



October 27, 2020

Ms. Lynn Napier
President
Northwest Territories Association of Communities
200 5105 50 STREET
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 1S1

Dear Ms. Napier:

2020 NWTAC Resolution Responses

Please find attached the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) responses to the New, Reaffirmed, and Standing Resolutions approved by the Northwest Territories Association of Communities (NWTAC) at the 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM), held February 27– March 1, 2020 in Inuvik, NT.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) has coordinated this response on behalf of the GNWT. Please contact Mr. Gary Schauerte, Director, Corporate Affairs, MACA at (867) 767-9162 ext. 21035 should you require further clarification.

Sincerely,


Caroline Cochrane
Premier

Attachment

c. Distribution List

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Municipal and Community Affairs

Ms. Sara Brown
Chief Executive Officer
Northwest Territories Association of Communities
sara@nwtac.com.

NEW RESOLUTIONS

2020-01 **Untitled (Municipal Funding Gap and Tuktoyaktuk Coastal Erosion Mitigation)**

Municipal Funding Gap

In August 2019, MACA released a document titled *Focus for the future: A Strategic Response to the Challenge of Community Government Funding*. This document presented a number of ideas to reduce the impact of funding shortfalls on NWT community governments.

The Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories was tabled on February 7, 2020. The GNWT committed to taking steps to reduce the municipal funding gap including:

- Reducing the gap by \$5 million;
- Refining the funding models to ensure continued fairness and transparency; and
- Providing communities with new opportunities to raise additional revenue and reducing or stabilizing the cost of delivering core programs and services.

Since the Municipal Funding Policy Review in 2014, MACA and community governments have been able to quantify and account for the infrastructure assets that support common community government programs and services. This information is providing for improved decision-making and capital planning, enabling community governments to make informed decisions about infrastructure such as balancing the decision to build a new recreational complex with the longer term need to plan for the replacement of high cost infrastructure such as a water treatment plant.

MACA will continue to work with all levels of government to seek funding opportunities to address the gap as well as finding other ways to either increase revenue generation or reduce operating costs.

Tuktoyaktuk Coastal Erosion Mitigation

Funding was received from Crown Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada's (CIRNAC's) Climate Change and Adaptation Program to support the relocation of houses from the critical area on the Tuktoyaktuk peninsula.

The original contribution agreement with CIRNAC identified funds needed to be spent by March 31, 2020. This deadline was extended one year by CIRNAC on January 31, 2020.

This contribution agreement was intended to cover the movement of three homes via ice crossing across the bay. The houses were moved in April 2020. MACA and the Department of Lands are working on the transfer of the new properties to the Hamlet and then transferred to the home owners.

2020-02 Ferry Service on the Mackenzie, Arctic Red and Peel Rivers

Traffic counts on the ferry services across the Mackenzie and Arctic Red Rivers at Tsiigehtchic and across the Peel River at Fort McPherson do not indicate that 24/7 operations are currently required. However, the ferries do provide “on call” services after scheduled hours for the RCMP, health and fire emergency response services during seasonal ferry operations.

The Department of Infrastructure website has been updated with information on the ferry operating schedules for the 2020 season, including measures for passengers in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19: <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/ferries> and <https://www.gov.nt.ca/en/newsroom/ferry-operating-hours-lengthened-response-relaxed-covid-19-restrictions>

2020-03 Dempster Highway Maintenance

Highway No. 8 from Inuvik to Tsiigehtchic is maintained 12 months of the year. One contractor provides Operations & Maintenance (O&M) services from kilometre 142.6 to 178.2 of Highway No. 8, and another provides O&M from kilometre 178.3 to Inuvik. Neither contractor is prohibited from O&M activities while the ferries are not operational.

The Department of Infrastructure website will be updated to indicate that the maintenance of the highway from Inuvik to Tsiigehtchic is continuing year-round.

2020-04 Day Care Funding (Similar to new 2020-10 RA 20-16-03)

Increasing access to early childhood programs in the NWT is a priority for the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE).

As part of the Mandate of the 19th Legislative Assembly, ECE will review and amend existing policies and funding models for early childhood programs.

Funding and resources available for early learning and childcare programs aim to support efforts to improve educational outcomes for all NWT children. ECE supports licensed early learning and childcare programs, including centre-based child day care facilities and family day homes, with funding that includes both grants and contribution agreements.

Funding provided to early learning and childcare programs supports the development of early learning and childcare opportunities in NWT communities.

In 2019-2020, funding streams available to licensed early learning and child care programs included:

- Early Childhood Program Operating Subsidy;
- New Child Care Spaces funding;
- Health and Safety funding;
- Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation funding;
- Provider Enhancement Grant;
- Technology Grant; and,
- Cultural Resource Grant.

Additional resources and professional development opportunities are provided to licensed early learning and childcare programs and early childhood educators who work in these programs. The GNWT is exploring ways to further support this sector.

ECE has allocated \$8.9 million in the 2020-2021 Main Estimates for Early Learning and Child Care. This includes \$1.7 million for Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation. The Canada-NWT Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement provides approximately \$2.5 million in federal funding for a total investment of \$11.4 million in 2020-2021.

2020-05 Day Homes in Social Housing

The Mandate for the GNWT for 2019-2023, identified the goal of increasing seasonal, part-time, and fulltime employment in small communities by amending the NWT Housing Corporation policies to allow appropriate home business opportunities within their units.

Additionally, the Mandate also includes increasing availability and reducing the costs of childcare in communities by amending income assistance and housing programs to allow for the delivery of licensed childcare programs.

With limited options for child-care in small communities, there has been an interest in changing those policies to allow Public Housing tenants to operate a Day-home business in their units. Allowing the operation of private businesses in Public Housing may be construed as subsidizing the operating costs of business operators, providing them an unfair advantage over competitors.

Currently, through its lease agreement, the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC) does not allow Public Housing tenants to operate For-Profit businesses in their Public Housing Units, except for the making of traditional arts and crafts.

As with all family day homes, the residence must meet ECE's licensing requirements. ECE has up to \$10K in Health and Safety funding to address renovations and/or retrofits required compliance with the legislation. ECE requires operators to have business liability insurance.

The NWTHC and ECE are exploring options around operating licensed early learning and child care programs in Public Housing units. The NWTHC is willing to review Public Housing policies and procedures to see what options are available.

2020-06 Water and Sewage Policy

Conversations between MACA and Senior Administrative Officers are not considered consultation or engagement, these conversations are to help inform MACA as the department starts to review changes to municipal funding policies.

MACA will continue to review and work with the NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) and LGANT to better understand the valuation methods and how to best measure changes over time. This will include updates to funding policies to clearly identify how funding is being provide and how the deficit will be calculated on an ongoing basis.

The Department will work with the NWTAC to obtain their input on the preferred split for the \$5 million mandate investment between the 3 core funding pots (Operations and Maintenance, Water & Sewer, and community public infrastructure).

2020-08 A Bridge at the Liard River Crossing Near Fort Simpson /Liidlii Kue

The GNWT welcomes NWTAC comments and suggestions with respect to furthering the studies for crossing the Liard River near Fort Simpson/Liidlii Kue and the Mackenzie River (N'dulee Crossing) with potential for bridge construction. The GNWT's mandates also commits to extending the Mackenzie Valley Highway (MVH) and both of these river crossings will eventually contribute in realizing this mandate.

The Department of Infrastructure (INF) is currently planning baseline LiDAR data acquisition for the summer/fall of 2020 for the Liard River crossing near Fort Simpson/Liidlii Kue. Timing will be subject to access and accommodations for the LiDAR contractor, and restrictions due to COVID-19. INF is also in the process of acquiring engineering consultant services for an initial panoptic study of the terrain; development of bridge hydraulic concepts for specific sites by determining the river regime; and a desktop geotechnical study to understand the topography and the riverbanks at crossing options.

Upon completion of the initial study (estimated first quarter of 2021), INF plans to prepare a business case and funding application for the purpose of further engineering assessments, which may include the following, subject to changes based on the interdependent study results and recommendations:

1. Economic Impact & Cost Benefit Analyses comparing existing ferry and ice bridge operations to permanent bridges with expected operational costs during the bridge service life.
2. Engineering planning study with options analysis. This will include baseline plans for each crossing option with class D estimates, and cost / benefits for each bridge type/crossing location.
3. Climate lens assessment.
4. Detailed geotechnical and hydrological analysis for the short-listed crossing alternatives.

Once the engineering studies and reports are completed, INF will be in a position to initiate a Project Description Report and further the design and delivery process, and seek out funding.

2020-09 Infrastructure Shortfall

The Department will work with the NWTAC to obtain their input on the preferred split for the \$5 million mandate investment between the 3 core funding pots (Operations and Maintenance, Water & Sewer, and community public infrastructure). With this mandate commitment, MACA is taking the opportunity to reassess the 2014 Municipal Funding Policy Review.

