



**NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

3rd Session

Day 62

18th Assembly

HANSARD

Wednesday, February 27, 2019

Pages 5123 – 5172

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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Published under the authority of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

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YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Wednesday, February 27, 2019****Members Present**

Hon. Glen Abernethy, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Blake, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Ms. Green, Hon. Jackson Lafferty, Hon. Bob McLeod, Hon. Robert McLeod, Hon. Alfred Moses, Mr. Nadli, Mr. Nakimayak, Mr. O'Reilly, Hon. Wally Schumann, Hon. Louis Sebert, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Testart, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Vanthuyne

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Jackson Lafferty): Good afternoon, Members. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Justice.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 157-18(3):
COMBATTING CYBER-BULLYING IN THE NWT

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Speaker, today is national Pink Shirt Day. I applaud all Members for wearing pink in the House today to symbolize that we will not tolerate bullying of any kind.

The Internet has opened an invaluable connection to the world by allowing residents of all ages, in even our smallest communities, access to information and opportunities easily. Sadly, it has also allowed bullying to move online.

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person. The intention is to cause harm or distress to the victims. Most often, it is sustained and repeated over a period of time and can damage a person's feelings, self-esteem, reputation, and mental health.

Cyber-bullying includes:

- Sending mean or threatening emails, texts, or instant messages;
- Posting embarrassing photos of someone online;
- Creating a website to make fun of others;
- Pretending to be someone by using their name; and
- Tricking someone into revealing personal or embarrassing information and sending it to others.

Mr. Speaker, cyber-bullying affects victims in different ways than traditional bullying. Unlike face-

to-face bullying, cyber-bullying can be relentless and can follow a victim everywhere 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Because cyber-bullying can spread quickly to a wide audience, most teens today have been involved in some way or another, either as a target, as a bully, as a silent observer, or as someone who participates on the sidelines and becomes part of the problem without realizing what they are doing.

As well as being traumatic, people need to know that forms of cyber-bullying can be illegal. There are repercussions to these actions. Repeated tormenting online can amount to criminal harassment. Threatening to share someone's personal information with others can be extortion or uttering threats. Fake profiles created to ruin or damage someone's reputation could result in charges of identity theft or fraud, while spreading untrue rumours may be defamatory libel. The sharing of intimate images of people may be illegal under the Criminal Code of Canada. The sharing of intimate images of youth, even solely among youth, may also fall under the Criminal Code's provisions relating to child pornography.

I encourage anyone who is experiencing these types of incidents to report it to your local RCMP or to Cybertip.ca. If you are being bullied online, know that every social media site has the ability to report and block the culprits. Phone service providers will take reports of unwanted text messages. Don't respond to the cyber bullies, but don't delete their messages, either, as these will be useful to the service providers and the police as evidence. Be sure to talk to a trusted person or get any help or support you might need from those able to assist you.

Mr. Speaker, the RCMP plays an integral part in combatting cyber-bullying in our territory. I am proud of the efforts that the RCMP and its members have made in building relationships and trust in the communities they serve. In addition to investigating reports of cyber-bullying to determine if charges should be laid, RCMP members are also available to visit schools to speak to the youth about cyber-bullying.

Mr. Speaker, cyber-bullying is continually changing as new technology and social networking sites emerge. All residents need to stay alert to the

presence of cyber-bullying. If you know someone who is a victim of cyber-bullying, talk to them and let them know that they can trust you and that they shouldn't deal with the bullying alone. Help them to report cyber-bullying to their telephone service provider or social media site, school administrators, or to the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister for Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 158-18(3):
DEVELOPMENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, many factors impact a child's life, both negatively and positively. As a parent, I understand some of the struggles parents face, and as a social worker, I adhere to the principle that all of us, parents, family, friends, community members, and governments, have a role to play in ensuring children have the supports to succeed in life.

Upon assuming the position as Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, one of my first priorities was to ensure we were doing our part to meet the developmental needs of children and having measurable outcomes to assess if our programs and services are effective. The 2015-2017 Early Development Instrument results and a national 2017 Early Childhood Education Report confirmed that my concerns had merit, and, although we are working in the right direction, we still have much to do.

The Early Development Instrument, or EDI, is a nationally utilized tool, administered prior to grade one, that provides a snapshot of five-year-old children's developmental vulnerability rates. The most recent data available shows that vulnerability rates of Canadian children are increasing. This is reflected in the results for the Northwest Territories, where vulnerability rates have increased from 38 percent to 42 percent, as compared to the 2012-2014 results. Unfortunately, the EDI results alone do not identify specific causes for vulnerability that we can easily address. They reflect the accumulation of early childhood experiences within the family, community, and wider society.

Education, Culture and Employment and Health and Social Services will continue to work together on initiatives in the Right From the Start Framework and Action Plan to address areas of vulnerability in the Northwest Territories. This action plan will be renewed during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, and the EDI data will be used to inform the new action plan and any initiatives included in that plan as we move forward. As part of this work, we will renew our joint Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan to ensure that we are looking at the impacts of

initiatives over the longer term and adjusting as necessary.

As well, we will work in partnership with the federal government through the Early Learning and Childcare Agreement, and we will work closely with education bodies and licensed childcare operators to support healthy early childhood development. Only by all of us working together can we provide a comprehensive set of programs and services to better support families and young children.

Mr. Speaker, the effects of junior kindergarten across the Northwest Territories continues to be monitored and has been one of our early successes. Although junior kindergarten is optional, 552 children are now enrolled in this early childhood programming. Not only is this helping to address the cost of living for families with small children, it is also ensuring more children have access to play-based early childhood programming. Preliminary analysis of the Early Development Instrument shows that children who attended junior kindergarten during the implementation in small communities were showing fewer vulnerabilities than children who did not.

During this 18th Legislative Assembly, we have developed a curriculum for our junior kindergarten programming and resources to support schools. In the coming year, we will also be introducing an early learning framework and, through federal funding, providing resources, including music, books, and other play-based materials, that reflect Indigenous beliefs and culture for licensed centre-based programs. A strong relationship with a child's own culture boosts a child's self-esteem, mental health, and general wellness.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that access to licensed-based childcare supports healthy child development, as does junior kindergarten, and reaches even younger children. However, we still have 11 communities without any licensed childcare programs. This continues to be a priority. During the coming year, we will be completing the mandate to develop a comprehensive plan to make childcare more accessible, affordable, and inclusive. As well, where communities identify a need and interest in operating licensed early childhood programs, ECE will work with the community to support their establishment. We will also be placing a stronger emphasis on reaching out to communities lacking licensed childcare programs to increase awareness of the start-up and ongoing funding available, as well as other supports we offer.

Mr. Speaker, to assist in the cost of living and encourage more licensed operators, we also have made increases to the licensed childcare operating subsidy rates beginning in October 2016, which

were further enhanced in 2017-2018 through federal funding. These increases, as well as the grants for health and safety, start-up funding, provider enhancement funding, and the Early Childhood Staff Grant program, will hopefully assist in making this opportunity more attractive to potential operators and early childhood educators.

Accessing qualified early childhood educators and ongoing training was a concern that we have also been able to address through the Canada-NWT Early Learning and Childcare Bilateral Agreement and its three-year action plan. With this federal funding, Aurora College has expanded its certificate program and is now offering a full-time, two-year diploma in Early Learning and Childcare. As well, we have increased the scholarships available for students in early childhood programs from 10 to 30 scholarships. Over the coming year, we will also be developing an ongoing training plan for flexible and sustainable training for staff of licensed childcare centres and family day home programs.

The Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, released its 2017 Early Childhood Education Report. This report assesses early childhood education programming in Canada by province and territory. From 2014 to 2017, the Northwest Territories' rating increased from 6.5 to 8.0 out of 15, which places the Northwest Territories exactly in the middle of all of the provinces and territories. This ranking shows that, as a government, we have made early childhood development a priority and are investing in our youngest residents, a commitment that must continue.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that it takes a community to raise a child, and we are doing our part to assist in this. We have made some great progress to date, and although we have a lot of work ahead during the rest of the 18th Legislative Assembly, we know how critical our work is, and we welcome the challenge, knowing that our efforts will assist our most valuable resource, our children. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Colleagues, I would like to draw your attention to the visitors in the gallery. We have with us students from the grade nine social studies class from Ecole Sir John Franklin High School. Welcome to our Assembly. Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 159-18(3):
SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, this Legislative Assembly has committed to support

early childhood development, and today I want to provide Members and the public with an update on our work to provide equitable access to a range of inclusive, culturally-informed programs and services for and children under five years of age and expecting parents.

