

FOR RELEASE  
January 30, 2017

## **Alternative emergency shelter slated to open**

A partnership between the Government of Yukon and Kwanlin Dün First Nation will add 10 beds to Whitehorse's emergency shelter capacity.

Located in the former St. Elias group home on Fifth Avenue, the shelter is scheduled to open February 3. The temporary shelter will be managed and operated by the Kwanlin Dün Health Centre. It will be open 12 hours a day and will supplement current existing shelter beds in Whitehorse.

The Yukon government is providing \$90,000 in funding to the Kwanlin Dün First Nation for the temporary shelter. The Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Elders Emergency Fund is also contributing \$5,000 to the project. Government of Yukon's Department of Health and Social Services is providing the building.

The project supports the principles of the Housing Action Plan for Yukon.

### **Quotes**

"The opening of this alternative temporary emergency shelter will help address the safety of some of our most vulnerable individuals who have no place to go during these cold winter nights. I am encouraged by how all the partners have come together to support this initiative. The community, the First Nation, the businesses — it is heartwarming to see how we can all respond to care for those in need."

*—Minister of Health and Social Services and Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation Pauline Frost*

"Through the vulnerable people at risk initiative, a partnership is growing between governments, NGOs, people with lived experience, business and community. Together, we are working on an action plan to end and prevent homelessness in Whitehorse. We know shelters are not housing, and safe, appropriate housing options are still needed. Kwanlin Dün is pleased more warm beds will be available for the city's most at-risk citizens this winter."

*—Kwanlin Dün First Nation Chief Doris Bill*

### **Quick facts**

- The shelter will operate until April 30, 2017 as a temporary measure to address a bed shortage. The building will be demolished this summer as planned.
- Additional shelter will become available when the new Salvation Army Centre of Hope opens, which will increase the number of temporary shelter beds from 14 to 25.
- The vulnerable people at risk initiative is a partnership between the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, the City of Whitehorse and the Government of Yukon. It also involves community partners from non-government organizations and businesses, as well as individuals with lived experience.

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