Improving student education outcomes to the same level as the rest of Canada is a priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly.

In 2018-2019, the NWT education system was the subject of extensive review processes, both intern and external to the GNWT. During this time, ECE [evaluated its Education Renewal and Innovation \(ERI\) Framework](#), which is the guiding strategic plan for the JK-12 education system. That same year, the [Office of the Auditor General of Canada \(OAG\) reviewed NWT Early Childhood to Grade 12 Education](#). Both the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) audit and ECE's internal evaluation identified common improvements needed in the JK-12 system and program delivery.

The OAG Report and the internal ECE evaluation both found:

- key achievement gaps have persisted, especially for students in small communities;
- a need to focus on more equitable programming;
- system that is overstretched and needs to refocus its priorities; and
- need to monitor our system to determine whether the work we are undertaking is making any difference to close the achievement gap.

The OAG report and ECE evaluation also had common recommendations for improvement. These improvements included changes to the approach to funding NWT education bodies and schools, changes in program delivery, and continued monitoring and adjustments to the NWT Inclusive Schooling Directive and Policy.

ECE is developing an Action Plan in response to the recommendations received from both reports. However, the NWT education system operates in a complex, shared governance environment guided by the *NWT Education Act*, which has not seen major revisions or updates since the 1990s. As a critical first step toward improving student outcomes, ECE will undertake a major legislative modernization project as committed in the Mandate of the GNWT, 2019-2023.

ECE has initiated the research, planning and analysis required to develop a new *Education Act*, with a view to bringing forward a Legislative Proposal in the 19th Legislative Assembly.

There are several components to the project, including:

- Legislative Proposal research and analysis;
- Communications and Consultation Strategy; associated engagement and reporting;
- Indigenous Government Engagement Strategy; associated engagement and reporting; and,
- Produce Legislative Proposal for submission to Cabinet.

Concurrent with the work on the Legislative Proposal, ECE will implement its Action Plan in response to the OAG review and ERI evaluation to improve student outcomes. This Action Plan be implemented in the 2020-2021 school year and will include a more streamlines strategic planning process for the JK-12 education system are working towards the same goals and reporting publically on the same performance indicators.

Advancing Universal Child Care by increasing the availability and affordability of child care is a priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly.

The *2030 Early Learning and Child Care Strategy* (Strategy) will establish a new roadmap for the GNWT and its partners to incrementally increase the availability of early learning and child care in communities by working with partners to create new spaces where there is a demonstrated need and communities are able to sustain programming that meets those needs.

ECE is committed to working with partners to support communities to tailor early learning and child care programs to meet community needs. Recommendations will be provided to inform the development the *Strategy* which will advance steps towards a proposed model of universal child care for the NWT. The Strategy is expected to be complete in Fall 2021.

ECE is aware that infrastructure costs are a significant barrier to the development of spaces for licensed early learning and child care programs and is committed to looking at additional ways to address quality and accessibility. ECE has identified an Early Learning Infrastructure Fund with a budget of \$500K to help address this barrier.

Through the renewal of the *Canada-NWT Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Bilateral Agreement* the GNWT is working to maximize support available through federal funding and will prioritize and address areas of greatest need.

The *Feasibility Study of Universal Affordable Daycare in the NWT* (2015) identified barriers to advancing universal child care in the NWT including:

- Doubling the number of child care spaces (Study identified need for 56% increase in licensed spaces)
- Doubling the present number of early childhood educators (Study identified the need for an additional 220-299 staff)
- Developing infrastructure to provide child care spaces (Study identified a cost of \$8 - \$15M capital investment)

ECE has already been working to address these barriers by:

- Providing increased funding to support the creation and sustainability of licensed early learning and child care programs.
- Providing a variety of post-secondary and professional learning opportunities and incentives, including Aurora College's ELCC Diploma, Early Childhood Scholarships and Staff Grants.
- Exploring the extent to which the NWT can support capital investments in infrastructure for licensed early learning and child care programs.

- Meeting with community members to determine early learning and child care needs in communities and consideration of options to address the availability of early learning and child care programs.

2020-12 Reinstatement of the Public Boards of Aurora College & the NWT Power Corporation

The GNWT committed to transform Aurora College into a polytechnic university. This will require changes to the Aurora College governance system to ensure it is effective, efficient, sustainable, and operating with the appropriate level of autonomy from the GNWT.

New legislation will be introduced to allow the new board to lead Aurora College at arm's length and then to run a degree-granting polytechnic university at arm's length.

An implementation plan describing major transformation activities, including timelines around the reinstatement of an Aurora College Board of Governors will be released later this fall. The GNWT has engaged with Indigenous government partners, key stakeholders and the public about a proposed governance model to inform the development of proposed amendments to the *Aurora College Act* that will in turn allow for the reinstatement of Board Governance at Aurora College at the right time in the transformation process.

The re-instatement of public boards for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) and Aurora College is the long-term goal of the GNWT. It cannot be rushed and there is careful planning that is required. For NTPC, consideration is being given to options—for the governance of the NTPC, including the timing of a new or reconstituted board.

The transformation of Aurora College into a polytechnic university is a critical step for the evolution of post-secondary education in the NWT. The success of that system is dependent on the new polytechnic university being effective and sustainable. This means—

that the governance of the new polytechnic must be properly planned and implemented.

2020-13 Reinstatement of Local Health Authorities

The current model with Regional Wellness Councils offers communities and regions the opportunity to offer input and have a say in the development of a territorial system to ensure regional needs and priorities are reflected.

The Chair of the Regional Wellness Council sits on the NWT Health and Social Services Leadership Council and can advocate and make recommendations and decisions for change/actioning at the territorial level.

One of the primary reasons for moving to this current model was that under the old system of community/regional boards of management, each community/regional board developed at its own pace but it also resulted in uneven level of services, extreme challenges in recruiting personnel, and fragmentation of the entire health and social services system. Additionally, communities and regions lacked the opportunities to have a say in the development of territorial programming on issues like medical travel and addictions services.

Community support for the Regional Wellness Council and, in turn, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Leadership Council will strengthen the progress towards system transformation and ensure consistency of health and social services delivery to every resident in the NWT.

2020-14 New Electoral District

At this time during the 19th Legislative Assembly, the GNWT is not prepared to review the process for dividing regions into further electoral ridings. Members of the Legislative Assembly review and adopt the current government's cabinet conventions, along with other legislative procedures, before every territorial leadership committee. This process was reviewed at the beginning of the 19th Assembly, and may be a convention that future Assemblies wish to review while considering the requests of their constituents.

2020-15 Lifespan of Resolution

The GNWT values the contributions of the NWTAC to the development and operation of community governments and makes every effort to address resolutions as priorities allow, and would support and encourage the membership of the organization in their review of the significant number of resolutions which have been put forward during the annual AGMs. This effort will assist GNWT departments to ensure that the annual resolutions reflect the priorities of the membership, help to eliminate duplication in content, and confirm their continued relevance to community government interests and best practices.

2020-16 Building Code Act

Concerns about the absence of a robust code compliance system in the NWT to verify building safety for public occupancy in relation to the National Building Code & National Fire Code have been raised on several occasions, by municipal authorities, professional associations and the NWTAC.

The GNWT is supportive of examining this issue with a view to improving harmonization among related regulatory functions and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

MACA has committed to a review of the *Fire Prevention Act* (FPA) which includes the GNWT's regulatory authority in this area through MACA's plan review function. Stakeholder engagement conducted in 2017 on the FPA identified the plan review function as a topic requiring a focused dialogue.

MACA is proposing to conduct a review of the *Fire Prevention Act* and the *Fire Prevention Regulations* during the term of the 19th Legislative Assembly. In considering the FPA, consideration needs to be given to the scope of the review - particularly with regards to broader building standards and the NWT regulatory compliance framework. A thorough understanding of the problem is crucial in helping to identify viable solutions.

2020-17 Presumptive Coverage for Work-Related Psychological Injury (including PTSD)

The WSCC actively monitors and considers policy trends within the worker's compensation industry including specific issues such as presumptive coverage for work-related psychological injury. Although the terminology "presumptive" is not specifically incorporated into the WSCC Policy on Psychiatric and Psychological Disorders (03.09), the resulting application of the policy already provides for outcomes in line with other jurisdictions that specifically prescribe a presumption.

For psychiatric and psychological disorders to be eligible for WSCC compensation they must be work-related, and they must be diagnosed by the most current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). To ensure protection of Human Rights, all injuries are treated fairly regardless of being physical and/or psychiatric or psychological in nature. The WSCC regularly reviews its policies. The policy regarding psychiatric and psychological injuries was reviewed and updated in 2014, and again in December of 2017, to ensure fairness and alignment with Territorial Human Rights Legislation. To ensure that emerging issues are considered, the WSCC sets out a five-year policy review schedule. As per that schedule, Policy 03.09 Psychiatric and Psychological Disorders is again set to be reviewed by the Governance Council in September of 2022.