In June 2017, our government tabled a renewed three-year Early Childhood Development Action Plan designed to help us take action at several sensitive times of a child's development. For the past two years, we have worked with parents, elders, healthcare practitioners, community partners, and research organizations to improve services to young children and their parents and caregivers in order to improve developmental outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, to support the best health and social outcomes for children under five, the Department of Health and Social Services has been doing work in a number of areas, including maternal-child health.

The department has been advancing work to establish a territory-wide program to enhance access to midwifery services, including safe options for birthing as close to home as possible. The NWT Midwifery Practice Framework has been updated, and we are acting on the recommendations of the NWT Midwifery Stakeholder Engagement Report. Prenatal care and education is available to expectant mothers through several programs, including the Midwifery Program and the Northern Women's Program and during one-on-one appointments with community health nurses. As part of the Early Childhood Development Action Plan, the department is taking steps to improve the delivery of prenatal education by developing a standardized prenatal program.

Related to this work, officials met with Indigenous community partners in Fort Smith to pilot the first Indigenous Doula Training course in the Northwest Territories. This training can strengthen the capacity of the community to support pregnant mothers and their partners. An evaluation of the pilot course will inform our next steps.

Since 2016, expectant mothers who travel to one of the NWT birthing centres receive the essential items that new parents need for the wellbeing and safety of their newborn, as well as information about the programs and services that they can access in their communities when they return.

The Baby-Friendly Initiative is our government's approach to maternity and community services that focus on providing quality care and enabling supportive environments in the Northwest Territories.

In order to better understand infant feeding practices in the Northwest Territories, the department commissioned the Aurora Research Institute and an Advisory Circle of Knowledge Keepers. This partnership resulted in a report that includes many stories discussing traditional knowledge practices and has generated new knowledge that will contribute to the advancement of the Baby-Friendly Initiative.

In December 2018, the Inuvik Regional Hospital received official designation as a baby-friendly facility, becoming the first hospital in the Arctic, and the most northern hospital in Canada, to receive this designation. Four other healthcare facilities in the Northwest Territories are currently working towards their Baby-Friendly designation.

We also funded Moms, Boobs and Babies to develop a volunteer peer support breastfeeding program to help build local breastfeeding support and capacity in all regions.

In addition, we are working with Hotii ts'eeda to renew the Healthy Family Program. Hotii ts'eeda is a research support centre for community members, organizations, and researchers involved in Northwest Territories health and health research. To support the renewal, the project team is visiting nine communities in five regions to research and design an innovative model that reflects the unique needs and features of communities. The team is learning about specific needs and cultural practices related to parenting which are unique to Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents, newcomers, families in smaller communities, and parents without family support. They want to hear the views and perspectives of communities where the Healthy Family Program is not offered. Hotii ts'eeda will make recommendations this spring to pilot a new program design.

Mr. Speaker, the department has made significant progress to identify resources available to children and families to enhance healthy growth and development. When developmental delays occur in a child, it is important for these concerns to be identified early, so that interventions can begin as soon as possible, and before school entry.

All parents and caregivers can schedule Well Child Baby visits for children between the ages of zero and five with community health nurses and public health nurses to ensure early detection and referral to appropriate services, such as rehabilitation services.

Mr. Speaker, since the inception of the Early Childhood Action Plan, our government has made strategic investments to better meet the needs of children with specialized needs. We are improving access and follow-up to rehabilitation services for

children ages zero to five in small communities and enhancing diagnosis and case management services for children with autism and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Children and parents who need specialized services will be supported by the Stanton hospital child-development team with a satellite team in the Beaufort-Delta.

We are currently in our second year of the three-year action plan, and we are making significant progress. We will continue to implement the Right from the Start Framework and action plans and use data from the Early Development Instrument to help update the action plan when it is renewed in 2020. We will also renew our monitoring, evaluation, and accountability plan to ensure that we are looking at the impacts of our actions in the longer term.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that it takes a community to raise a child, and we are doing our part to assist in this. We have made some great progress to date, and although we have a lot of work ahead during the rest of this 18th Legislative Assembly, we know how critical our work is, and we welcome the challenge, knowing that our efforts will assist our most valuable resource, our children.

Mr. Speaker, supporting early childhood development is critical work for our government. We are committed to working with families and communities to ensure that they have the tools and resources to support the best outcomes for their children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 160-18(3): COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT FUNDING

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Community governments are an important partner for the Government of the Northwest Territories, and we continue to be one of the only jurisdictions in Canada that provides ongoing funding to this level of government. While we recognize that community governments have many financial needs that exceed current funding levels, we remain committed to supporting them and have made considerable gains in closing the community government funding gap during the 18th Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I do seek unanimous consent to conclude my Minister's statement, even though I just started.

---Unanimous consent granted

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Addressing the financial needs of community governments is a long-term project that has to include clearly understanding

what exactly those needs are and how effective our policies are in meeting them. That is why, Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories did a comprehensive review of its community government funding policies in 2014. The review was initiated, in part, because existing funding policies were difficult to understand and defend, in terms of the amount of funding any one community received. In addition, there was no direct linkage between the operations and maintenance funding policy and the infrastructure funding policy. The department felt there were significant gaps in understanding this relationship and the cost drivers related to infrastructure.

The 2014 review allowed a broad spectrum of community government officials to voice their concerns and help shape policy decisions. It started us on a path towards more accurate and detailed information for both the department and community governments and a clear and defensible approach to calculating community government funding needs.

The review also identified a large difference between current funding levels and full needs-based funding. This Legislative Assembly has made a commitment to close that funding gap, Mr. Speaker, and we have been making progress on that commitment.

Mr. Speaker, at the start of this Legislative Assembly, the Minister of Finance said the Government of the Northwest Territories would increase community government funding as its own revenues increased. Our government continues to keep that promise. In spite of our challenging fiscal environment that required our government to examine its spending closely, we have managed to not only protect community governments from funding reductions, but have actually increased base funding to them.

Over four years, we have succeeded in obtaining a total of \$8.3 million in increased funding, closing the gap by almost 50 percent in both the community governments' operations and maintenance funding and environmental services, also known as water and sewer services funding. Over the same period, the increase in revenues for the whole Government of the Northwest Territories, when you exclude specific project funding from the federal government, was just \$49 million. That increase had to pay for all the forced growth demands and initiatives of the government, including addressing the municipal government funding gap.

Mr. Speaker, as well as allocating new funding to community governments as it becomes available to us, in accordance with the results of the Municipal Funding Policy Review, we also continue to update the existing community government funding policies

to meet the needs of community governments and ensure the funding is distributed with a fair, clear, and understandable policy base. This work will provide an update to the calculations used in each of the funding models and support specific actions that the department will take in partnership with community governments to make sure that we continue to have current data that can be used over time to defend future funding requests through our forced growth and budgetary cycles.

A key source of the data used in the funding-model calculations is the infrastructure valuation provided through a third-party source, the Northern Communities Insurance Program. As Members of this House may recall, the base for our funding models is the infrastructure information, and that is why the valuation from the insurance data is so important to this analysis. A new annual insurance cycle starts with renewal on April 1, 2019, and will provide us with the most current and critical information on the common infrastructure in each community, its valuation and condition.

Over the four years since the initial research was completed, I would also like to acknowledge that we have continued to work with the insurance program and invested in asset management with communities. These efforts have resulted in better quality data on infrastructure than we have ever had before.

We will ensure that this data is available to provide more regular updates to the formula calculations as well as for supporting requests on future federal funding programs.

Mr. Speaker, I believe in the direction that the department has taken since the completion of the Municipal Funding Policy Review in 2014. We have made solid progress in closing the municipal operations and maintenance funding gap by almost 50 percent over the last four years. We have also worked hard to improve funding policies so that they are clearer and better account for community needs. We intend to continue this work and will prepare a plan that will allow the Government of the Northwest Territories to increase community government funding as our own revenues increase based on good data and improved policies for the next Legislative Assembly's consideration.

We are well-positioned to advocate for community governments to receive their fair share of any new funding that becomes available. I look forward to discussions with stakeholders and Members of this House on community needs as a priority during the remainder of our term. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Ministers' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Yellowknife Centre, that Minister's Statement 158-18(3) be moved into Committee of the Whole for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried

The Minister's statement delivered earlier today, 158-18(3), is now referred to Committee of the Whole for later today. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PINK SHIRT ANTI-BULLYING DAY

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's show our support today, wearing pink shirts, taking a stand against bullying. A short history: this day was started in 2007 by two students who organized a high school protest in support of a fellow student who was bullied for wearing a pink shirt.

