

**KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE**  
**Share of Federal Infrastructure Funding**  
**Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review**  
**NWT Housing Corporation—March 7, 2018**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess this is the point where I could ask questions about revenues for the Housing Corporation. The Minister's colleague made a statement in the House earlier today about federal infrastructure funding. There is \$570 million coming to the GNWT from the federal government. It's going to be, I guess that's 75 per cent federal dollars that we have to match with 25 per cent of our own funds. I'm just wondering how much of that funding is going to be used towards housing.

Of course, I'm looking at the report that the Minister tabled in the House called, "Towards Level Ground" where housing core need is set out. There's a bit of a, not more than a bit, there is a table in here that shows that it would cost \$67 million as of the time that the Minister tabled this report to get rid of the core housing needs here. The \$36 million that the Minister talked about for the Northern Housing Fund is not going to meet this need. So is the Minister looking at accessing some of this \$570 million in infrastructure funding to help get our housing out of core need? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you. I was just trying to think of the name of the infrastructure of funding that we just announced today with the federal government. That one I believe is called the Building Canada Plan, Phase Two. I may be incorrect, but I believe it's called that.

That infrastructure money that was announced today actually is not to address the housing. The housing infrastructure, the housing money is actually coming through within the National Housing Strategy. I have a FPT in the middle of April, if they don't change the date, because they've changed it a couple of times so far. We'll be looking at that allocation.

So far they've confirmed the \$36 million over 10 years. They are looking at how they can assist the North more. We are advocating so that we can actually get something more equitable to the Nunavut government. They are all still looking at an Aboriginal stream, and we are working with them to try to actually expand that because right now, as they currently have it, it's not going to meet the needs of the Aboriginal governments within our communities.

We've been working diligently with them, but not on our own. It's important to note that we've been working in partnership with the other two territories. We're working in partnership and trying to get our needs to the table so that they recognize that the North is different.

It was a huge movement actually when we got them to state that there was going to be a northern strategy. We just need to push a little bit further and ensure that the needs of the Northwest Territories are met within that. The infrastructure money will be coming

within the National Housing Strategy and the Aboriginal stream. We're still working diligently on making sure the needs of the territories are addressed within that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, that's all great information. I want to thank the Minister for that. I'm looking at the Minister of Infrastructure's statement in the House today. He talks about how there are a number of streams for this federal infrastructure money, some of which you think would be where housing would be eligible, things like Green Infrastructure Fund, Rural and Northern Communities Fund, Arctic Energy Fund. Can any of these funds be accessed and used for housing? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. Martin.

**MR. MARTIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Housing Corporation has been working and collaborating with the Department of Infrastructure regarding a couple of separate pots of funding. We've been working in terms of completing a proposal for Environment and Climate Change Canada's Low Carbon Economy Fund. Within that application, the Housing Corporation is proposed to receive \$4 million, which translates into about \$1 million a year over the next four years. That will be cost-matched by the Housing Corporation, I understand approximately 25 per cent.

The funding associated with this application would support energy upgrades for 128 existing housing units across the Northwest Territories, as well as a conversion of 43 oil fire heating systems in Yellowknife to propane. That's one example of an area that we're working with the Department of Infrastructure on. We're also working on an application or have for this past year regarding INAC's REACHE program. This is the Northern Responsible Energy Approach for Community Heat and Electricity Program. It's a long name. Under that program, the Housing Corporation was supported in an investment for PV and solar system for the Whati seniors complex. The year before that, the Housing Corporation was supported under that same program for a solar system for the 17-plex in Inuvik.

There are a couple of programs out there certainly that we continue to work with the Department of Infrastructure on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. Martin. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, those are great examples of the Housing Corporation getting creative and accessing federal infrastructure programs. I'm really pleased to see that, but are there any concrete plans by the corporation to access the \$570 million in infrastructure funding that was announced just outside in the Great Hall here earlier today? Is the Housing Corporation looking at getting any of that money to carry out the Towards Level Ground that's required, or are we just going to use it all to build roads? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

**HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I agree with the Member that housing needs are important within the Northwest Territories and we need to look at all

accesses, all opportunities for funding. I am hopeful that the National Housing Strategy and the Indigenous Funding will actually address some of the needs within the territories, but I do commit that we will continue to work with the Department of Infrastructure to identify any opportunities that we can use to increase and better maintain the stock of housing that we have in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, okay, I want to encourage the Minister to continue to go after that some of that federal infrastructure money that was announced in the Great Hall to meet our housing needs. Those are critical for our residents.

When I look at our Towards Level Ground report, there are lots of things in here that you would think would be eligible under this federal infrastructure program, things like emergency repair, seniors aging in place retrofits, new unit constructions, all kinds of things in here that are cost-spared at millions of dollars, that are not funded right now. This federal infrastructure money should be accessed for housing. It shouldn't just be for roads, so I want to encourage the Minister to go after some of that money and work with her Cabinet colleagues to make sure that we meet the needs of our residents. That's all I have to say. Thanks, Mr. Chair.