All jurisdictions with presumptions require that the diagnosis of a psychological injury or PTSD be made using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual or Mental Disorders (DSM). Employment criteria are also considered under their presumptions. Some jurisdictions limit the application of presumption to certain categories of workers (e.g. First responders, front-line workers, or emergency-response workers), others extend the coverage to any worker covered by their Acts who is exposed to a work-related traumatic event. Specific wording of presumption in some jurisdictions simply states that provided the diagnostic and employment criteria are met, a worker's PTSD is presumed to be a work-related injury, unless the contrary is proven on the balance of probabilities. For others, the presumptive language explicitly includes the requirement that the worker's condition has to have arisen in response to an individual traumatic event or a series of such events.

The coverage provided by the WSCC for psychiatric and psychological disorders is not restricted to any category of worker, but is equally provided to all workers under the *Workers' Compensation Act*. Our coverage, like other jurisdictions, is dependent on the psychiatric or psychological disorder being work-related and diagnosed through the DSM. These coverage factors already exist within WSCC policy regardless of the specific title "presumptive coverage".

2020-18 Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in the NWT

In January 2020, the Territorial Committee on Problematic Substance Use was formed. The mandate of this committee is to develop a comprehensive response to the ongoing issues related to problematic substance use including a deliverable of a whole-of-government Alcohol Strategy. A whole-of-government approach addresses areas of responsibility held by the other GNWT departments.

The Committee held a full-day workshop in March, to set the direction of an agreed upon approach towards the development of an alcohol strategy specific to the needs of NWT residents.

Next steps will be to use findings and feedback from the workshop to inform community engagement plans. This phase will occur in 2020. Once community feedback is collected, a preliminary draft alcohol strategy can be developed.

2020-19 Support for Federal Mandate

The Government of the NWT supports NWTAC's efforts to ensure the Northwest Territories receives maximum benefit from federal initiatives and programs, and will continue to collaborate and with the federal government and advocate for key shared priorities, including the implementation of the Arctic and Northern Policy Framework, economic diversification, infrastructure funding, hydroelectricity and clean energy, housing, childcare, food security, implementation of the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the calls to justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

2020-20 Review and Amendment of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act, R.S.N.W.T. 1988, c.50 (Supp.), as amended

MACA has identified three large pieces of legislation to prioritize for review and significant amendment during the 19th Assembly. These are, in order of anticipated priority: the *Fire Prevention Act*, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, and the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*.

In addition to MACA-led initiatives, community governments have expressed a strong interest in the *Fire Prevention Act* and the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. MACA intends to prioritize these legislative initiatives with the greatest stakeholder interest before considering the addition of another large legislative project.

2020-21 Winter Roads

The Northwest Territories is experiencing numerous changes and impacts due to a rapidly warming climate, and there are many knowledge gaps that need to be better understood and addressed. Overarching action areas required to improve climate change knowledge include the planning, management and use of information, along with enhanced research and monitoring networks. Using the best available information to improve the understanding of current and future impacts of climate change based on local, national and scientific knowledge will be paramount.

In recent years, the GNWT has been working with other levels of government as well as academic institutions and researchers on numerous research and monitoring projects targeted at addressing climate change knowledge gaps.

INF is involved in the construction and monitoring of test sections along the NWT highway system in order to understand and mitigate climate change effects on transportation infrastructure. For example, four test sections were constructed and monitored on Highway No. 3, and two test sections were constructed and continued to be monitored on Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway.

These test sections are a part of a research and development program intended to evaluate better rehabilitation techniques for infrastructure constructed on warm, ice-rich, discontinuous and continuous permafrost. During construction, each test section was instrumented with thermistor cables connected to data loggers. The data downloaded from data loggers have been used to relate climate change effects and develop mitigation techniques.

We will continue to work with our partners to understand, adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change on transportation infrastructure.

2020-22 United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation

As described in the GNWT's 2019-2023 Mandate, the GNWT is committed to further identifying, prioritizing and strengthening key actions to further implement UNDRIP work with Indigenous governments, including creating and implementing an action plan that identifies changes required in GNWT legislation and policies to best reflect the principles set out in UNDRIP. The GNWT is anticipating developing a Terms of Reference (TOR) for a Working Group with Indigenous governments in 2020.

RA-20-19-01 Taltson Hydro Project

The Taltson Hydro Expansion is a key priority for the 19th Legislative Assembly that supports the goals and objectives of the *2030 Energy Strategy, Petroleum Resources Strategy* and the *Climate Change Strategic Framework*.

The GNWT secured \$18 million in funding from the Government of Canada in March 2020 to pursue the project over the next three years, in collaboration with Indigenous partners.

Establishing the commercial structure, defining a customer market, conducting public engagement and completing a project definition will be part of this work going forward.

RA-20-19-02 Duty to Consult

The duty to consult with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations is a GNWT responsibility. Municipalities can aid the GNWT's consultation process by engaging with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations early in their planning processes. The GNWT encourages the municipalities of the NWT to continue their good efforts of having strong working relationships with the Indigenous people of the NWT.

By having continual engagement and strong working relationships with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, municipalities can help identify and resolve potential issues, minimize future issues, and explore opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

Municipal engagement will aid the GNWT consultation efforts helping to ensure a well informed and timely consultation process. No amendment of GNWT legislation is required for municipalities to continue their ongoing engagement efforts. MACA requires communities to host public meetings as part of compliance with the *Community Planning Act*, the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, the *Charter Communities Act* and the *Hamlets Act*.

The Department is currently completing consultation under s.35 on a number of planning documents with impacted Indigenous Governments. MACA is also completing consultation on a boundary change request submitted by the City of Yellowknife.

RA-20-19-03 Alternative Voting Methods

A legislative review of the *Local Authorities Elections Act* (LAEA) has not been identified as a priority during the 18th Legislative Assembly and has not been put on MACA's list of legislative priorities.

As of February 2020, phone voting in municipal elections is not done in any Canadian jurisdiction. Most Canadian jurisdictions do not have online voting, with the exception of some municipalities in Ontario. Individuals in these Ontario municipalities register for online voting. They are sent PIN numbers at a cost of \$2.00 per online voter (mailing costs). Ontario elections take longer than the 49 day calendar used in NWT municipal elections to allow for PINs to be distributed.

MACA will consider these types of alternative voting methods along with other jurisdictions and will refer to this resolution at which time the LAEA is up for review.

RA-20-19-04 Cannabis Revenue Sharing

The GNWT share of the 2018-19 federal excise tax revenues was \$111,208. The GNWT share of the 2019-20 federal excise tax revenues was \$167,743. The GNWT would encourage the NWTAC to provide the specific incremental costs faced by communities resulting from the legalization of cannabis.

RA-20-19-05 Post - Secondary Education Transformation

The GNWT has committed that all Aurora College programs will be reviewed, with the Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education as the priorities. A new Academic Program Review Framework based on best practices in program review, and which meets the standards required to establish degree programs, has been implemented. The Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education programs are being reviewed through this new process. Both reviews are expected to be complete in 2021. Future program decisions and the development of new or revised curricula will be informed by the results of the reviews.

RA-20-19-06 Carbon Pricing

The NWT Carbon Tax and rebates were introduced September 1, 2019. Cost of Living Offset (COLO) payments were issued in October 2019 and April 2020. Each payment was \$52 for individuals and \$60 for each child.

Starting in July 2020, annual COLO amounts will increase to \$156 for an individual and \$180 per child and payments will be issued quarterly. Single individuals in the NWT will receive their full annual payment in July, because their quarterly payments would be less than \$50.

Rebates are as follows:

- Heating Fuel Rebate – 100 % rebate for residents, governments and business entities
- Electrical Power Producers Rebate – 100% rebate of carbon tax paid for generating electricity for distribution. This rebate will insulate municipalities from increased electricity costs that would otherwise result from the carbon tax on diesel used to generate electricity.
- Large Emitters: 72% rebate of carbon tax paid and 12% in individual accounts for GHG reducing investments.
- The GNWT continues to prioritize investments in alternative energy options to provide reliable, affordable alternatives to carbon-intensive fuels for communities and businesses.

- The Department of Finance intends to provide an Annual Report on carbon pricing, including: raised revenues, rebate expenditures, and the investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This report will be included in the Climate Change Strategy Action Plan Report.