Mr. Speaker, we tend to forget that sometimes it is the smallest acts that make a big difference, even if we speak up, if we listen to, or stepping up. Let's make this day aware in our schools, in our homes, in our communities, and in this country.

Children have the right to be protected from physical and mental harm and the right to live free from any form of discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, Pink Shirt Day has exploded with support. However, we still need to educate against bullying and make it known that it is unacceptable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON REVIEW OF THE MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

MR. VANTHUYNE: Mr. Speaker, the regulatory delay for approval of the water license application for the TerraX Minerals project near Yellowknife has reminded me how important it is to push ahead in the long process of improving our regulatory system. When I say "long process," I do mean long. Regulatory reform has been going on for at least a

decade, and the need for improvement has been there a lot longer.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier was fond of saying "devolve and evolve." This has been his mantra for a made-in-the-North regime to manage land and resources in the Northwest Territories. He has laid the foundation for this to happen, but we still have a way to go before we have true Northern control.

It's a big job in itself to keep pressuring the federal government to live up to its promises. With respect to devolution, this means the promises to begin a review of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and negotiate management of oil and gas resources in the Beaufort Sea. The latter negotiations were to have begun in 2014, but all we have seen is Canada's moratorium on offshore oil and gas development.

Right now, I am much more concerned about the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act or MVRMA as most people call it. The Northwest Territories needs more control over its own destiny and more control over our economy and environment.

The window of opportunity to do just that is about to open soon, Mr. Speaker. The exact day is the sulai xaye anniversary of devolution on April 1st, 2019. "Sulai xaye" translates as five years in South Slavey.

Mr. Speaker, under the devolution agreement, negotiations for the review of the MVRMA "shall commence... as soon as is practicable" after that day.

This is a tremendous opportunity for our territory. Through the Intergovernmental Council, we have already broken new ground. The collaboration of Indigenous governments and the GNWT to shape a joint land and resource management system is a unique achievement, but it is only the beginning. We can develop a better land- and resource-management system that reflects our needs and aspirations.

We can bring what we are all learning together to bear when we review the MVRMA with the federal government. Mr. Speaker, I hope our government is prepared to begin the job come April 1st. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. The Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON PREVENTING BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

MR. BEAULIEU: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. Today, I rise to talk about bullying. Mr. Speaker, I realize that bullying is not only in the schools, but that is

where I will concentrate my efforts today. Mr. Speaker, we all wear pink as politicians and bring attention to the matter of bullying. Mr. Speaker, I think that we really do our share when we teach our children not to be bullies. Mr. Speaker, we do our share when, as adults, we speak to our children about the harms of bullying. We do our share when we speak to our children, period, about bullying. We do our share when we have empathy for others when they tell us that our children are bullying their children.

Mr. Speaker, we, as parents, must help people that know about the bullying in the schools, and we must help stop the bullying. Mr. Speaker, we have situations where children do not attend school because some child or some children are bullying them and, no matter what they say or do, it does not stop the bullying.

Mr. Speaker, we have many situations where children have ruined lives of other children by denying them on education because they are afraid to go to school. Mr. Speaker, I reach out to the parents of bullies today to say: please help stop your child from being a bully. If someone tells you your child is a bully, talk to your child. Find out what is making them want to hurt other children in school.

Mr. Speaker, the best place to stop bullying is at home. Let's make it so that our children, no matter what size or nature they are, can go to school and feel free and safe to get a good education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. The Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGE TAX

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak on an issue which has left me and many Northerners with a bitter taste in our mouths, the sugar-sweetened drink tax. This government has stated that it wishes to address health outcomes in the territory and proposes to achieve this goal by the creation of a new tax. Let me be clear. The creation of a new arbitrary and regressive tax is not the course we should be taking right now.

This tax arbitrarily targets pop only from fountain drinks and pre-packaged cans and bottles. It exempts pop mixed with alcohol, the sugar in your coffee or tea, flavoured milk, flavoured yogurt drinks, and fruit juice.

Now, I hope I do not need to remind the honourable Members of this House of just how difficult it is for Northerners with low incomes to get by in the

territory nor how local small businesses have already been feeling the crunch of our declining economy. Adding to the cost of living for residents and adding to the administration costs for business is not the way we should be combatting diabetes, obesity, or trying to improve oral-health outcomes.

Even by the GNWT's own estimates, the new tax will just barely generate more revenue than it will cost to administer, let alone reduce consumption. This is a misguided approach that uses a tax to achieve health outcomes. This ought to be a Department of Health issue, not a Department of Finance issue. Forcing people to pay more for calories they consume in the hope that they will change their consumption habits is patently absurd.

We must continue to combat obesity, diabetes, and poor oral health through education, access to sports, and availability of alternatives, not through further taxation, and yet this government continues its wrong-headed approach in increasing the cost of power, raising fees, upping service rates, and pushing new taxes. Enough is enough, and I urge Members of this House not to support this new sugar tax. Any support for this tax will only serve to add more pressure on those already living on overstretched home budgets. Mr. Speaker, taxpayers can only be squeezed so hard before they break. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. The Member for Deh Cho.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SPECIALIZED FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD) JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS

MR. NADLI: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Today, I want to talk about FASD. FASD, or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, is what they call an umbrella term. It covers various possible diagnoses, each with potential physical and cognitive issues for someone who was exposed to alcohol in the womb.

In Canada, FASD is the leading known cause of preventable developmental disability. It is a lifelong disability, and it affects an estimated 1 in every 100 Canadians. That is about 330,000 people.

Through prevention activities, we can build a future without FASD, but, because FASD cannot be reversed or cured, prevention activities alone are not enough. Governments and communities must plan for lifelong support for people with FASD.

For example, without a formal diagnosis, which can be very difficult to obtain, adults who may suspect that they have FASD can't access much-needed programming and services.

Mr. Speaker, once I started to look into FASD research, I was shocked by the scope of the challenges we face, not only in the NWT but across the country. For example, CBC reports that up to 25 percent of inmates in federal corrections could have FASD, but only seven assessments were funded by Correctional Services Canada in 2017. Sadly, it seems that a lack of adequate support is a common problem.

When it comes to the criminal justice system, obstacles for people with FASD are built into the courts themselves. Medical experts agree that it is common for those with FASD to struggle to understand court proceedings, to connect actions and consequences, and to change their behaviour. As it is, the system just doesn't work for them.

Manitoba has taken action to restore fairness. At the end of this month, it will open a specialized court, much like our wellness and DVTO courts, for people with FASD. Judges will be trained to understand FASD and support workers will be present to help defendants access community programs, including diagnostic services. The courtroom itself will also be smaller and quieter.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. NADLI: Mr. Speaker, I admire this work greatly. Here in the NWT, our healthcare and education systems are taking some important steps to improve resources for people with FASD, but, unfortunately, these make the gaps in our justice system stand out even more. I am hopeful that one day soon our people can have access to supports like those offered in Manitoba. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. The Member for Nahendeh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST IN NAHENDEH

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have been approached by many parents and leadership that we need our own speech and language pathologists and occupational therapists in the Deh Cho. It is my understanding that there are over 70 speech and language pathologist cases and over 50 occupational therapy cases that need to be seen from the Nahendeh alone. The frustrating thing is that this has to be done in 13 service days. If there is one day of bad weather, the assessments get cancelled for months. This tells me that the services are lacking for the Nahendeh and Deh Cho and our youth. It explains why some of our EDI scores are so bad.

A majority of the clinics are held in major centres in Fort Providence, Fort Simpson, and Hay River. This means the smaller communities, such as Jean Marie and Nahanni Butte, Sambaa K'e, Wrigley, and Kakisa, would have to travel to these centres to get their children assessed. This means that the children would be assessed in a foreign environment instead of the location they are familiar with.

It is my understanding that families who have children with complex needs find it difficult to travel outside of their home communities due to the challenges that exist for their children. As well, it is my understanding that speech and language pathologists and occupational therapist services do not travel to smaller communities, with the exception of once in Jean Marie.

