

NDP Caucus News

For Immediate Release

May 27, 2026

Dinn Says AG Report Shows Horizons at 106 Was Optics Without a Plan

NL NDP Leader Jim Dinn (St. John's Centre) says the Auditor General's report on Horizons at 106 transitional housing confirms what the NDP has said from the beginning: while transitional housing is a necessary and effective model to help people move toward stable housing, government's approach to Horizons at 106 was driven by optics instead of a real, coordinated plan to address homelessness.

The report makes clear that while Horizons at 106 has helped people transition into permanent housing, demonstrating that transitional housing can be an important and effective model, the program was brought forward without proper oversight, accountability, or a long-term plan. Dinn says this confirms what he has been saying all along: government's primary focus was removing tent encampments that emerged as a direct result of years of underinvestment in public housing.

"It's clear to me that the former Liberal governments priority was removing tent encampments from the public eye, making it a knee jerk reaction, rather than building the long-term supports and housing solutions people need," said Dinn. "Rather than addressing the root causes of homelessness with a coordinated housing strategy, government acted quickly, a day before the first cruise ship was to arrive for the tourism season, to move those unhoused elsewhere."

"Let's be clear – transitional housing is an effective model, and End Homelessness does great work in our community, but government completely dropped the ball on this initiative by throwing millions of dollars at a Liberal donor to lease the hotel and having no oversight in how it was operating," Dinn continued.

"For years, I have been pushing for real investment in non-profit, community-based housing so that tent encampments wouldn't have to exist in the first place. But instead of building up public housing and supports, we continue to see government favour the private market over taking responsibility for ensuring enough units and services to actually make a difference. This money could have been used to develop a well-planned, accountable model for transitional housing that truly supports people rather than just moving the crisis out of sight."

The NDP continues to push for a fulsome housing plan, offering to work with government to implement the NDP Housing Plan that would see investments in public housing, first-time homebuyers, and creation of a Crown Corporation that would oversee borrowing to building public units.

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