

Construction boost under housing corp.

More than 1,000 new public units at various stages of completion

by Guy Quenneville
Northern News Services
Nunavut

Boosted by a major injection of federal cash in recent years, the Nunavut Housing Corporation still has a lot of new public housing units to build throughout the territory.

The \$200-million Nunavut Housing Trust, announced in 2006 and administered by the Nunavut Housing Corporation, has been responsible for a large portion of residential building in the territory.

That trust set aside money for the construction of 725 new public housing units in Nunavut.

"It's ongoing until the funds are spent," said Alain Barriault, president of the housing corporation.

As of the end of December, 537 units were 100 per cent built, according Barriault.

An additional 82 units were 90 to 99 per cent complete by the end of 2010.

The target for this fiscal year, 2011-2012, is, as Barriault put it, "Whatever's left."

"Most of them have been tendered and awarded at this stage; there are very few left to be contracted," said Barriault.

The Nunavut Housing Trust isn't the only recent source of federal funding for new housing in the territory.

In 2009, the federal government's Economic Action Plan set aside \$100 million for Nunavut – money for the construction of an additional 285 units over and above the 725 units already planned under the Nunavut Housing Trust.

"Material is in place in all communities and the majority of projects have been tendered and awarded for construction," said Barriault.

"Some began (undergoing)

construction in the fall of 2010 and they are completed or near completion. But quite a large number are having a spring 2011 startup."

Between the Nunavut Housing Trust and Canada's Economic Action Plan, more than a thousand new units are being added to the housing corp.'s stable of public housing.

"There's still a lot of work."

"That's an increase in our public housing stock of about 30 per cent ... a huge investment," said Barriault.

Given that increase, the vast majority of the housing corporation's own 2011-2012 capital spending plan is taken up by renovations to old housing units in need of repairs.

However, the housing corporation is also spending \$2.6 million on staff housing in Clyde River for employees of



Nathaniel Mapsalak, a general labourer, hammers away at the construction site of a new apartment building in Repulse Bay. The building was erected by Naujat Co-operative Ltd. for the Nunavut Housing Corporation last summer.

the soon-to-open Clyde River Cultural Learning Centre, and another \$5.7 million on staff housing for employees of the Rankin Inlet Correctional Facility, scheduled for completion in October.

"We purchased the materials and delivered them by sealift last year. Labour components will be starting this year," said Barriault of the Clyde River staff housing.

Despite the recent boon in public housing unit construction, there's still room for plenty more, according to a housing needs survey conducted last year by the corporation in partnership with Statistics Canada and the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics.

"It basically shows that if you look at all housing in Nunavut and you compared that to the need, we need to

increase the overall housing stock by 70 per cent," said Barriault.

"There's still a lot of work, but we also recognize that not all that growth needs to be in the public housing or rent-geared-to-income housing category."

Additional focus needs to be placed on private rentals and private home ownership, he added.

A True Northern Company



Equipment Rental and Industrial Supply

Rent it or Buy It - We've got it!

Phone: 867-766-6025
Fax: 867-873-4871
ronsauto@theedge.ca
103 Kam Lake Road
Yellowknife, NT X1A 3B5

FROBUILD (2006) LTD.

Doing business with the North
for the North

Providing quality service with a smile
Complete building & home improvement centre
for the do-it-yourselfers & contractors.

No matter the size of your project, Frobuild (2006) Ltd. is the right choice when choosing building materials.

Everything you need for
your home improvement projects

- power tools
- plumbing supplies
- electrical supplies
- light fixtures
- Hardwood flooring
- appliances

...and much more!

Proudly serving the
Eastern Arctic with
quality building products!



PHONE 1-867 979-6800
Fax 1-867 979-6878
Email tpfrobuild@northwestel.net