With the five small communities in Deh Cho proper, we are seeing youth not identified until they start going to school. In my research, I found that early intervention is the key to many speech and language pathology and occupational therapy issues. If speech and language pathologists and occupational therapists could travel to communities and provide workshops for the communities in collaboration with early child staff, many issues would be identified and possibly improved on prior to entering school. Decrease in vulnerability is noted on the EDI scores for the Deh Cho. How is this done? I believe by having speech and language pathology and occupational therapist staff in place.

If we have a speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist hired in Fort Simpson as part of the Dehcho Health and Social Services team, the patients currently being seen by Stanton and Hay River staff could be enveloped into the Deh Cho case load, further reducing the case load and helping these communities.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services later today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON TLICHO ALL-SEASON ROAD ECONOMIC EVALUATION

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. The government is ready to place a checkmark against another commitment fulfilled in the mandate of the 18th Assembly. The money is in place to build the road to Whati, and construction is expected to begin this fall, but let's take a moment to reflect on the cost of this project.

Mr. Speaker, two-and-a-half years ago I spoke in this House about the economic evaluation of the all-season road. The information came from a study by Nichols Applied Management of Edmonton, and it was completed in March 2015. To summarize the benefits, there will be a glut of construction jobs that will last, at most, three winters. The project will provide much-needed but short-lived jobs. A number of people will be employed afterwards for operations and maintenance.

Better returns on the road are available if and when Fortune Minerals builds its 50-kilometre spur road from its NICO project to Whati. There is no telling when that will happen. Fortune Minerals has the necessary permits, but the company has been unable to finance the \$600 million project, and with its stock trading at 12 cents a share, development looks like a dot on the distant horizon.

Those are the benefits. Let's now turn to the costs. The 2015 report that I just spoke about put the cost of the road at \$152 million. Two years ago my colleague from Yellowknife North asked the Infrastructure Minister for the all-in cost. His reply was \$175 million, but that estimate is also short of the mark.

Ten days ago, the Minister announced that the contract had been signed to build the road. The NWT will spend \$214 million for predevelopment and construction costs over the next three years, and a further \$198 million over 25 years to repay the principal and interest on the debt, along with operations and maintenance of the road. The total all-in cost is \$411 million, shared by the GNWT at 75 percent and Canada for the rest.

Mr. Speaker, let's focus on the opportunity cost. What else could \$411 million buy? If we spent it on infrastructure, it could have bought a segment of road to more marketable projects in the Slave Geological Province. It could have increased the life of the diamond mines by reducing the operating costs of a winter road, or it could have been spent on people. It could have wiped out our housing problems.

I seek your consent to conclude my statement. Mahsi.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, it could have met the needs of seniors who want to remain in their communities while they age. I don't think we have done enough to debate the opportunity cost of this and other infrastructure projects in this House. I recognize that it is too late for this debate to take place about the road to Whati, but it is not too late for other large infrastructure projects that the government is shopping around. It is time for the

people to have their turn. I will have questions for the Minister of Finance. Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Hay River North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INVESTING IN APPRENTICESHIPS

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is well known that there is a shortage of skilled labour in the Northwest Territories and that it is getting worse. The number of apprentice program registrations and completions are down, and the number of licensed journeymen who are retiring is on the rise.

This shortage has negative effects across the board. Seniors can't get renovations done on their homes to help them age in place, because there aren't enough qualified people to do the work. The growth of small- and medium-sized businesses is being stifled because they don't have the capacity to take on new work. Our government can't deliver on half of the infrastructure projects that it promises to complete. An untold number of available jobs are going to fly in and fly out workers. The list goes on, Mr. Speaker, but I am sure that I don't have to convince anyone that this is a serious problem. As such, it requires the full attention of this Assembly and must be addressed by the whole of government.

It has been said in this House on many occasions that the best social program is a good job. I disagree, Mr. Speaker. The best social program is a good education, because it is the last social program that you will ever need. If you are a journeyman electrician, you are probably not going to be living in social housing or collecting income assistance. Investments in training boost the economy, increase government revenues, and lower future expenditures.

I will give credit where credit is due. In the past few years, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment has worked hard to promote the trades, develop strategies, revamp programs, and made investments to help individuals, small businesses, and organizations offset costs of training. However, Mr. Speaker, it appears that we are missing the full support of the three GNWT departments responsible for capital projects: the Department of Infrastructure, the Department of Finance, and the NWT Housing Corporation.

While programs to help private businesses provide training are great, they are not enough. Small businesses often don't have the capacity to provide training, and increasingly, they often don't have enough work to take on trainees or apprentices. That is why the government has to step up its

game. Every time the government plans to build a new facility, procure a new manufactured product, or enter into a new P3 partnership, the relevant departments need to figure out how to best utilize the project as an opportunity to provide training.

Mr. Speaker, an honest effort will require a change to the way that business is done, a change to how RFPs are designed and evaluated, and it will require the government to look beyond the bottom line and realize that an investment in training is one that we can't afford not to make. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON FUEL PRICES IN NUNAKPUT

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The cost of living in Nunakput is the highest in the Northwest Territories. On February 18th, the price of diesel fuel in Paulatuk went up almost 17 percent, hitting \$1.94 per litre. The cost of regular gasoline is up to \$1.98 a litre. Prices went up in Sachs Harbour and Ulukhaktok, as well.

Mr. Speaker, the rising cost has been hard on hunters living in these communities. People need fuel to hunt, to feed their families, and to continue to pass on their cultural survival skills to future generations. Families simply cannot afford the price increases of fuel, supplies, and equipment.

When families cannot hunt, they have to purchase all food from the store. The prices are simply shocking compared to the prices here in Yellowknife. I will not mention the quality or variety, but just to buy basic essentials is impossible for families. Even with Nutrition North, people are struggling. Inuvialuit prefer to have traditional food, harvested from their own time spent out on the land.

The average personal income in Nunakput communities isn't much more than \$35,000 a year, Mr. Speaker, relying on numbers from our Bureau of Statistics. That is not even close to the average in the Northwest Territories, which is over \$60,000 a year. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for many of my constituents to afford fuel at these prices. The Minister of Infrastructure will let me know that the prices of fuel in Arctic communities are subsidized. That is all well and good, if the subsidy can reflect and positively affect the cost of living in that community. Mr. Speaker, on average this year, a tank of gas for a snowmobile is around \$50. When we raise the fuel price, all that we are doing is creating hardship for residents in our communities.

The mandate of this government calls for action to reduce the cost of living, not to increase it. The mandate also calls upon the government to promote the consumption of traditional foods, such as fish and wildlife, improve nutrition, and improve the wellness and the way of life of Indigenous peoples in the territory. Investment in traditional harvesting is another priority that we set in our mandate. So is reducing poverty.

Raising the fuel price in Nunakput communities does the exact opposite in all of those areas, Mr. Speaker. The high cost of fuel prevents the majority of people's access to food, cultural values, and wellness.

However, there comes a time in point when any increase is too much. What we need is a commitment to fulfill this mandate item and a continued promise to serve our Arctic communities better by easing the high cost of living. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON STANTON HOSPITAL TRANSITION

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I have been asking for some time now about the transition plan for the opening of the new Stanton hospital, the old Stanton hospital renovations, and what happens with the services operating during those renovations. I checked the Stanton renewal website, and there is a lot of helpful information there, but no real timelines for the transition of services or renovations.

As I understand it, May 26th is the day when patients will be transferred from the old Stanton to the new Stanton hospital. I am sure that this must involve a monumental amount of planning and coordination. It is great that, according to the Stanton renewal website, the old Stanton is going to be renovated to allow extended care; transcription services; primary clinics; food and laundry service for extended care and long-term care; outpatient rehab programs, which includes occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language pathology, and audiology; and long-term care; but where is the schedule?

All I am asking for is clear communications showing when and where services will be located during that transition. It could easily be done by a dated Gantt chart, of course, subject to change. I haven't seen anything like that, even though Stanton is in my riding. I think that's the least we should be doing for our residents, who rely on Stanton, and even for the staff who work there. As we move closer to transition day, we need to ramp up our public

information efforts, so answers are there for people and they will know where the services are available, and when.