RA-20-19-07 Aurora College Transition to Polytechnic University

The GNWT has committed that all Aurora College programs will be reviewed, with the Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education as the priorities. A new Academic Program Review Framework based on best practices in program review, and which meets the standards required to establish degree programs, has been implemented. The Social Work Diploma and Bachelor of Education programs are being reviewed through this new process. Both reviews are expected to be complete in 2021. Future program decisions and the development of new or revised curricula will be informed by the results of the reviews.

RA-20-19-09 Multi- Year Funding

MACA adheres to the provisions of the Community Government Funding Policy, and the Financial Administration Act to guide the administration of municipal funding agreements.

Under this legislative and policy base, multi-year agreements are permissible, and MACA has used these in the past to administer funding with non-government organizations.

It is essential to note, that any funding allocations contained within a multi-year funding agreement are always subject to the approval of the Legislative Assembly through the process to approve annual Budget. Accordingly, any commitments to future year funding can always be changed through the budget approval process, so no future year funding should be viewed as a formal commitment to fund.

At best, multi-year agreements provide a basis for community governments to plan for the future. However, should funding allocations for future years be included in a multi-year agreement, these numbers could always change, for example through Forced Growth increases. As such, community governments could only plan notionally on any future year allocations.

MACA would be prepared to discuss the potential for multi-year funding agreements with the NWTAC on this basis. It would be important to understand the community government operational needs within this context.

For any programs that are administered through an annual call for applications, multi-year funding agreements would not be possible.

RA-20-19-10 Climate Change Adaptation

Building resilience and adapting to a changing climate remains a priority for the GNWT, and is reflected in the new GNWT Mandate 2019-2023.

All GNWT departments are cooperating to implement the 2019-2023 Action Plan. ENR continues to work closely with the NWTAC on climate change adaptation actions.

In 2020, ENR began funding an annual Community Climate Change Award valued at \$5,000, to recognize a community that has shown leadership on climate change adaptation, and to encourage communities to do the same. An annual report on the 2019-2023 Action Plan will be available in fall 2020.

RA-20-19-10-A Climate Change Models and Forecasting for Each NWT Community

Accurate climate change models and forecasts are needed to support long-term community planning. ENR is working with the governments of Nunavut and Yukon, as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada, to seek federal funding to establish a northern climate hub that would increase our ability to model climate change.

RA-20-19-10-B Permafrost

As the NWTHC is completing each of the community housing plans, the NWTHC is engaging with community proponents on their knowledge of known areas of soil erosion or permafrost degradation.

The NWTHC also continues to work with other GNWT departments as well as scientific agencies that may have information on known erosion or permafrost degradation areas.

The NWTHC continues to utilize adjustable foundation designs such as space frames, pads and wedges and screw jack systems where appropriate.

The NWTHC also relies on other GNWT departments as well as scientific agencies to gather and analyze information on known erosion or permafrost degradation areas to determine possible solutions when constructing or repairing NWTHC assets.

In terms of adaptation, the NWTHC utilizes where appropriate, adjustable foundation designs such as space frames, pads and wedges and screw jack systems.

MACA provides capital public infrastructure (CPI) funding to communities along with advisory services in the area of budgeting for operations as well as planning and implementation of capital projects. There are no barriers for communities to set aside monies for planned and unplanned capital projects and we encourage communities to do so.

MACA will continue to work with other GNWT departments to promote awareness and education regarding impacts of permafrost loss. MACA supports the Northern Infrastructure Standards Initiative which does create a standard for drainage. MACA will also continue to work with Public Safety Canada to support changes in funding programs that support planning efforts for disaster mitigation and adaptation.

Securing funds to support this program is a priority for ENR. Federal funding will be pursued to support the capacity of the territory to better adapt to climate change.

Providing relevant hazard mapping outreach and training tools to support communities with their hazard mapping priorities is necessary. The advisory team will further discuss and plan for the development opportunities.

ITI is leading a regional (7.5 km pixel scale) terrain sensitivity mapping project. This work will inform the community hazard mapping program.

MACA will also continue to work with Public Safety Canada to encourage changes in funding programs that support planning efforts for disaster mitigation and adaptation.

RA-20-19-10-D Governance and leadership on climate change in the GNWT

The 19th Legislative Assembly mandate states one of the GNWT's priorities is to strengthen the government's leadership and authority on climate change. This includes:

- Implementation of the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and 2030 Energy Strategy.
- Establishing an NWT Climate Change Council in 2020 (see 20-19-10-E).
- Advocating for NWT perspectives at national and international organizations and forums, and
- Working with Nunavut and Yukon to develop a joint statement on climate change and the north.

The GNWT continues to move forward on its climate change action plan as the territory emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. Most actions remain on-track, but some will be slightly delayed as we navigate how to work with our partners while following the orders of the Chief Public Health Officer.

The Governments of the NWT, Nunavut and Yukon are developing a pan-northern statement on climate change, to highlight significant climate change concerns and the need for federal government support to address these concerns. The GNWT will be engaging with Indigenous governments and organizations on this draft statement in 2020.

RA-20-19-10-E Climate Change Secretariat or Network

ENR is currently working towards establishing an NWT Climate Change Council in 2020, to include Indigenous governments and organizations, community governments, and other external partners to support the GNWT in improving coordination and communication for climate change.

A review of approaches and models used in territories, provinces and other jurisdictions, as well as current structures in place for guiding committees, councils and advisory bodies in the NWT is underway. ENR has begun to engage with Indigenous governments and organizations, community governments, and other external partners to establish Council.

Through the Knowledge Agenda Action Plan, the GNWT plans to engage with communities on a territory-wide research agenda for the NWT. Many actions have already been taken to support the objectives of the Knowledge Agenda Action Plan.

In August 2019, GNWT staff assisted with organizing the Tuktoyaktuk Science Day – which brought researchers from across Canada to present results of their work to the community and provided an opportunity to hear about research priorities directly from community leaders.

The GNWT, Aurora College and ArcticNet are working together to establish research positions in three NWT communities which will be designated to grow knowledge-based programs and help develop knowledge capacity throughout the NWT.

The GNWT is also working to improve the ways in which researchers communicate the results of their work back to decision-makers and communities in the NWT. Several publicly available information management tools are currently under development to address this need including:

- A list of departmental contacts who can provide information to communities on various areas of research supported by the GNWT;
- A common reporting mechanism for GNWT and external researchers supported by GNWT to summarize program results in plain language; and
- Web-based tools which highlight where research into GNWT is conducting and supporting research which addresses Knowledge Agenda priorities.

RA-20-19-10-G Bridging the Community Capacity Gap

Appropriate capacity is needed to support and sustain the implementation of the 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan, both within the GNWT and within Indigenous and community governments.

The GNWT continues to actively explore internal and external funding possibilities to address the comprehensive needs of the NWT communities in adapting to climate change.

In November 2019, ENR and MACA co-delivered a climate change course through the School of Community Government for Indigenous and community government staff. Participants provided positive feedback on the training and the GNWT intends to deliver the course again in 2020. ENR will review options for course delivery in light of restrictions due to COVID-19.

The Community Government Funding Policy provides the authority to Councils to determine their own priorities and MACA has support for strategic planning and budgeting. Communities are encouraged to assess their needs in the areas of climate change and sustainability. MACA also promotes this approach through the capital planning process. The NWT has developed a climate change strategy with specific areas that MACA is working with communities on, specifically the areas of emergency management, capacity building and infrastructure planning.

The new territorial *Emergency Management Act* requires communities to update their emergency plans annually. MACA works with community governments to update plans and to improve their capacity through workshops and table-top-exercises at a community's request. The GNWT's emergency management approach incorporates key considerations associated with climate change.

The GNWT also supports community governments who are developing projects to address specific climate changes risks by supporting specific mitigation options. MACA continues to work with Public Safety Canada by encouraging changes in funding programs that support planning efforts for disaster mitigation and adaptation.

MACA also continues to support implementation of the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework. Related activities in the Strategy include, support for improved community participation in research and monitoring initiatives, the completion of hazard mapping for vulnerable communities, increased monitoring of climate change impacts on community shorelines, transportation system assets and building foundations, and improved wildfire suppression planning and adoption of FireSmart principles in communities.

RA-20-19-10-I Adaptation Plans

Adaptation planning needs to be part of community planning, emergency plans and operations and maintenance procedures. ENR is working with internal and external partners to develop tools and resources to support community climate change adaptation.

One of the key ways the GNWT is supporting communities with adaptation planning is by developing community hazard maps. ENR established an advisory team to guide the development of the hazard mapping program and NWTAC is a key participant (see response to resolution 2019-10-C). A hazard mapping pilot project is underway in Tuktoyaktuk. This pilot will inform future hazard mapping in other at-risk communities. Federal funding will continue to be pursued to increase the number of communities conducting hazard mapping.

