



Affordable Housing & Lot Development

Policy Position of Association of Yukon Communities (2025-26)

Affordable Housing and Lot Development. *Association of Yukon Communities – For
Discussion, April 2025*

1. Background

Access to affordable housing and serviced land is a foundational requirement for healthy, inclusive, and economically resilient communities. Across Canada, housing affordability has emerged as one of the most pressing national challenges. In the North, and particularly in Yukon, this crisis is intensified by a chronic shortage of developable lots, high construction and servicing costs, and a constrained housing supply that lags behind population growth.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) 2025 Federal Election Strategy calls for urgent federal action to enable local governments to fast-track housing and expand non-market housing options. However, the tools required to do this—particularly the provision of serviced land—often lie outside municipal control in Yukon, requiring stronger intergovernmental coordination and intervention.

2. Yukon and Northern Context

The housing crisis in Yukon is defined by:

- A limited supply of fully serviced residential, commercial, and industrial lots;
- Long timelines and complex processes for land development approvals;
- High construction costs and limited local capacity in the building trades;
- Inadequate non-market and supportive housing options for vulnerable populations; and
- Over reliance on senior government programs that may not reflect local market conditions or community needs.

For smaller Yukon communities, housing challenges are also often compounded by limited financial and administrative capacity and jurisdictional fragmentation between municipal, territorial, and Indigenous governments.

3. Policy Position

The Association of Yukon Communities supports a Housing and Land Development Partnership that aligns federal and territorial investment with local housing priorities. This partnership must address not only construction, but also the upstream bottleneck of lot development and the need for long-term planning capacity within municipalities.

4. Recommendations

AYC calls on the federal and territorial governments to:

1. **Expand federal and territorial investment in lot development**, building on the successful Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives, including site preparation, subdivision planning, road access, and utility servicing, especially in rural and remote communities.
2. **Establish a Northern Housing Infrastructure Fund**, with flexible eligibility criteria that include pre-development costs and capacity supports for small municipalities and Indigenous governments.
3. **Accelerate land development timelines** through improved intergovernmental coordination with First Nations, regulatory streamlining, and faster territorial land release processes.
4. **Support the creation and expansion of non-market housing through the Yukon Housing Corporation**, including cooperative, transitional, supportive, and culturally appropriate housing projects.
5. **Integrate housing funding with infrastructure programs**, recognizing that housing readiness depends on roads, water, sewer, and internet connectivity.
6. **Enable long-term land use and housing planning** through regional planning, intergovernmental cooperation, technical assistance, and funding for housing needs assessments.

5. Strategic Considerations

- **Labour and construction costs:** Building in the North remains significantly more expensive than in southern Canada, with longer timelines and limited contractor availability.
- **Climate adaptation and energy efficiency:** New housing and subdivisions must be built to withstand permafrost degradation and extreme weather, while minimizing energy costs.
- **Population growth and service pressure:** Lack of housing constrains workforce attraction, regional economic development, and community well-being.
- **Land tenure and governance complexity:** In many communities, overlapping roles between municipal, territorial, and Indigenous governments create uncertainty in land development processes.

6. Implementation

To enable faster and more coordinated housing and land development, AYC recommends:

- Creating intergovernmental Housing and Land Tables to coordinate planning and investment across Yukon Government, municipalities, and Indigenous governments.
- Piloting turnkey lot development initiatives in smaller communities, bundled with capacity-building and infrastructure support.
- Establishing a Yukon Housing Innovation Fund to support modular, prefabricated, and alternative construction approaches suitable for northern climates.
- Developing a toolkit for municipal housing policy, including zoning reforms, incentive programs, and sample bylaws to reduce barriers to housing development.

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