I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services later today. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. If we missed anyone in the gallery, thanks for being here with us. It's always great to have an audience as part of our proceedings. Mahsi. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 622-18(3):

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS IN NAHENDEH

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I spoke about speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist positions in the riding, and the need for them. Can the Minister please tell us: how many service days does the department provide for the communities of Fort Simpson and Fort Liard in respect to speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist caseloads? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are 19 days allocated for speech-language pathology and OTs for the Deh Cho, and that's broken down as 10 for Simpson, and six for Providence and Fort Liard. That's site visits, daytime face-to-face meetings. This does not include weekly telehealth sessions with clients or intensive rehab sessions held at Stanton, where a client has to come in. These are also separate, just so we're all clear, these are separate from the numbers available for adults. These are for paed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. THOMPSON: That's good information to hear. Can the Minister please tell us how many rehabilitation speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist caseloads people are on the waiting list for in the 2018-2019 fiscal year?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There is a wait list for the zero- to 18-year-olds for 2018-2019. There are 23 for OT and five for speech-language therapy. Of those, nine OTs are for children under five, and five speech-language therapy are for children under five.

MR. THOMPSON: I think I missed how many cases are out there, not the waiting lists, but I'll go on to

my next question. It is my understanding that the department is not looking at placing a speech and language pathologist and occupational therapist position in the Deh Cho. Can the Minister explain how we are going to improve services in this area?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: My apologies. I forgot to give the number for the caseload for rehabilitation services. For OT, it's 57 in the Deh Cho, and for speech, it's 85 in the Deh Cho. With respect to the follow-up question, we are working hard to support the demand for rehab services across the Northwest Territories. We are focusing on improving services delivered by the existing rehabilitation teams that exist. Additional resources have been allocated to the Beaufort-Delta in 2018-2019, and while we are proposing some additional investment into the Stanton team for 2019-2020, there have been significant new investments put in place. Over the past two years, we have increased the budget for rehab services by \$2.02 million, and we've increased it by 13 positions. This is an increase of 33 percent in the budget in this area, taking us from \$6.2 million to \$8.6 million, and an increase of 21 percent in positions.

Currently, before the rollout in the Beaufort-Delta, the travel teams all worked out of the Yellowknife office, or the Yellowknife Stanton. Those travel days that were previously allocated to the Beaufort-Delta will now be reallocated to the South Slave, which includes Fort Smith, Hay River, and the entire Deh Cho region. With those reallocations and the creation of the positions at Stanton, we are actually anticipating an increase in the number of travel days, but also actual employment time, which can be done by telehealth to the Deh Cho, which will greatly increase the services in the Deh Cho. To that end, we're also looking at having the travel teams travel beyond just the locations they've been travelling to, which are Fort Providence, Fort Liard, and Fort Simpson, and actually including some of the smaller communities where the caseload demands it.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nahendeh.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister for answering those three questions with good information, and I appreciate that. My last question: does Stanton have therapists who can provide specialized services for children with complex needs, and how does the region access these resources? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: We do have speech-language pathologists and we do have OT for paed. We also have the FASD and the ADS coordinator positions. All these positions can be accessed through referrals through their health providers in the communities. Obviously, we were

out there trying to get the referrals done so that we can get these kids the supports and services they need. Regardless of where you are in the Northwest Territories, it still takes a referral to access any of our rehab services, regardless of where you live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

QUESTION 623-18(3):
FUEL PRICES IN NUNAKPUT

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about the cost of living in Nunakput, and my questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure. My question is: how does the Minister justify the recent increase of fuel prices in Nunakput, given the mandate priority of reducing the cost of living, reducing poverty, and investing in traditional harvesting and consumption of traditional foods? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The simple answer is the cost of the product went up, therefore triggering a rate increase. The cost of fuel is driven by factors outside the control of the Government of the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories does not make the market, nor set the cost of fuel. Fuel prices reflect the cost of supply and delivery of petroleum products. The fuel prices are adjusted periodically to reflect the recovery of full fuel costs, including the product cost, transportation cost, sale commission, operations, maintenance expense, and operation losses and taxes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I appreciate the response. The cost of delivery is high in our region, with the current structure that we have. I'm sure there are other competitors that can deliver fuel at a lower rate. However, we rely on the system that we have right now. Based on the average annual consumption, how much would it cost the government to leave the prices of fuel in Ulukhaktok, Sachs Harbour, and Paulatuk where they were before the latest price increase?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: The total cost to the government to leave the fuel prices unchanged in all three communities in the Member's riding would have cost us \$607,000. To do this, though, to inform this House, would be outside FMB policy. The Financial Management Board sets the direction and policy, and fuel prices are adjusted accordingly. To exempt certain communities from increases would not be consistent or equitable with how all the other communities are treated and would not be affordable to the Petroleum Resources Revolving

Fund or the Government of the Northwest Territories.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: I understand that sometimes the cost of delivering goods is out of our control and we must comply. Just to come back, the cost of living is high in the northern part of the territory. I appreciate the Minister's response, because I know they're always looking out for the best interests of our residents. My final question is: will the Minister commit to working with his colleagues and myself to revise the process for setting fuel prices in remote communities to ensure that they reduce the cost of living and do not result in hardship for people?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I said, the Petroleum Products Revolving Fund Act requires the Department of Infrastructure to recover all operating costs from the sale of our fuel. The proposed changes would be contrary to the petroleum resource program, which is self-funded and would have to be debated and voted on in the Legislative Assembly if we were to do something like that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 624-18(3):
MACKENZIE VALLEY RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT ACT REVIEW

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Premier. Earlier today, in my statement, I talked about the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act and the need to bring it home to the North. In 2014, we devolved the land, water, and resources to the Northwest Territories, but we didn't devolve the regulatory controls. I would like to ask the Premier: what are the biggest potential benefits of a review of the Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act from our government's point of view? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The Honourable Premier.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Essentially, the elements of the MVRMA within the devolution agreement are being reviewed. The potential benefits are all related to increased local decision-making, for example, items listed in 3.17 of the devolution agreement, including approval of issuance of Type A water licences, which a Member referred to in his Minister's statement, designation of inspectors and board-appointment decisions. For example, Aboriginal governments, such as the Tlicho, can appoint their own members, and our government cannot. This is an oversight that we intend to address, as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you to the Premier for that reply. I would also like to ask the Premier what sort of research or let's call it preparation has our government done to get ready for the review of the federal MVRMA?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: The Government of the Northwest Territories has been working within this regulatory system since the 1990s with both the federal government and Aboriginal governments. That was when the MVRMA first came into effect. We have continued to work within the system post-devolution. The federal review will ideally lead to further delegation of province-like authorities, and our system is ready to take on those authorities.

MR. VANTHUYNE: I think that is welcome commentary from the Premier. I would also like to ask what communication, in fact, has there been between our government and Canada with regards to the subject of reviewing the MVRMA?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: I and the government have regularly communicated to federal leaders the importance of fulfilling these commitments set out in the devolution agreement. As a matter of fact, with the change in government four years ago, we made the suggestion that we should get rid of the five-year requirement and start the review right away, but there was some unfinished business with regards to some of the changes that were being proposed. We have waited until those were addressed satisfactorily.

The devolution agreement commits to the development of the terms of reference of the review after April 1, 2019. I am pleased to advise the Member that the Minister responsible for Northern Affairs has readily agreed to commence this review even earlier than what was provided for in the devolution agreement.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It seems as though there is more good news, and we are slowly making our way to full devolution, including having regulatory control here in the North. Mr. Speaker, what communication has there been between our government and Indigenous governments and industry in the NWT about potential review of the MVRMA? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We are in regular communications with Indigenous governments through the Intergovernmental Council. Obviously, they play an integral part in any of these decisions. The concerns that they had addressed when they went to court four years ago, I think that those are

being addressed. I think I will be in a good position to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 625-18(3):
TLICHO ALL-SEASON ROAD COSTS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Finance. Two years ago, his colleague, the Minister of Infrastructure, told the Member for Yellowknife North that the all-in cost of the road to Whati was estimated at \$175 million. The cost of building the road announced this month is 20 percent higher than that figure. Why are construction costs so much higher now than two years ago? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The direct construction cost, I think the Member made it in her statement before, \$185 million. The total capital cost of \$214 million, that would include the crude interest, predevelopment costs, and also GNWT costs for geotechnical studies, the EA process, project management, and provide funding for the measures resulting from the EA process Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate the Minister's response, but I didn't hear an answer. In two years, the two figures have differed by 20 percent. Can he tell us why that is?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The initial \$175 million from the cost two years ago, since then obviously, the price to direct construction cost went up to \$185 million. That is a \$10 million difference. Maybe the prices of material and things have changed. I am not sure exactly what that \$10 million is made up of, but I can get that information and provide that information to the Member.

