



News release

For immediate release

Investing in a new Elders complex in Old Crow, Yukon

Old Crow, Yukon, August 6, 2021— The governments of Vuntut Gwitchin, Canada and Yukon are working together to build Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation's first assisted-living complex for Elders in Old Crow, the only fly-in community in the Yukon.

Today, the Honourable Larry Bagnell, Member of Parliament for Yukon, on behalf of the Honourable Maryam Monsef, Federal Minister of Women and Gender Equality and Rural Economic Development; the Honourable Marc Miller, Federal Minister of Indigenous Services; the Honourable Richard Mostyn, Yukon Minister of Community Services; and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm, announced a joint funding for the construction of an Elders complex in Old Crow, Yukon.

The Government of Canada is investing \$9 million in this project through the Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure Stream (RNIS) of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, and \$1.7 million through targeted funding for First Nations housing. The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation is also providing \$3 million towards the "Home of the Wise Ones," which the community will eventually give a Gwich'in name.

The complex includes eight one-bedroom assisted-living units for Indigenous Elders and a one-bedroom unit for a live-in caregiver. It also includes a kitchen, a laundry room, washrooms, and a large indoor common area to be used as a Gwich'in language hub and for family gatherings, activities and crafts.

The three governments acknowledge that strategic infrastructure investments in northern communities must respond to the unique values and lifestyles of Indigenous peoples, as well as the challenges faced by remote communities. For decades in Old Crow, a fly-in village of approximately 250 people, Elders have had to move south to larger cities and away from family supports to access assisted-living options.

Quotes

"This building is significantly more than bricks and mortar; it is the solution to a heartbreaking problem that has affected the Vuntut Gwitchin people for decades. This 'Home of the Wise Ones' will enable our Elders to continue living amongst loved ones and offering the language, the leadership and the teachings we depend on to move forward with our vision for a self-government that is entrenched in the wisdom of the past and carries our culture forward."

Vuntut Gwitchin Government Chief Dana Tizya-Tramm

"Through today's investment in the Vuntut Gwitchin Elders Complex, we are ensuring that Elders in Old Crow can age with a better quality of life. With the support of the Investment in Canada Infrastructure Plan, the Vuntut Gwitchin Elders Complex will help meet housing needs while creating a space that puts people first. Housing like this builds stronger communities and creates spaces for cultural practices to be shared. Our government continues to work in partnership with First Nations governments, municipalities and communities to identify their long-term infrastructure needs and advance local priorities."

Minister of Community Services Richard Mostyn

Our government is proud to support important projects like the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Elders Complex, investing in the well-being of our Elders while planning and responding to their needs and providing them with accessible housing units. Through the Investing in Canada plan, the Government of Canada invests in thousands of infrastructure projects in all areas of the country, creating jobs and strengthening communities at a time when it is needed most.

Member of Parliament for Yukon Larry Bagnell

Access to appropriate housing is critical for quality of life, especially in small Northern fly-in communities. We're pleased to have supported Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in the planning, design and foundation installation for their new Elders' complex, which will provide much needed accessible housing units for Elders in Old Crow.

Federal Minister of Indigenous Services Marc Miller

Quick facts

- Under the *Investing in Canada Plan*, the federal government is investing more than \$180 billion over 12 years in public transit projects, green infrastructure, social infrastructure, trade and transportation routes, and Canada's rural and northern communities.
- \$2 billion of this funding is supporting infrastructure that meets the unique needs of rural and northern communities, like facilities to support food security, local access roads and enhanced broadband connectivity.
- Across Yukon, the Government of Canada has invested more than \$750 million in 115 infrastructure projects through the *Investing in Canada Plan*.
- Across Canada, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic the Government of Canada has contributed \$9.7 billion to 3,500 infrastructure projects.

Associated links

Investing in Canada Plan Project Map:
<http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/map>

Federal infrastructure investments in Yukon:
<https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/prog-proj-yt-eng.html>

Investing in Canada: Canada's Long-Term Infrastructure Plan:
<http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/icp-publication-pic-eng.html>

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