Additionally, ENR, MACA and other partners have assisted communities with adaptation planning, including an NWT-wide infrastructure risk assessment for community and GNWT-owned infrastructure, the creation of a community development guidance document in partnership with NWTAC incorporating climate change considerations, and delivering a climate change mainstreaming course for municipal planning processes.

Federal, territorial and other funding will continue to be pursued to support communities to plan for their climate change adaptation needs.

The GNWT has also funded NWTAC to develop an advocacy video on community climate change concerns and needs. This video will be used to advocate for funding needed to address climate change in the NWT.

The GNWT also supports community governments who are developing projects to address specific climate changes risks. MACA continues to work with Public Safety Canada by encouraging changes in funding programs that support planning efforts for disaster mitigation and adaptation.

The 2030 Energy Strategy, the Energy Action Plan, and the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework were developed through extensive joint public engagements that included regional workshops with residents, communities, businesses, Indigenous governments and other stakeholders across the NWT.

GNWT-led projects are primarily prioritized in the 2030 Energy Strategy in terms of cost effectiveness such as greenhouse gas reduced per dollar invested. There are other factors as well, and the GNWT has to balance competing and often shifting factors in its decision making. The GNWT also consider the following factors for GNWT-led projects:

- Community and Indigenous government engagement, participation, involvement and approval
- Energy security and reliability
- Energy affordability
- Project complexity and likelihood of success
- Stakeholder and community interests and needs

The GNWT will be annually updating its three-year Energy Action Plan based on changing circumstances to transparently inform the public. The GNWT will also report annually on progress to remain accountable. We welcome input from communities about their priorities and what they would like to see in the Energy Action Plan.

The GNWT undertakes appropriate community engagement before major energy projects are advanced. GNWT will always attempt to accommodate a community's request to take part in a GNWT or utility led project.

If communities wishes to lead their own energy projects, there is a significant amount of funding available through the GNWT's Government GHG Grant Program, the Arctic Energy Alliance community funding, and through the Community Energy Efficiency Upgrades funded under federal Infrastructure programs administered through Municipal and Community Affairs, as well as through federal sources such as Natural Resources Canada and CanNor.

The GNWT and the Arctic Energy Alliance currently take an active role in supporting communities in reaching their energy-related goals and objectives. If a community wishes to apply for GNWT and Arctic Energy Alliance funding, the community can ask for support and it will be provided, including advice on which fund would be most appropriate.

Should a community wish to apply for federal funding, the GNWT and the AEA are available to provide advice on where to apply and letters of support, as well as some technical support as appropriate for both the application process and for project implementation.

During the term of the 18th Legislative Assembly, Municipal and Community Affairs successfully brought forward amendments to more legislation than any other previous term of the government.

MACA has engaged with community governments on future legislative priorities during the NWT Association of Communities (NWTAC) Annual General Meeting (AGM) on February 15-18, 2018 and during the Local Government Administrators of the NWT (LGANT) conference on October 1-4, 2018.

While these efforts did not identify clear priorities for future amendments to legislation, MACA is interested in pursuing legislative amendments that will address the largest issues facing community governments.

The capacity of MACA to bring forward legislative amendments will always be restricted. An important element of any legislative initiative is the full engagement with community governments at a pace at which they can provide meaningful input to both issue identification and potential solutions. Accordingly, to update all legislation would exceed both the capacity of MACA, as well as the community governments that the legislation serves.

MACA has identified three large pieces of legislation to prioritize for review and significant amendment during the 19th Assembly. These are, in order of anticipated priority: the *Fire Prevention Act*, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, and the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*.

In addition to MACA-led initiatives, community governments have expressed a strong interest in the *Fire Prevention Act* and the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. MACA intends to prioritize these legislative initiatives with the greatest stakeholder interest before considering the addition of another large legislative project.

RA-20-18-01 Energy

The GNWT has released the final NWT *2030 Energy Strategy*, which is the GNWT's long term plan to guide the development of affordable, secure and sustainable energy for transportation, heat, and electricity, to support energy efficiency and conservation, and to promote renewable and alternative energy solutions for the NWT.

In 2013, the GNWT created a Power Systems Plan that may be of interest that still forms the basis of much of the work undertaken in the electricity system. It can be found at:

https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/sites/inf/files/a_vision_for_the_nwt_power_system_plan_-_december_2013.pdf

RA-20-18-03 Wildfires

ENR, MACA and communities continue to update the status of wildfire risk and occurrence to support emergency management organizations' planning and preparedness activities.

ENR continues to provide advice and recommendations to communities to assist to reduce the risk from wildfire. 29 Community Wildfire Protection Plans have been updated.

ENR has met with most communities to talk about their updated plans, and continues to engage communities to implement the recommendations. ENR also provides available FireSmart funding to support community protection. Information on available funding and the application process is available from regional ENR offices and on the ENR website.

Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) helps community governments improve community emergency management capacity, through emergency planning workshops and table top exercises, which consider hazards relating to wildfires.

Work is underway to improve integration of wildfire hazard assessment and community emergency planning with a view to better safeguarding municipal infrastructure and residents, and ensuring effective response measures.

Community governments may also use federal gas tax funds, as well as Community Public Infrastructure Funding to undertake new firebreak initiatives which are supported by a FireSmart Plan.

RA-20-18-06 MACA Funding Formula

MACA will be working with the NWTAC and community governments to update the Community Public Infrastructure Policy (CPI). The CPI Policy provides capital funding to communities along with advisory services in the area of budgeting for operations as well as planning and implementation of capital projects. There are no barriers for communities to set aside monies for planned and unplanned capital projects and we encourage communities to do so.

RA-20-18-06 Urban Indigenous Definition

The GNWT recognizes that the definition of Urban Indigenous People can be complicated when working with the federal government, particularly given the 'distinction-based' approach. This issue has been raised with a number of federal departments by the GNWT for the very reasons set out by the NWTAC. We continue to work with our federal partners to try to seek both an acceptable definition, and it does appear that they are shifting in some areas such as around the release of additional COVID-19 funds for non-Reserve populations.

RA-20-18-08 Secondary Access Road to Communities

The \$140 million in funding that was committed to the Mackenzie Valley Highway (MVH) in June 2018 by the federal and territorial governments is being used for three projects:

1. Great Bear River Bridge (GBRB)
2. Mount Gaudet Access Road (MGAR)
3. MVH Environmental Assessment (EA)

The GBRB is the last bridge to be installed in the section of the winter road from Wrigley to Norman Wells. Although the GBRB would not currently improve access to any community, in the long term it will be an important link in the MVH, initially providing an all-season link between Tulita and Norman Wells and eventually to communities further north. Pending receipt of environmental authorizations, construction could commence as early as 2021 and would take approximately 3 years.

The MGAR is a road that will extend the current all-season MVH from near Wrigley to a location close to Mount Gaudet, about 15 km north of Wrigley. As with the GBRB, the MGAR will not provide increased community access but it is an incremental step in connecting Tulita and other Sahtu communities to the all-season highway system. It is intended that construction of the MGAR will start in winter 2021 and take 3 years.

The MVH EA is currently underway with the scope of the project being the upgrading of the winter road to an all-season from Wrigley to Norman Wells. INF will prepare and submit the Developer's Assessment Report and following the completion of the EA and regulatory authorizations, construction of additional segments of the all-season road between Wrigley and Norman Wells would then be subject only to the amount and timing of the acquisition of further construction funding. INF will continue to seek funding to allow additional segments of the MVH to be upgraded to all-season.

In addition to these three projects, INF is also advancing the Prohibition Creek Access Road (PCAR). This road would extend the current all-season road that runs south from Norman Wells about another 13 km from the Canyon Creek Bridge to the Prohibition Creek Bridge. Although construction funding has not yet been secured for the PCAR, an application has been submitted to the federal government and a positive response is expected.

As with the MGAR, the PCAR itself would not increase community access to the all-season highway system but it is another incremental step towards that goal and more significantly, it would reduce the winter road portion of the road between Tulita and Norman Wells to about half. With the PCAR and the GBRB complete, connecting Norman Wells and Tulita with an all-season road will be much closer to reality. It is intended that construction of the PCAR will start in winter 2021 and take 3 years.

RA-20-18-11 Fire Prevention Act

The review of the Fire Prevention Act is included in the 19th Legislative Assembly Mandate.

MACA has identified the need for further engagement and research to determine the amendments to be included in the Bill and Regulations.

A specific area of interest is the Office of the Fire Marshal's plan review function, which serves to verify that construction plans and specifications comply with the adopted codes and standards.

MACA has identified the need to engage further with GNWT departments, community governments and professional associations to determine a legislative approach for harmonized regulatory authority that is suitable for the Northwest Territories.

This scope of work will consider other related inspection, permitting and code compliance activities administered by municipal authorities and GNWT departments, with a view to encourage an integrated approach to code compliance in the NWT.