MS. GREEN: I appreciate that commitment from the Minister. I don't recall any discussion of the potential costs of operations and maintenance prior to the announcement earlier this month. I note that the Minister of Infrastructure didn't repeat the all-in cost of \$411 million in his statement last week. My question is: what efforts did the government make to inform the public of the actual all-in costs of this road, given that it was more than double any estimate that had been voiced publicly?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: The direct construction costs are \$185 million, as was noted previously. The total capital cost was \$214 million, as was noted previously as well as some of the reasons the cost was that high. The \$400 million through the P3 partnership, that would represent the total value of

the 28-year contract with NorthStar Infrastructure, who are the proponents of the Whati road, of which 25 years of operations and maintenance payments are included.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I didn't hear an answer in that, but I am going to push on. The Minister has said that this P3 project will save over 15 percent compared to a traditional model. Can the Minister provide an explanation or why this would be the case? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: I believe there was an answer to the Member's previous question in the response that I provided. They wanted to know why it was \$411 million, and I explained that was through the 28-year contract with NorthStar Infrastructure. I think that was self-explanatory.

The 15 percent, compared to a traditional model, this represents a value for money that results from a P3 contract over if, the GNWT, we were to construct it, operate, and maintain the road as a GNWT project, we would pay in excess of 15 percent more than the cost that I had quoted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 626-18(3):
SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGE TAX

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier in the sitting, the honourable Minister of Finance was asked questions around the consultations related to the proposed sugar tax. Looking now, I see that the engagement is closed. I am wondering if the Minister can update the House as to when the results of the consultation will be made publicly available. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is some concern with the sugar-sweetened drinks tax. We have changed the name. It was going to be the "sugary tax," but we have decided to change it to the "sugar-sweetened" because there are a number of drinks that are sugary that are not sugar-sweetened.

The consultation, as the Member noted, ended in January 2019. We have had public meetings in a number of communities, and we have heard from members of the public. The report of the results of the public consultations is anticipated for March of 2019, so March would start tomorrow, the next day, and then March has 31 days, so we will try to have that document released. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TESTART: Has the Minister learned anything from this consultation that he feels necessary to share with the House now, such as abandoning this unnecessary tax?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: We are doing our due diligence. This was to investigate the introduction of a sugar-sweetened tax. It doesn't say the implementation of a sugar-sweetened tax. This was to investigate. We have heard from people across the Northwest Territories. Obviously, you have seen some of the comments in the news from one person saying that, "I am opposed to any type of tax, and I will continue to drink pop regardless," and somebody else calling it a "goofy tax," but this was just to investigate the introduction of the tax. It doesn't say we are going to implement it. So, being the consensus-type government that we are, and we hear the voices of the people, according to our code of conduct, we have to listen to what they say before a decision is made to proceed any further.

MR. TESTART: Is the Minister going to implement the tax, then?

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure if I need an interpreter. I said this was to investigate the introduction of a tax. It doesn't say that we are going to do the tax. There is still some work that needs to be done. We need to do our due diligence, and once we do that, a decision will be made at that time, based on all the information received, as to whether the tax will be going forward to implementation or not.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My constituents want to know, and that is why I am asking these questions. Certainty is what we are looking for, is what they are looking for, what I am looking for. I appreciate the Minister is proceeding through the consultation, so, if there is a decision to implement a, what are we calling it, the "sugar-sweetened tax," when can this Assembly expect to see it? Thank you.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Mr. Speaker, my constituents want to know, as well, as to the course of action that we are going, and I said that we will receive the feedback, and we will analyze the feedback, and then we will make a determination at the time whether this tax should proceed, the sugar-sweetened tax should proceed, and, until then, I mean it is hypothetical for me to say that yea or nay. I will wait until the results, and then, as most good governments do, we will make an informed decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

QUESTION 627-18(3):
FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER
(FASD) SPECIALIZED JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In my statement, I talked about the fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, so my questions are to the Minister of Justice. Without a question here in the Northwest Territories, we have high rates of alcohol and drug abuse. My question is: the Northwest Territories Wellness Court is meant to support people with addictions or cognitive issues. Can the Minister tell me if our wellness courts currently support people with FASD? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Justice.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The wellness court is an alternative to conventional criminal court. It focuses on the offender rather than the offence, and it seeks to address underlying issues of drug and alcohol addiction, mental health and cognitive challenges, and, certainly, it is an option for those with FASD. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NADLI: Even so, although it may be a better option than regular courts, I am not convinced that wellness courts are the most suitable option for individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Wellness court could create demand that offenders accept responsibility for the crimes that they have been charged with, and "be ready to put in a lot of hard work." For many people with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, this just may not be a fair expectation. How have our courts programs have been adapted to suit the unique needs of people with FASD?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I do appreciate the Member opposite's concern about this very serious problem and his desire to see the best programming possible for people who find themselves in criminal court, particularly those suffering with FASD. I don't agree with the suggestion, however, that all people with FASD are not able to accept responsibility and put in a lot of hard work.

It is important to recognize that the programs are not necessarily for everybody and that the potential participants are assessed for suitability. The reality is that anyone pursuing the type of program offered is that success will require the willingness to accept responsibility and to work to change behaviour. That work may be hard, and I do appreciate that, and I do realize that it will be a challenge for those with FASD, as it is a challenge for those with other cognitive disabilities or addictions. However, this court, which has been in operation for more than five years, I believe, is a path for those who find themselves in these situations.

MR. NADLI: I think the department is on the right path. There is some innovation in terms of thinking, to try to decolonize the society here in the North, especially attitudes towards incarceration, and so can the Minister commit to considering the implementation of specialized courts programming for individuals with FASD in the NWT?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I can commit to the Member opposite that the wellness court program will be continually reviewed and improved. There is a steering committee for wellness court that includes representatives from the judiciary, Crown, and defence bar. Improvements can always be made, Mr. Speaker, and certainly we do want to make improvements to deal with those offenders who find themselves before the wellness court. I understand that more than a hundred people since 2014 have been referred to wellness court. The court, as I say, was set up in 2014. The first sitting was October 2nd of that year, so I do regard the wellness court as being a success. I realize that there is a lot of work involved by everyone, including the offenders. We are always looking to improve the system.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the outset of responding to my first question, the Minister stated that, you know, there are options to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder in terms of working with the department. As another program, aside from the alternative court process, what other options does he mean in terms of addressing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder? Mahsi.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We understand that this problem has many facets and that they are not always dealt with the best in the court system. Of course, I am speaking of the wellness court that can assist, in my view, in these types of situations with those who do have cognitive or mental issues or addiction issues. There are also other options, through Health and Social Services, where people can be assisted.

The wellness court is a specific court dealing with offenders that find themselves before the court system, but that doesn't mean that there aren't other programs that can't assist. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 628-18(3):
FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER
(FASD) SPECIALIZED JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Earlier today I spoke about the transition of health

and medical services within the old and new Stanton hospitals and possibly offsite during renovations.

Can the Minister share any insights into the planning and coordination that is happening for the day when patients will be transferred from the old Stanton to the new Stanton? I believe that day is May 26, 2019. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. May 26th is fast approaching. It is going to be an incredibly important day for the healthcare system, and it is also going to be a very complex and busy day. In order to ensure that we have little-to-no patient interruption or reduction in services during that time, we have been doing a significant amount of planning.

Health Care Relocations Inc. has been contracted to guide the Stanton team and the Stanton staff through transition planning. Operational readiness activities have been under way since November 2016, with the creation of 17 different transition planning teams.

The final move plan will be developed in such incredible detail and minute detail that the movement of patients will be scheduled down to the minute, with minimal impact on patients. The patient move will occur in one day, on May 26th. All necessary infrastructure, equipment, furniture, and systems in the new hospital will be in place and tested long before that date to ensure that we have a smooth transition.

Like I said, we want to reduce or have very little to no impact or reduction in services due to the transition. There will be some mock moves tested, some practice moves before the day actually comes. On that day, everybody, every service, will be coming out of the old Stanton building into the new Stanton building and a couple of other different locations around town for those services that will not be permanently located in the new Stanton building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks to the Minister for that. I am very excited. I will probably be a spectator, watching it all, but I appreciate that a lot of work is going into this. It is a very important event.

