

Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition  
Box 31230  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Y1A 5P7

To the members of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition;

As a society, we have an obligation to ensure that we care for our most vulnerable members. Over the past five years, our government has invested significantly in housing, education, health and social services – all while cutting taxes and increasing tax credits for families and businesses.

We have worked with stakeholders and community organizations to create the Housing Action Plan, the Mental Wellness Strategy, the Local Food Strategy and are supporting the creation of a Homelessness Action Plan currently under development. We know strategies are just the first step, and have committed funding and resources to ensure each continues to be implemented.

The Yukon Party knows that when families are making ends meet, they are putting food on the table. While we know there is more to do, when we look back over the past five years, we are very proud of the many accomplishments we have achieved together, for example:

#### **Making Life Less Expensive for Yukoners**

- Indexed minimum wage to CPI, the first jurisdiction in North America to do so.
- Enhanced the Child Care Subsidy Program, increased child tax benefits, purchased school supplies for every student, established a Caregiver Tax Credit for families caring for a child with a disability, increased the Yukon Seniors' Income Supplement to better support low-income seniors and lowered taxes for Yukon families (the average Yukon family of four is paying \$777 less per year in taxes).

#### **Increasing Community Supports**

- While we recognize it will not be a “silver bullet,” we are extremely proud of the new Salvation Army shelter, which will include a 25-space emergency shelter, drop-in space, increased dining room capacity, enhanced programming and 22 transitional housing units.
- Multi-year funding for the Sally and Sisters, Victoria Faulkner Women’s Centre’s *Safe Place* program, Skookum Jim Friendship Centre’s Women’s Legal Advocate initiative, as examples.
- Changes to the Department of Health and Social Services to help improve the transition for children and youth with disabilities into programs for adults with disabilities.
- Established the Community Safety Committee with the Council for Yukon First Nations, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Association of Yukon Communities, Yukon Women’s Coalition and RCMP to enhance services for children and youth, to work to reduce violence against women, to coordinate efforts supporting vulnerable populations, to better share information on effective community safety initiatives and on new and emerging research.
- Established the Community Addictions Program, helping to provide a continuum of services to all Yukon communities.
- Constructed the new Sarah Steele Facility; invested in the Jackson Lake Healing Centre.
- Funding for the Yukon Distress and Support Line and the crisis information line available to addictions support workers 24/7 through Alcohol and Drug Services.

- Targeted employment initiatives including Bridges Café at the Legislative Building, the Workplace Information and Networking Hub, *Skills for Building*, *Skills for Life*, SingleTrack for Success and the Northern Cultural Expressions Society.

## **Housing**

- Since 2012, built 82 affordable housing units and 96 affordable units for independently living seniors in communities across Yukon.
- Provided funding, land, technical expertise and/or operational funding for the St. Elias residence, Habitat for Humanity, Options for Independence independent living facility, Betty's Haven, Da Daghay Development Corporation, Chief Isaac Corporation, 360° Design Build.
- Expanded the Rent Supplement Program and introduced four new programs to assist low income families acquiring rental housing: the Municipal Matching Rental Construction Program; Rental Quality Enhancement Grants; Accessibility Enhancement Grants; Housing Allowances for Families.
- Extended the Whitehorse affordable family housing program coordinator and expanded programming and supports at the Whitehorse Affordable Family Housing residence.

But we know there is more to do.

A re-elected Yukon Party government would continue to work with service providers, not-for-profit associations and businesses in town to build on our accomplishments and to continue to support all Yukoners in ensuring they have adequate food, shelter, access to services and opportunity for meaningful employment.

Building on our current partnerships and initiatives, a re-elected Yukon Party would:

## **Making Life Less Expensive for Yukoners**

- No tax increases.
- No carbon tax. It is not the right solution for the North and it disproportionately impacts rural and low-income families.<sup>1</sup>
- Make funding permanent to purchase school supplies for every Yukon child.
- Review the childcare subsidy program regularly to ensure it is keeping pace with demand.
- Increase the Caregiver Tax Credit to better support Yukoners who incur expenses providing personal care for family members who are seriously injured, permanently disabled or have a long-term illness, including seniors, adults and children.

## **Community Supports**

- Amend the Social Assistance process to better support permanently disabled Yukoners.
- In consultation with women's groups, increase core funding for women's shelters in Yukon.
- Working with Victoria Faulkner extend funding for the *Safe Places* program for 5 years.
- Invest in early intervention efforts with social-emotional and behavioural vulnerabilities in schools across the territory.

---

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

- Invest \$5 million to support ongoing implementation of the Mental Wellness Strategy, specifically targeting capacity-building initiatives, support in communities and partnerships with First Nations.
- Work with the Yukon Distress and Support Line to explore ways to expand services until 3am or later.
- Continue providing financial support to the Jackson Lake Healing Centre; investigate opportunities to work with other First Nation communities to provide similar healing and aftercare programs.
- Increase operating funds by \$3.5 million per year to ensure the new Sarah Steele Facility can provide the alcohol and drug addiction programs and services required. This funding will support:
  - 300 additional detox admissions per year,
  - increased in-patient capacity, from 90 clients per year to more than 250,
  - 50 beds, or double capacity, so that Yukoners as young as 13 can access support.

### **Housing**

- Continue identifying vacant Yukon Government land for development to ensure an adequate stock of available land in every community.
- Continue to partner with organizations – like the Klondike Development Organization and the Da Daghay Development Corporation to increase affordable housing options.
- Increase private sector participation in the rental market through rent supplement agreements.
- Increased program funding to support Yukoners in making their homes more energy efficient; offer tax incentives for buying local.
- Make legislative and regulatory changes to enable tiny home construction in communities.

### **Food Security**

- Explore opportunities to improve access for farmers bringing their product to market.
- Work with farmers and industry associations to implement the local food strategy.
- Additionally, our platform includes multiple commitments to increase local food production including helping to make agriculture land available and infrastructure support.
- No carbon tax, which will increase food prices at the point of sale.
- Continue to invest in the Cold Climate Research and Innovation work at Yukon College.

Thanks to you, and to all the members of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition for your hard-work and commitment to Yukoners and our community. We are proud of steps we have taken over the past five years in partnership with you, and your member organizations. We know there is more to do, and hope to build on our current accomplishments to make Yukon and even better place to live for all Yukoners.

Sincerely;

Currie Dixon  
Yukon Party Chair