The top results told us that the community wants to see police engaged with investigations into illegal drug-related offences, property crime, and driving, and that has been reflected in our priorities and our actions.

"We will also continue to consider calls for service, statistics and crime trends from previous

years, and community partner and stakeholder input."

Survey results and the annual priorities will be shared with the public after results are reviewed and compiled.

An online survey has been set up on the Survey Monkey website and is available in both official languages until Friday.

Paper copies and a drop box will be available at the Whitehorse RCMP detachment front desk until Friday.

A labelled drop box will be

available during business hours in the lobby at the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, located at 302 Steele St. #101, Whitehorse, until Friday.

An email can be sent to whitehorsefrontdesk@rcmp-grc.gc.ca for an electronic copy of the survey; when completed they can be printed and submitted to a drop box or emailed back.

Answers will be kept anonymous but an option for individuals who wish to be contacted is available.

Yukon Prize deadline looms tomorrow

Applications for the 2023 Yukon Prize are open until Tuesday.

Three Canadian arts professionals have been named as the jury who will select the finalists and the recipient of the 2023 Yukon Prize for Visual Arts.

They are:

- Dr. Heather Igloliorte, an Inuk from Nunatsiavut, University Research Chair in Circumpolar Indigenous Arts at Concordia University in Montreal, and co-ordinating producer for the 2022 Arctic Arts Summit;

- Michelle Jacques, head of exhibitions and collections/chief curator of the Remai Modern gallery in Saskatoon and former chief curator at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria; and

- Sarah Milroy, Chief curator of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection in Kleinburg, Ont. and former chief art critic for the Globe and Mail.

The privately-funded Yukon Prize for Visual Arts offers \$20,000 to an outstanding Yukon visual

artist, as selected by the jury. Five other short-listed finalists will receive a \$3,000 prize.

This year, for the first time, a long list of finalists will be published, offering recognition to a larger number of talented artists.

The Yukon Prize for Visual Arts recognizes excellence by Yukon visual artists and is intended to be a catalyst for the promotion of Yukon visual art across Canada.

The Yukon Prize has been established in partnership with the Yukon Arts Foundation and the Yukon Arts Centre by co-founders Julie Jai and David Trick, with the support of a dedicated team of volunteers.

"We are thrilled that these distinguished arts professionals have agreed to serve on the 2023 Yukon Prize jury," the couple said.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for Yukon artists to have their work seen by three prominent Canadian curators.

"We want the Yukon Prize to help bring Yukon art into the

national dialogue about art and give Yukon artists the recognition that they deserve."

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CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS

Yukon Quest Musher?

The Whitehorse Star thanks all those who submitted an answer to our Yukon Quest contest over these past four weeks. It was a fun stroll down memory lane and we hope you enjoyed it!

Last week's musher was
Louve Tweddell

Last week's winner of \$50 was
Lisa Gallant-McRobb



