

Yukon Leadership Summit establishes the 405 Alexander Advisory Committee to improve and strengthen operations at 405 Alexander

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The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations governments met on September 17, for the fourth Leadership Summit since April 2025, marking an important step in strengthening partnership and collaboration for 405 Alexander. The summits led to the formation of the 405 Alexander Advisory Committee, a new body dedicated to improving cultural safety, operations and service outcomes.

Ta'an Kwäch'än Council's Deputy Chief Michelle Telep was appointed co-chair by Yukon First Nations leadership, along with the Yukon government's acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Social Services Stephen Doyle. Membership will include six Yukon First Nations members and three Yukon government members to be determined. The committee will meet monthly to review operations and provide strategic advice to both First Nations leadership and the Minister of Health and Social Services.

The summit also reviewed updates to the newly signed one-year operating agreement with Connective Support Society, which introduces key changes aimed at improving safety and outcomes for guests. These changes reflect recommendations from last year's external evaluation and feedback gathered through previous summits.

Key operational improvements include:

- Program and case management connections and requirements for all guests in the housing units
- Enhanced staffing levels to provide more support within the existing 24/7 coverage
- A dedicated three-person outreach team for case management
- Indigenous hiring expectations and culturally safe practices
- Strengthened safety protocols, reporting mechanisms and guest engagement strategies

A new model introduces structured support programs for all upper-floor units. Clients will now enter into individualized case plans designed to foster independence and community integration.

These updates respond directly to concerns raised by Yukon First Nations leaders, community partners and the public. They also align with jury recommendations from the coroner's inquest and support broader initiatives such as the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan, the Substance Use Health Emergency Strategy and ongoing housing and wellness efforts.

The creation of the 405 Alexander Advisory Committee marks an important step forward in building shared responsibility, collaboration and partnership for 405 Alexander. I want to thank Yukon First Nations for their leadership and every member of the Working Group who helped shape this new approach. These changes, including the renewed agreement with Connective, reflect our joint commitment to better services, stronger partnerships and continuous improvement for those we serve.

Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Health and Social Services

It is an honour to be appointed co-chair of this Advisory Committee by Yukon First Nations leadership. Collaborative relationships like this, between our leadership and the Yukon government, are essential for ensuring strong oversight as we move forward. There are positive changes on the horizon aimed at improving all aspects of operations at the shelter. I see this committee playing a critical role to monitor and help navigate this work. I'm also encouraged that this committee is being established now, so we can maintain momentum as we get ready to welcome a new government following the election of a new Yukon Legislative Assembly in November.

Deputy Chief of Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and Co-chair of the Advisory Committee, Michelle Telep

The tragic deaths of Cassandra Warville, Myranda Tizya-Charlie, Josephine Hager and Darla Skookum at 405 Alexander, along with those we have lost since, have torn at the heart of our communities. We continue to mourn their loss and stand in solidarity with their families. The creation of the 405 Alexander Advisory Committee has the potential to bring meaningful change by increasing oversight by and accountability to Yukon First Nations. Our duty now is to ensure that this change is realized, that the recommendations of the coroner's inquest are fully implemented, and that those who seek refuge at 405 Alexander are safe and cared for. We owe this to Cassandra and Myranda, to Josephine and Darla and to all those who have sought shelter and support at 405 Alexander and were failed.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Chief Pauline Frost, Chiefs Committee on Health Chair

Quick facts

- The new 405 Alexander operations agreement with Connective is valued at \$6.89 million through August 31, 2026, and includes provisions informed by last year's external evaluation, community input and negotiations with the operator.
- An additional \$780,671 is being directed toward food services is in place through March 31, 2026, ensuring uninterrupted daily meals for guests.
- The agreement provides for 24/7 staffing, a three-person outreach team delivering case management and dedicated staff and programming for the 20 upstairs program rooms. Case Managers are being added to the operating model to develop individualized case plans and to generally to connect clients to supports and other services.
- The new model replaces the Housing First approach, transitioning all upper-floor units to a structured support program. The housing units at 405 Alexander will now require clients to enter into program agreements with individualized case plans toward greater independence in the community.
- An overall increase in staff will lead to better oversight, wellness checks and safety, and relational connections, stronger guest management and better enforcement.
- The Council of Yukon First Nations and other First Nations will continue to provide a range of outreach services, supports, programs and services for guests at 405 Alexander.

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