When I searched the Stanton renewal website, I could find some information about the final location for various services. There are some nice floor plans and so on, but there doesn't seem to be any information there about the transition period during renovations, when some of these services may be moved offsite. Does the Minister have this kind of information, and can he share it?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: There will be some temporary program moves as renovations are completed in the legacy Stanton building, the old building. For instance, outpatient rehab will be temporarily located on level 2 of the centre square tower, while speech and audiology will remain at the Stanton Medical Centre, which is the building beside McDonald's. The extended care unit will temporarily move to level 5 of the new Stanton building. There will be some temporary moves.

Mr. Speaker, we want this information to be clear. We want this information to be transparent. We are intending to keep our website updated on a regular basis. The Member and I had a quick conversation about the website this morning, at which point I went and quickly checked the website to see if I could find the information. I was able to find pretty much everything that I was looking for. I may not have been looking for the same information that the Member was looking for.

I know that the Member wants us to do some updates on the website. I am going to encourage the Member to come down to my office, and we can sit in front of my computer together and try to find the pieces of information that he is looking for and make some suggestions to me on how we might improve our website, because, bottom line, we want to be clear; we want to be transparent; we want the information available to the public.

MR. O'REILLY: I would be delighted to join the Minister in his office and work away on his computer with him. I am sure that there is going to be a big public information campaign rolling out about these transitions within the old and new hospitals and so on.

Part of that campaign should include information about how services will transition from the old Stanton hospital to offsite, and the Minister has given some of that, during the renovations. Then, of course, they are going to return to the Stanton legacy building that the Minister referred to. Can the Minister tell us when all of this information is going to be put together and when it is going to be made available to the public?

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Some of that information has already been made public. We have been clear on what types of services and what services will be going into the Stanton legacy building. The extended care will be there. Long-term care will be there, and there will be a number of other services, including some of the rehab services, the primary care clinics, and other things. Those are going to be in the old Stanton.

Like I said, I am happy to sit down with the Member. I was able to find that information when I looked. I would be happy to sit down with the

Member and figure out what is missing from the average user's point-of-view, to make sure that we get the information out there. I, like the Member and like everybody in this House, want that information out there. We want our public to know where the services that they need are located so that there is no confusion during the two-to-three years that it will take to retrofit the legacy Stanton building and get everybody moved back in.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President, and thanks to the Minister for that. I guess what I am really looking for here is a Gantt chart, a list of the services that are located in the old hospital now, when they may be moved offsite, when they are going to come back, and where they are in the interim. I think a Gantt chart would help.

I am prepared to sit down and work with him on this, but can the Minister commit to putting this information about the transition of these services together using a Gantt chart on the Stanton renewal website? I would be happy to work with them and get that done as quickly as we can, but can he commit to doing that? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: I commit to getting the information that the Member is looking for out into the public through our website. I recognize that I am not an expert in communications. I don't believe the Member is an expert in communications, although he may be good.

My recommendation is that we rely on the experts who are involved in getting information to the public on a regular basis and take their input to make sure that the right tool is being used. If it's a Gantt chart, let's do a Gantt chart. If it's not a Gantt chart, let's not do a Gantt chart. Bottom line: let's get the information out there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

QUESTION 629-18(3):
HEATING ISSUES AT JOE GREENLAND
CENTRE

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation. Mr. Speaker, earlier this session I asked the Minister about the heating at the Joe Greenland Centre, and I would like to follow up.

I would like to ask the Minister: what is the status of the work on the heating at the Joe Greenland Centre? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is a little bit of history with the Joe Greenland Centre in Aklavik. That was completed in the fall of 2015. When it was completed, there were concerns raised by residents of the community that some of the units didn't have adequate heating during the winter.

The Housing Corporation did do an assessment, and we found, in order to resolve the issue and the situation, that in-floor heating was identified as the most appropriate solution to fix that problem. We went ahead, and we did that. The installation of in-floor heating began last year in November, when the required materials were able to get to the community.

From my understanding, Mr. Speaker, it has been completed. We will get an official confirmation for the Member so that he can share it with his constituents. I know that, when we did go and do the opening for the Northern Pathways to Housing in Aklavik, we did go into the Joe Greenland Centre and got a good update. From my understanding, at this moment it has been completed. We will get an official confirmation for the Member so that he can share that with his constituents.

MR. BLAKE: I know this has been an ongoing issue since the opening. You know, this could have been avoided if the department didn't try to cut costs during construction. I'd like to ask the Minister: is there any further work needed on the Joe Greenland Centre, or will this solve the heating problems?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Once the residents raised the issue of the heating issues during the winter months, we did work with our professional engineers and our designers to address the issue. As I mentioned earlier, in-floor heating was the best solution to address the issue. We have done that, and as I mentioned, from my understanding, it has been completed. I will get an official confirmation for the Member. Moving forward, we will continue to assess the Joe Greenland building. I mean, it's providing a valuable service to our residents in the Beaufort-Delta, and we will continue to monitor that particular building.

MR. BLAKE: That's good news. I'm sure the elders there will appreciate that. One of the other things that the elders wanted to see was a meeting area in the back. Right now, if elders want any fresh air or to go outside and have a cigarette, or something, they have to sit at the entrance, at the front door. Will the Minister now look into a meeting area in the back yard of the Joe Greenland Centre for the elders to have cook-outs during the summer?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We just completed a seniors' planning study that we tabled in the House yesterday. I think that, when we are investing in some of our most vulnerable people, obviously, we want to make sure that we get input from our residents, as well as our stakeholders, when we're doing this. A perfect case in point is Fort Providence, with their seniors' residence. We're doing some really good work there. This is something that we'll continue to work on with the residents and the leadership, how we can develop some type of congregation area, meeting place, for the seniors in the Joe Greenland Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Mackenzie Delta.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We always talk about aging in place, here. Would the Minister work with the Minister of Health to cost-share on a gazebo for elders to enjoy the summer, to visit with one another, and also to visit with community members? As I mentioned, it's great scenery there, at the location that they have, but it's a shame that our elders do have to sit outside to enjoy fresh air facing away from the mountains. You know, we should be making use of the scenery there. It's a good place to enjoy life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: I appreciate the advocacy that the Member is bringing on for seniors and aging in place. With the planning study, we did identify that there are certain communities across the Northwest Territories that we do need to provide adequate care and services to, and as I have mentioned in this House before, the three communities that were identified were Yellowknife, Hay River, and Norman Wells. We want to make sure that we identify our priorities as a government, but at the same time we also want to make sure that our Indigenous governments and our municipalities also work with us and take part of that ownership to provide the services. The main thing right now is to make sure that we do provide the services for seniors aging in place, and at this moment we want to make sure that they can have an adequate space, health, and wellness of their own. Right now, the communities that have been identified have been Yellowknife, Hay River, and Norman Wells. If you want to look at gazebos and other things that might be on top of the priority costs, then we'll have to have those discussions in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

QUESTION 630-18(3):
ADDRESSING A SHORTAGE OF SKILLED
LABOUR

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier I spoke about the need for GNWT departments responsible for capital acquisitions, specifically Infrastructure, the Housing Corporation, and Finance, to better utilise the tens, or rather hundreds, of millions of dollars they spend annually on infrastructure to increase the number of skilled workers in the NWT. I honestly personally consider it irresponsible that we're not doing this to a much greater extent.

When the Department of Infrastructure's budget was being debated in Committee of the Whole, the Minister of Information told me that I should direct my questions about training to the Minister of ECE, so I have some questions for the Minister of ECE. We'll start with the basics. According to ECE's Apprenticeship, Trades, and Occupational Certification Strategic Plan, the NWT is facing a worsening shortage of skilled labour. What is ECE doing to increase the number of journeymen and skilled workers in the Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member is right. There is an issue about apprenticeships; in fact, it's a national issue that the numbers are going down, so we need to work on that. Since the Skills 4 Success was introduced in 2015, though, we have had 375 new apprenticeships and 188 certificates of qualification issued. One of the bigger issues that we recognize in doing that work, though, is that, one, it's getting them into it, but it's also supporting our apprenticeships to complete. So that is one of our strategies that we're looking at. In 2017, we did an Apprenticeship, Trades, and Occupational Certification Strategy to address the needs that we have for apprenticeships. We've made a lot of progress, actually, so I want to go over some of that.

Some of the progress that we've done is we've revised the Trades and Occupations Wage Subsidy Program to better support employers; so we've increased that for them. That happened in April 2018. We are also working in cooperation with Aurora College to deliver new programs. That includes the revised Housing Maintainer Program and introducing the Pre-employment Carpentry and Pre-employment Electrical Programs. We are developing a communication strategy, which will be implemented in the beginning of March 2019. We are also doing a training module for career development officers, which will be offered in May 2019. So those are done.