RA-20-18-12 Transfer of Lands to Community Governments

A working group consisting of the GNWT Departments of Lands, Executive and Indigenous Affairs, Municipal and Community Affairs and the City has been established to complete a bulk transfer of vacant public land to the City of Yellowknife. The working group has met several times through the fall, winter and early spring. A process document has been drafted and is currently being reviewed by the City.

Work has begun on an overarching agreement between the GNWT and the City to address outstanding questions and to ensure clarity of approach in future years. This agreement may include: managing land selection processes related to Aboriginal Rights agreements with Indigenous governments; future GNWT land requirements not currently anticipated; the City's requirements; and the costs to complete surveys. The Department of Lands provided preliminary mapping of current land tenure and existing interests.

The City is reviewing the mapping to ensure consistency with their records. Further work with the City to identify specific areas of interest, including any land the GNWT needs.

The Minister of Lands has met with Chief Sangris and Chief Betsina of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) and Mayor Alty to discuss, among other things, the potential bulk transfer of unoccupied public land within the current boundary of the City of Yellowknife. The Minister heard from the YKDFN that any bulk land transfer cannot impact the Akaitcho process.

RA-20-18-16 Review and Amendment of: Cities, Towns and Villages Act, S.N.W.T. 2003, c.22 Article 122 Hamlets Act S.N.W.T. 2003, c.22 Article 124 ; Charter Communities Act S.N.W.T. 2003, c. 22 Article 126 Tlicho Community Government Act S.N.W.T. 2004, c.7 Article 118

Forgiveness of debt is a reduction in revenue to the community government and also signals that some individuals or organizations are being treated differently than others. It is important for Councils to deal with these matters in a transparent manner and to give residents a reasonable time to voice their concerns.

Fees and payments due to the community are normally set through the adoption of a budget or through a formal bylaw approval process for example a Water Services By-law. The intention is that this is a public process that allows the opportunity for transparency to residents. It follows that any reversal of this process, for example a forgiveness of debt related to an approved revenue source, should also be done by by-law.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs will keep note of this issue on file for consideration when these pieces of legislation are discussed further as legislative priorities are prepared for consideration for the 19th Assembly. That way, we do not lose the concern for further discussion when these Acts are next opened. At this time, the Department does not see the case for amending the acts for this purpose alone.

RA-20-18-18 Review and Amendment of the Property Assessment and Taxation Act, R.S.N.W.T. 1988 c.P-10, as amended with regards to Unsold Property Article 97.85

The current *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* was enacted in 1988 and has not had a comprehensive review since coming into force.

MACA has identified some issues with the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* legislation and the corresponding policies and procedures that lead to confusion, administrative challenges, and potentially complaints.

MACA has initiated preliminary research to identify issues related to assessment that may require legislative or administrative solutions. This research will support the basis of a Legislative Proposal later in the 19th Assembly.

The preliminary research includes engagement with a number of stakeholders including GNWT staff who are responsible for the implementation of the Act, the NWTAC and the public. MACA is also reviewing other property assessment legislation in Canada.

RA-20-18-19 Review and Amendment of the Motor Vehicles Act R.S.N.W.T. 1988, C.M-16, and amendments

The GNWT has reached out to the municipal enforcement agencies and is awaiting a response. INF is committed to investigating this option and will seek input internally and from the Department of Finance to guide next steps.

RA-20-17-02 TRC Recommendations

The Government of the Northwest Territories continues to move forward to implement relevant Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including work related to the implementation of UNDRIP.

The GNWT has also agreed to work with the City of Yellowknife and the Yellowknives Dene First Nations on Call to Action 82, and install a Residential Schools Monument to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

RA-20-17-06 Untenured Land

ENR continues to provide advice and recommendations to communities to assist to reduce the risk from wildfire through Community Wildfire Protection Plans. 29 Community Wildfire Protection Plans were updated in 2019. ENR has met with most communities to talk about their updated plans, and continues to engage communities to implement the recommendations.

ENR also provides available FireSmart funding to support community protection. Information on available funding and the application process is available from regional ENR offices and on the ENR website. The Department of Lands does not, as a general practice, fire smart on untenured Commissioner's Land due to the significant area this would involve and the lack of resources to undertake this activity.

Recognizing that the spread of forest fires are a concern for everyone, the Department of Lands is available to engage with individual communities and FireSmart Committees to consider options consistent with fire response plans. An example could be the establishment of fire breaks on Commissioner's Land at strategic locations around the community.

RA-20-17-20 Mackenzie Valley Highway

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In addition to these three projects, INF is also advancing the Prohibition Creek Access Road (PCAR). This road would extend the current all-season road that runs south from Norman Wells about another 13 km from the Canyon Creek Bridge to the Prohibition Creek Bridge. Although construction funding has not yet been secured for the PCAR, an application has been submitted to the federal government and a positive response is expected.

As with the MGAR, the PCAR itself would not increase community access to the all-season highway system but it is another incremental step towards that goal and more significantly, it would reduce the winter road portion of the road between Tulita and Norman Wells to about half. With the PCAR and the GBRB complete, connecting Norman Wells and Tulita with an all-season road will be much closer to reality. It is intended that construction of the PCAR will start in winter 2021 and take 3 years.

RA-20-17-24 Medical Travel

The NTHSSA administers the Medical Travel program for all regions, including the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority and the Tl'chô Community Services Agency.

Standard practice is to first access the Standing Offer Agreement (SOA) with the lowest cost. However, patient circumstances are considered and other air carriers may be accessed.

The GNWT Department of Infrastructure has combined the non-exclusive SOAs for Medical Travel and the GNWT into one tender in order to receive the best rates and manage costs associated with employee duty travel and medical travel.

GNWT employees are required to follow the Business Incentive Policy and it states:

“Whenever possible, goods, services and construction valued at less than \$25,000 should be purchased directly from BIP Businesses in the Local Community, but no bid adjustment will be applied.”

Procurement Shared Services tenders for the provision of airfares for routes within the NWT and some routes to the south on a non-exclusive standing offer agreement basis for use by GNWT departments and boards. The tenders are publically advertised on an annual basis and available to any commercial airline company that chooses to bid.

RA-20-17-25 Decentralization of Jobs and Services

The GNWT continues to reallocate positions to communities and looks to establish new positions in regional centers and other communities whenever it is appropriate to do so. Where it makes economic sense or the reallocation of a position can be justified in order to meet new service delivery requirements, the GNWT will follow through with this commitment.

An example of this process in action has been the establishment of 23 Government Service Officer positions at the community level in the NWT over the past several years. In 2016 the GNWT also introduced the Regional Recruitment Program, a training and development initiative that creates employment opportunities for potential employees by linking vacant regional positions with relevant on-the-job work experience.

RA-20-15-06 ATIPP Legislation for Communities

The Department of Justice is working to bring the majority of the amended provisions of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the Act) into force by the fall of 2020, noting however that this is dependent on a number of factors, including the need to fill vacant senior positions within the Access and Privacy Office, provide staff training and engage with municipal stakeholders, all of which are difficult to undertake during the COVID-19 pandemic. This work also involves the development of new regulations and guidelines to assist GNWT departments and public bodies in meeting their obligations under the Act.

Given the fairly substantive changes made to the Act, the Department of Justice will also need to work with all GNWT departments and public bodies to provide training and ensure the necessary tools are in place for when the new amendments come into force.

The timing of when the Act will be made applicable to communities is yet to be determined, but the amendments contemplate a staged approach, which will see six tax-based communities brought under the legislation first.

A Municipal Access and Privacy Working Group has been established to oversee the development of an implementation plan for bringing municipal governments under the Act. This work will include determining the most appropriate time frame for the coming into force of this change.

RA-20-14-01 Fees for Households in the GTA

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) has the responsibility to assess lands and improvements across the Northwest Territories (NWT) in accordance with the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* and the Property Assessment Regulations. The Department of Finance is responsible for establishing mill rates and the collection of property taxes for territorial purposes on an annual basis, also in accordance with the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. These tax revenues go into general revenues and are allocated to Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) programs and services based on government priorities, including funding to all community governments to support their programs and services under the Community Government Funding Policy. Tax-based community governments establish their own municipal mill rates and collect property taxes from their residents to fund their municipal services.

Households living in proximity to tax-based community governments do not receive the same municipal services, such as: municipal enforcement, water, sewer, and garbage pickup that the households within the municipal boundaries receive. Therefore applying the same mill rates to households outside the municipal boundaries as applied to households within the established community governments is not equitable tax treatment.

Municipal councils are already able to raise revenue from households living outside municipal boundaries who use municipal services by charging user fees. Some NWT municipalities distinguish between residents and non-residents when charging user fees for emergency response services so that individuals living outside municipal boundaries are charged higher fees for fire and ambulance services. Municipal councils also have the ability to change the property tax/user fee mix to extract higher user fees so that more of the cost recovery is paid by the user of the service, regardless of whether the user is a resident or non-resident than through general property taxes.

