



# NWT Seniors' Society

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October 22, 2022

The Honourable Paulie Chinna  
Minister Responsible for Housing Northwest Territories  
Box 1320  
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2L9  
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Ms. Chinna,

The NWT Seniors' Society was disappointed that you were not able to attend a meeting on October 4, 2022, and hope that you are well again.

The Board of Directors discussed how the system is not working for seniors in the NWT because many of the structures that are intended to support residents are broken. The NWT Seniors' Society is concerned about areas where seniors live in NWT Housing, as well as the funding that is intended to support seniors who own their own homes to age in place.

Firstly, Local Housing Authority Boards, which were originally intended to be a tool, to aid tenants, appear to have become a tool of Housing NWT. Seniors deserve to live in safe, secure, and well-maintained homes or units. We have reports that when some seniors identify maintenance issues to their Authority, they are subject to ridicule, intimidation, harassment, and disrespect followed by threats of eviction. This is totally unacceptable and cannot continue. Seniors cannot and must not live in fear and insecurity or be threatened with becoming homeless this is totally unreasonable. Some Seniors have lived in their homes or units for many, many years with ever-increasing rent for a deteriorating, substandard unit, why are not they offered a "rent to own."

Seniors require support to maintain the homes they own. We have identified areas of concern and potential roadblocks in the application process for Seniors who own homes. Current policy dictates that an applicant must complete the application in the presence of a representative, seniors cannot complete the application individually or online. This approach infanticides seniors reduces their independence, and pride and is full of potential pitfalls. Furthermore, application timelines are not concise and smooth, quite often this results in the available funds being reduced and insufficient to address the applicants' needs. As seniors aging in place save the GNWT money and major capital expense, we would like to recommend that more funds be

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allocated to this program. Seniors Aging in Place must receive immediate approval for all issues addressing safety and security.

The NWT Seniors' Society would like action to be taken to improve the housing for seniors across the NWT. Seniors living in NWT Housing should expect that required maintenance will be completed in a reasonable time to an acceptable standard. Seniors should expect scheduling or notice of repair work to meet a 60-day turnaround. However, all work involving safety and security issues must be addressed on a very high priority basis and must be completed within 30 days.

The NWT Seniors Society would like to take this opportunity to propose two actions that could begin immediately.

1. An accounting of the NWT Housing maintenance and repair funding allocations to the various communities be compared to the actual spending and the number of units actually repaired.
2. Many old, unaddressed maintenance, safety and security issues were identified and reported to the Society by tenants of a Seniors Complex and other units in the community of Tsiigichic. The simple repairs have never been properly addressed they have become major safety and security issues. We are proposing that NWT Housing initiate a pilot project in Tsiigichic to address these repairs and other needs in a very timely manner. Once completed to an acceptable standard we would want a report on what was done and the actual costs so that we could use this information to plan future needs and requirements.

This letter is intended to begin the dialogue with the NWT Legislative Assembly and the Minister Responsible for Housing Northwest Territories. The Board of Directors intends to follow up monthly on the progress of the Minister and Housing Northwest Territories in addressing the housing needs of Seniors whether in Housing NWT units or aging in place.

I look forward to hearing from you by November 3, 2022, to address our concerns and implement the actions we have requested.

Respectfully,



Don Webb  
President, NWT Seniors' Society

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Katrina Nokleby, MLA Great Slave  
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