

## **Questions and Answers about the On-the-Land Camp**

### **Where on the Ingraham Trail is the camp located?**

- The camp is located on the Ingraham Trail outside of City limits.

### **How do potential residents apply to live at the camp?**

- Residents who are interested in attending the camp will apply either by themselves or with the support of a service provider. Various service/shelter providers in the city have the applications, but applications are also available at the Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) office located at 4510 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Yellowknife.

### **Is the camp being operated by the GNWT or is it being contracted out?**

- The camp is being operated by an NGO funded by the GNWT through a contribution agreement.

### **Must residents commit to a stay for the entire camp duration? Or can they stay a shorter time?**

- Length of stay is determined by each resident. Residents can stay for the duration of the entire camp or shorter periods. However, once they leave the camp, they will be required to provide a new application if they wish to go back.

### **What type of “programs” are being offered?**

- Counselling supports will be offered 2 days a week and cultural programming 3 days a week. The specifics of these may shift to respond to resident interests.

### **Who is eligible or how is eligibility determined?**

- Yellowknife residents of all genders who are 19 years of age or older, who can commit to an abstinence-based lifestyle, and are currently using shelters or sleeping rough.
- A committee of GNWT staff and NGO representatives who work with this population will review applications to identify residents who are both suitable and likely to succeed in this environment. The primary focus will be on ensuring resident safety, particularly regarding drug and alcohol use, as well as other known medical conditions.

### **Why is it abstinence-based?**

- Outcomes from the Alcohol Strategy and interviews with encampment residents expressed interest in abstinence-based opportunities outside of the city.
- Abstinence-based simply means that they commit to living in a “dry” environment, free of drugs and alcohol consumption.
- Considering the remote location of the camp, and being outside city limits, an abstinence-based approach will create the safest environment for residents and camp operators.

### **What are the estimated costs for operation?**

- Estimated costs are \$642,000; \$635,000 which are third party funds and \$7,000 which come from the GNWT.

**Who reviews and approves applications?**

- A committee of GNWT staff and NGO representatives who work with and know the target population will review applications to identify residents who are both suitable and likely to succeed in this environment.

**Will new options be created for those who cannot commit to abstinence-based living?**

The intent of the On-the-Land camp is to provide an additional safe, warm shelter space for unhoused residents this winter. Those who can commit to abstinence -based living at the camp will free up spaces in the downtown shelters for those who cannot. **What happens to residents after the 10-week period for the camp is over? Where will they go?**

- This is a temporary solution that provides a place for people to stay safe and warm during the winter. The camp is intended to alleviate the pressure on Yellowknife shelters while longer term housing solutions are established.

**Will residents have access to healthcare or other critical services while at the remote location?**

- Programming, and some outreach services will be offered on site. Emergency medical services will be available on site 24/7.

**How will residents be transported to and from the camp, and what provisions are in place for emergencies?**

- Emergency medical services will be available on site 24/7. Transport to and from the camp will be arranged by the NGO operator.

**Has there been consultation with shelters, community organizations, or individuals with lived experience of homelessness to inform this initiative?**

- This initiative is the result of a partnered approach, with the GNWT being one player. There were weekly consultations with NGOs, the City of Yellowknife, GNWT departments and agencies, RCMP, and CIRNAC throughout the summer to work towards finding a solution before the winter.

**Will this camp divert resources from existing homelessness services, and how will those services be supported?**

- No. This camp will be providing additional resources and will not be diverting resources from existing services.

**What measures have been taken to ensure that the camp is sufficiently equipped for the harsh winter conditions in the Northwest Territories?**

- The camp is equipped with insulated dorm style cabins heated by wood stoves, heated outhouses and showers, internet access, and a central insulated kitchen cabin with wood stoves for eating and activities.

- Staff and medical services are on site 24/7 to ensure safety and comfort of residents accessing this sheltering option.

**Are there plans to expand this type of initiative or replicate it in other parts of the Northwest Territories if successful?**

- The GNWT is aware of planning for similar programming that is underway between Indigenous Governments and NGOs and is open to share lessons learned and best practices for their implementation.

**How does the GNWT respond to possible criticisms that the camp might be a temporary fix rather than a comprehensive solution to homelessness?**

- The On-the-Land camp is intended to provide a temporary safe shelter for unhoused residents over the winter while more longer-term housing solutions are established. It is not intended to be a permanent solution to homelessness.