MACA has initiated preliminary research to identify issues related to assessment that may require legislative or administrative solutions. This research will support the basis of a Legislative Proposal later in the 19th Assembly.

The preliminary research includes engagement with a number of stakeholders including GNWT staff who are responsible for the implementation of the Act, the NWTAC and the public. MACA is also reviewing other property assessment legislation in Canada.

RA-20-14-03 Hazardous Waste Materials in Municipal Land Fills

The Waste Resource Management Strategy and Implementation Plan (2019) committed the GNWT to assisting five to ten communities to implement the Clean Up Clean Start program by 2025, and to continue expanding the program into the future. This includes removing hazardous waste from community solid waste sites, and transition to temporary storage of hazardous waste to prevent the recurrence of stockpiles. The GNWT has allocated \$500,000 annually from the environmental liability funds over the first four years of the Strategy for hazardous waste removal. To date, the Clean Up Clean Start Program has used this funding to remove hazardous waste in Ulukhaktok, Paulatuk, Fort Good Hope, Tulita, Fort Providence and Fort Simpson.

The federal government has committed to providing \$37.5 million over ten years to improve infrastructure in communities, specifically targeting projects that result in improvements at solid waste sites. ENR and MACA will engage communities and assist them in applying for these Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) funds. To date, \$3.225 million in ICIP funds has been committed to solid waste site diversion and improvement projects in Sahtú and Beaufort Delta communities, including Norman Wells and K'asho Go'tine (Fort Good Hope).

In addition to supporting communities with accessing ICIP and environmental liabilities funds through the Clean Up Clean Start Program, ENR will continue to support hazardous waste removal under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiative.

RA-20-13-01 Regulation of Massage Therapy Providers

The Health and Social Services Professions Act (HSSPA) is an umbrella Act that protects the public by ensuring regulated professions meet established requirements, standards, and competency levels. The *Naturopathic Profession Statutes Amendment Act* was advanced at the end of the 18th Legislative Assembly, to allow for the passage of regulations regulating the Naturopathic Doctors profession in the NWT. The Department of Health and Social Services (HSS) is currently drafting the following profession-specific regulations under the HSSPA. The Emergency Medical Services Provider Regulation will be finalized during the 19th Legislative Assembly. The Naturopathic Practitioner Regulation and Psychologists Regulation will follow after that.

The Executive Council is responsible for deciding which professions will be included under the Act. In accordance with section 2 of the Act, professional associations can initiate the process to become regulated by bringing forward an application to HSS. There are a number of criteria that are used to determine which professions should be designated under the HSSPA, but also when a profession should be designated. These criteria include, but are not limited to, a profession's regulatory status in other jurisdictions, whether there are other means to regulate members of the profession other than under the Act, the nature and degree, if any, of the risk to the health and safety of the public if the profession is unregulated, and the potential economic impacts of regulation.

RA-20-13-02 Review of the Property Assessment and Taxation Act and the Grants-in-Lieu of Property Taxes Policy

The current *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* was enacted in 1988 and has not had a comprehensive review since coming into force.

MACA has identified some issues with the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* legislation and the corresponding policies and procedures that lead to confusion, administrative challenges, and potentially complaints.

MACA has initiated preliminary research to identify issues related to assessment that may require legislative or administrative solutions. This research will support the basis of a Legislative Proposal later in the 19th Assembly.

The preliminary research includes engagement with a number of stakeholders including GNWT staff who are responsible for the implementation of the Act, the NWTAC and the public. MACA is also reviewing other property assessment legislation in Canada.

MACA has identified three large pieces of legislation to prioritize for review and significant amendment during the 19th Assembly. These are, in order of anticipated priority: the *Fire Prevention Act*, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, and the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*.

The capacity of MACA to bring forward legislative amendments will always be restricted. An important element of any legislative initiative is the full engagement with community governments at a pace at which they can provide meaningful input to both issue identification and potential solutions. Accordingly, to update all legislation would exceed both the capacity of MACA, as well as the community governments that the legislation serves.

RA-20-98-12 Limiting the Time Available to the Territorial Assessment Appeal Tribunal to Reach a Decision

Due in part to capacity, but also due to the number of Acts that MACA administers, it has become necessary for MACA to prioritize its legislative initiatives. The current *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* was enacted in 1988 and has not had a comprehensive review since coming into force.

MACA has identified some issues with the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* legislation and the corresponding policies and procedures that lead to confusion, administrative challenges, and potentially complaints.

MACA has initiated preliminary research to identify issues related to assessment that may require legislative or administrative solutions. This research will support the basis of a Legislative Proposal later in the 19th Assembly.

The preliminary research includes engagement with a number of stakeholders including GNWT staff who are responsible for the implementation of the Act, the NWTAC and the public.

MACA is also reviewing other property assessment legislation in Canada.

MACA is aware that the NWT Association of Communities has historically passed as many as eight resolutions with considerations that may impact the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. This is important feedback that will be considered, not only as we set priorities, but also once we begin the legislative review process.

RA-20-18-06 MACA Funding Formula

MACA will be working with the NWTAC and community governments to update the Community Public Infrastructure Policy (CPI). The CPI Policy provides capital funding to communities along with advisory services in the area of budgeting for operations as well as planning and implementation of capital projects. There are no barriers for communities to set aside monies for planned and unplanned capital projects and we encourage communities to do so.

RA-20-18-04 10 year plan to end homelessness

The NWTAC has completed a review of all GNWT homelessness supports. Work on the development of an overall GNWT homelessness strategy has begun. The strategy will identify areas where GNWT services and supports to end homelessness can be further improved. It is expected that strategy will be completed in Fall 2020.

RA-20-18-10 Highway Rescue and Ambulance Services

Since fall 2017, the GNWT has been working with key stakeholders through an interdepartmental committee to develop an action plan to build capacity and support for GAHR services in the NWT.

Research and consultation completed to date confirms that solutions to gaps and challenges with the current system will not be attained without longer-term collaboration involving the GNWT, key communities and other stakeholders.

Priorities identified moving forward include developing and gaining consensus on options for governance and establishing an acceptable fiscal arrangement between the GNWT and community governments. Committee continues to define priorities and develop a way forward through action planning and collaboration with key stakeholders.

Service expansion is a key component of the GAHR Action Plan. In its environmental assessment of the Tłıchǵ All-Season Road (TSAR), the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board recommended in Measure 5-6 that the GNWT develop and implement an effective GAHR action plan for the TSAR in collaboration with the Tłıchǵ Government (TG), Tłıchǵ Community Services Agency (TCSA), Community Government of Whatı, and Community Government of Behchokǵ.

Work that has been progressing on the TSAR will feed into the larger GAHR project. Moving forward, the GNWT (MACA, HSS) will continue to work closely and collaboratively with the TG, TCSA, and all Community Governments providing Highway Rescue and Ambulance Services.

RA-20-17-05 Shoreline Erosion

Riverbank and soil erosion are ongoing natural processes that can be accelerated by human activities. Depending on where infrastructure is located, it may be vulnerable to increased erosion in the future by sea level rise, melting permafrost or flooding of river systems due to climate change.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) can work with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA), and community governments to help identify vulnerable areas and prepare adaptation plans to reduce risks. In the event MACA undertakes work associated with the protection or relocation of infrastructure affected by erosion, ENR could contribute technical input to this process.

MACA has re-established its Community Planning Unit, within the new Community Governance Division. Land use planning is one of the most effective processes to facilitate local adaptation to climate change. Land use planning refers to the processes and instruments to manage the use of land and the physical development of a community.

Shoreline Erosion issues can and should be taken into consideration when community governments update their community land use planning tools, including: community plans, zoning bylaws, development permits, and other development policies that may be used to minimize risks to communities in these areas experiencing erosion, landslides and other natural hazards.

As the climate changes, so will the frequency and magnitude of climate-related hazards, posing a challenge for communities and residents on the NWT.

For communities susceptible to flooding/erosion, MACA has annually shared information on any funding opportunities related to mitigation programs. MACA continues to work with Public Safety Canada by encouraging changes in funding programs that support planning efforts for disaster mitigation and adaptation.

In addition, in a broader planning context, the updating of community plans is gas tax fund eligible within the terms of the 2014-2023 Agreement. MACA also encourages the community to use their annual Capital Planning Process and funding allocations to identify projects that will support the mitigation of shoreline erosion especially where it relates to protecting core community public infrastructure. MACA will continue to ensure that community governments are aware of these funding opportunities, as well as new federal funding that may apply, and encourage communities to discuss these matters with the MACA Regional Offices.

Ground instability poses major risks to land use and development and reinforces the importance of integrating natural hazard management into land-use development and planning policies, particularly as there are few mitigation measures that can be implemented to address major ground movement events that can happen with little or no warning.

RA-20-17-03 Fiscal Year Resolution

MACA recognizes that there are a number of good reasons why the GNWT may want to consider the legislative changes required to allow all municipalities the option of choosing the same fiscal year (matching the calendar year or a fiscal year that ends on March 31, or some other option).

Such a change may require additional or new amendments to six pieces of territorial legislation including the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, the *Charter Communities Act*, the *Hamlets Act*, the *Tłı̨chǫ Community Government Act*, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* and the *Local Authorities Election Act*. These amendments would represent a significant undertaking and given the current legislative priorities of the department for the 19th Assembly, this work will need to be reviewed at a later time.

MACA has identified three large pieces of legislation to prioritize for review and significant amendment during the 19th Assembly. These are, in order of anticipated priority: the *Fire Prevention Act*, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*, and the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*.

The capacity of MACA to bring forward legislative amendments will always be restricted. An important element of any legislative initiative is the full engagement with community governments at a pace at which they can provide meaningful input to both issue identification and potential solutions. Accordingly, to update all legislation would exceed both the capacity of MACA, as well as the community governments that the legislation serves.

RA-20-17-07 CRTC Ruling

The GNWT is pleased to see the NWTAC continue to advance telecommunications and broadband issues, both through your policy positions and resolutions and through your work with other stakeholders such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. We both welcome and appreciate the Association's voice at the CRTC table, as you speak on behalf of so many Northerners, and raise issues important to us all.

The GNWT appreciates the close ties we've developed over the years on working on these files matters and look forward to continue working with you to illuminate and advance northern telecom and broadband issues at the federal level.

ST-20-15-04 Power Subsidy Billing Cycles

The GNWT considers the current level of support sufficient. The GNWT currently has no intention to expand or increase the total number of months where the larger subsidy would apply.

ST-20-12-07 Reduced Power Rate for Municipalities

The 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 GNWT response to the Resolution remains applicable. To reiterate, it should be noted that reducing the electricity rates for community governments means increasing the electricity rates for community residents.

ST-20-10-09 Community Consultation on Any Proposed Changes to Electricity Delivery

The GNWT will continue to engage directly with communities and Indigenous organizations to encourage participation, partnership, and empowerment when proposing and undertaking energy solutions and regulatory changes as it implements the 2030 Energy Strategy.

ST-20-09-06 Training for Community Fire Departments

Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) continues to assess community fire departments to establish safe, effective, and sustainable community fire protection services in the Northwest Territories. A priority of the 18th Legislative Assembly is to work with stakeholders to identify priorities for Community Fire Protection Plans.

Since early 2017, twenty-three (23) community assessments have been completed, which has resulted in the development of twelve (12) action plans. Although progress is slower than anticipated, efforts will continue in 2020-2021 and beyond to complete assessments and action plans for all communities that do not maintain a general plan for their fire service.

A key consideration for the assessment is Worker's Safety and Compensation Commission's Firefighters Code of Practice, which provides practical guidance to achieve the safety requirements of the NWT *Safety Act* and Regulations.

Thus far assessments have identified a range of gaps and deficiencies, which to a large extent; will be addressed via training available through MACA's School of Community Government.

The ability to complete this work often is impacted by the capacity of the community governments which ebbs and flows. MACA has all the tools in place to respond to community governments, and recommends that this resolution be deleted.

ST-20-09-08 Plumbing Inspections

The Government of the Northwest Territories does not have any legislation that could be used to regulate plumbing services. Municipal legislation provides municipal governments with the authority to pass bylaws to adopt in whole or in part, a code such as the National Plumbing Code or standard made or recommended by the Government of the Northwest Territories, Canada or a province.

The City of Yellowknife, for example, requires plumbers and plumbing companies to get a Mechanical Permit when undertaking plumbing work within their municipal boundaries. When applying for the permit, the contractor has to provide sufficient information that the work will conform to Yellowknife's by-laws, the National Building Code and the National Plumbing Code. Inspections are also required by the permit. Municipal governments, therefore, have all the legal authority they require to regulate plumbing work and they can do it by passing a by-law.

ST-20-08-02 Housing Assessment

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) assesses lands and assets across the whole of the Northwest Territories (NWT) throughout the Municipal Taxation Authority communities (MTAs) and the General Taxation Areas (GTAs). Property assessment is governed by the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* and the Property Assessment Regulations. The Act and the Regulations prescribe the manner in which the values of properties are to be determined for assessment and taxation purposes. A Fair Market Value approach to property assessment is based on there being sufficient sales data from which to develop mathematical models to value properties.

In the NWT, there may be sufficient data available in some MTAs to develop a Fair Market Value model for assessing land, but not in all. Additionally, to be effective and accurate with a Fair Market Value, assessments would need to be done much more often, to keep up with the fluctuating markets of the day. Land in the MTAs is assessed using a Fair Market Value approach, as land is subject to far less fluctuations. Improvements in the MTAs are assessed in accordance with the Act and Regulations. Land and improvement valuations in the GTAs are not market-based, but are assessed in accordance with the Act and Regulations. MACA has determined that it is unlikely that a movement to a Fair Market Value approach, applied across the NWT, is feasible in the foreseeable future

ST-20-01-07 Permanent Station Placement of Community Registered Nurse

Several challenges arise when striving to provide healthcare services in small communities and these challenges are not unique to the Northwest Territories. In many of small, more remote NWT communities, there is concern not only with access to routine care, but particularly with the capacity to respond to a medical emergency when such an event occurs. Programs such as Med Response facilitate immediate, around-the-clock access to physician support and emergency services, including medevac services. Through referral processes and medical travel services, all residents of the NWT have access to specialist and allied health services in the larger regional centres.

Healthcare is provided to residents in communities without a permanent nurse through nurse visits and also by the Community Health Representative, Community Health Worker and/or a Community Support Worker who reside in the community.

There are additional initiatives to balance scopes of practice for healthcare providers in small communities. One such initiative is the Tsiigehtchic emergency services pilot project, which was organized in response to residents' requests for full-time nursing staff. The Department, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA), members of the Beaufort Delta Region, and Tsiigehtchic leaders have been working together to explore an approach to emergency health care in Tsiigehtchic that is uniquely suited to Tsiigehtchic. The goal is to develop a new approach to emergency care that is tailored to meet community needs for care and emergency services in communities without resident nurses. The proposed approach incorporates first responder education for community members. The Community Based Emergency Care (CBEC) project has been piloted in Tsiigehtchic to help the community better respond to emergency situations.

Phase one of the CBEC project in Tsiigehtchic was completed on June 30, 2017, The working group members include the Department of Health and Social Services (Department), the NTHSSA, the Charter Community of Tsiigehtchic, the Gwichya Gwich'in Council, and Tsiigehtchic community members.

The second phase of the project commenced in mid-October, 2018 and was completed at the end of March 2019. This phase of the project focused on capacity-building and planning.

The Community Based Emergency Care training was delivered during the week of February 25th, 2019, 16 community members attended the training. Upon completion of the course participants received a custom Community Based Emergency Care certificate as well as a certificate in First Aid from the Canadian Red Cross.

Target populations identified to participate in the training were members of the Rangers, municipal workers, councilors, and other community members. The community Working Group members worked within their community to identify course participants. The SAO coordinated registration for the course.

From the program evaluation the participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the course and felt it was quite valuable.

The Department is anticipating a final program report that will contain the program curriculum, course evaluation and recommendations for future offerings.

ST-20-01-11 Permanent Placement of a Community RCMP Officer

The Department of Justice continues to work with the RCMP and communities to provide policing services and local justice programming to each community in the NWT. The Department of Justice has been able to secure funding under the First Nations Policing Program to create 5 new RCMP positions across the NWT. These positions will not be physically located in small communities but will be posted to hub locations that will serve outlying communities. The RCMP remains committed to a strategic approach to patrolling small communities that promotes community safety and health.

ST-20-17-12 UNDRIP as a guide for NWT

As described in the GNWT's 2019-2023 Mandate, the GNWT is committed to further identifying, prioritizing and strengthening key actions to further implement UNDRIP work with Indigenous governments, including creating and implementing an action plan that identifies changes required in GNWT legislation and policies to best reflect the principles set out in UNDRIP. The GNWT is anticipating developing a Terms of Reference (TOR) for a Working Group with Indigenous governments in 2020.

RA-20-18-09 Funding for Sport and Recreation Travel

MACA provides each community government with recreation funding annually through the Recreation Contributions program. Community governments may also use Operations and Maintenance Funding to support community government recreation programming. Additionally, community governments, and community based organizations are eligible for travel support through some programs offered by other organizations. Please contact the MACA regional recreation coordinator for more information.