Some of the things that we are also in the process of doing is we are reviewing our apprenticeship

record book to streamline the reporting. We get a lot of complaints. People say it's cumbersome, so hopefully this will work to streamline things and make them easier. We are leading a pan-territorial working group to revise and redesign the Housing Maintainer Occupational Standards. This is in process, and we are currently at the second year of our strategy. So we have a lot of work to do, but we've done quite a bit. We recognize that it's an issue, and we are working as hard as we can to address it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMPSON: I looked into what ECE is doing. They're actually doing quite a few things, and I think even more than the Minister just mentioned. I think they need to improve their supports for the career development officers. I think we probably need an extra one in Hay River. The community learning centres at Aurora College probably need to be better utilized, as well, to help people train to actually take the trades entrance exam, which is a big barrier to many people. There are a lot of investments there, and I'm not a fan of just throwing money at a problem and hoping that it fixes it. We need to know what the problem is and if what we're doing to address it is effective. That being said, the strategic plan the Minister mentioned calls for the creation of performance measures and indicators and the implementation of an effective data management and information system to track and report on results. What is the status of this work?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: I want to acknowledge the MLA for actually talking about some of the things that we have done, because it's nice to hear in the House. We have a lot of work to do, but it's also nice to recognize that we are working at things, so thank you for that comment.

What are we doing? We have developed our measurement plan. It is already done. Some of the indicators that we have been looking at: we will be measuring stakeholder satisfaction with the program, that is normal; the number of apprentices that are registered and that are certified under the program; and the number and the type of new trades programs introduced. Those are a few of the things that we will be measuring. That is done. That work is done.

We are actually, in the next couple of months, going to be reviewing the outcomes of our evaluations to see what needs to be done. This fits really well within our polytechnic visioning because the vision exercise is talking about what we need in the territory. This work is coming at an opportune time to be able to look at where we are moving forward within our polytechnic university.

MR. SIMPSON: As I have stated, we need a whole-of-government effort to effectively address this issue. We need ECE, ITI, Infrastructure, Finance,

the Housing Corporation, and probably even Health and Social Services, all working together.

When I asked questions about training to the Minister of Infrastructure, he directed me to address my questions to the Minister of ECE. This leads me to believe that there is some sort of formal relationship between the departments, which is great. I know that the Minister of Infrastructure has stated that there was training done with the Canyon Creek project and the Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway, but I want to make sure that there are training opportunities for the fish plant in Hay River and the 48-bed long-term care facility in Hay River and all of those projects, Mr. Speaker. We have to utilize every one.

In terms of a formal relationship, are there MOUs or other similar instruments in place with Infrastructure and the Housing Corporation regarding using infrastructure projects for training and with Finance regarding utilizing P3 projects for training? Does ECE have these types of MOUs?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: We don't have a traditional MOU, because that is not something that we use traditionally across departments. It is more what we use with contractors outside of the government.

However, in saying that, we do work very closely across the departments. Our deputy ministers meet regularly. We have committees of Cabinet who sit and meet regularly. As well, we have our regional training partnerships that ECE uses. It has representation from ECE, Aurora College, Indigenous governments, and industry partners. We work closely, as closely as we can.

Some of the projects where we have been finding examples of how we work together have been the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway and the Canyon Creek all-season road. With the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway, approximately 185 people were trained on that. The contractor trained over 70 people using simulators to operate rock trucks, graders, and excavator equipment. We provided additional on-the-job training. They also trained one administrative assistant, one heavy equipment support person, three apprentices, and 40 individuals with class 1 and class 3 driver's licences. As well, within the Canyon Creek project, the contractor provided training for 12 trainees and 16 heavy equipment operators, as well as employment opportunities for 50 people during that.

Those are just two examples. I have a list of them, but I am not going to go through them all, Mr. Speaker. We try to work as closely as possible. We need to do better. We know that, but we are trying.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Hay River North.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give the government credit for what they have done in the past, but I am looking to the future. That is what I am concerned about.

I know that the deputy ministers meet and Cabinet meets, but there is nothing official in place. In the absence of any official relationship, how, exactly, does ECE engage with Infrastructure, the Housing Corporation, and Finance in the evaluation of capital needs and the development and evaluation of RFPs to ensure that training opportunities are fully realized? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: As stated before, we do have a deputy ministers committee, as well as a Committee-of-Cabinet to work with the economy. We still have work to do. Major projects, such as when we look at mines, socio-economic agreements, et cetera, we sit together. The Ministers actually sit together at the table and discuss what we need. Those are put into things such as socio-economic agreements.

All of the departments, when it comes to capital needs, believe me, we are all at that table. We all have our own interests in that process, though, I think, maybe more so than working collaboratively together. What we are falling down, though, in my opinion, is the evaluation of RFPs. That is something that we actually should be looking more at. I will bring that to the Committee-of-Cabinet for the Economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

QUESTION 631-18(3):
TLICHO ALL-SEASON ROAD COSTS

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. I have a few more questions for my friend, the Minister of Finance.

I would like to ask the Minister: of the \$411 million of spending on the road to Whati, how much of that will go to Tlicho businesses and individuals over the 28-year period? Mahsi.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Minister of Finance.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The \$400 million that is being invested in the project agreement signed between the GNWT and North Star Infrastructure is designed to maximize the Tlicho and northern involvement. In addition, the Tlicho government has directly invested, I believe, 20 percent into the project.

As far as the actual breakdown of what is going to be staying in the Tlicho region, I think that we will have a better idea of that as the project gets moving forward. As we do with most projects, there is a reporting process, so we will be able to provide real-time information as the project proceeds. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: I am wondering if the Government of the Northwest Territories assisted the Tlicho in taking that participation in the consortium that is going to build the road.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: If the Member is asking if we assisted them financially to take a stake in the project, the answer is no.

MS. GREEN: I would like the Minister of Finance to tell us whether this project can be instructed over a longer period of time so that the construction jobs last longer.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: No, the financial close has been completed with the proponent, and changing the construction schedule would impact that project cost. Obviously, we would like to see folks working as long as possible. I think, with some of the experience that they gain on this, there may be other opportunities for them to work in other places. It may require some moving around.

I think we have seen a good indication of that with the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway project, where 85 percent of the workforce was pretty well from the Beaufort-Delta. A lot of them, with the experience that they have gained, have been able to find other work where they have required operators. There is a benefit that way. It may require some moving around, but we think that that is one of the benefits of the project, and I think that the Tlicho region will see that as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the Minister for that response. As I mentioned in my statement, in terms of economic returns, it looks like the Slave Geological Province road may be more lucrative because of the advanced exploration that has gone on in that area and because it may be a lifeline for the diamond mines, who are trying to maximize production and minimize costs.

Has the Minister examined the relative economic benefits of the road to Whati to those of the Slave Geological Province, and can he share those results? Mahsi.

HON. ROBERT MCLEOD: First of all, a lot of work was done on the Whati road. The project was submitted. Funding was received for it. I don't think that you can underestimate the value of the road to

the citizens of Tlicho and Whati and the benefits that it will bring to them. I don't think I need to point out the benefit, but there are a lot of benefits.

The same level of work on the Slave Geological Province has not been done yet, so I think it would be hard to compare the two, but we can never underestimate the value of making work for residents across the Northwest Territories who actually want to work. I think that this is one of those projects that would be beneficial to Whati and to the citizens of the Tlicho. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 632-18(3):
COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT FUNDING GAPS

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs delivered a statement on community government funding. I would like to question some of the contents of that statement. We see the total gap. We see the \$8.3 million that the government has invested into this funding gap, and we have a lot of talk about a 50 percent, covering the gap by 50 percent, all this progress that was made. However, the largest pot of funding that remains unresolved is infrastructure, so how much progress has the Minister made on closing that gap?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, I know we are going into Committee of the Whole later on and debating the budget for Municipal and Community Affairs. We want to be open with all Members of the Legislative Assembly. Something that we will be bringing up this weekend when we meet with the NWT Association and communities and their membership is that this is an area of issue. As much as we can work and try to get, secure, federal funding to address some of the infrastructure concerns, we will, and we continue to do that. Previous Ministers, previous governments, have worked on trying to reduce that gap that has been involved, and that is the message that I will be sharing with all of our mayors and our councillors this weekend. I think that the Minister's statement says what we have done, and we have seen some successes. I know that, in future governments, this government and future governments, it is going to be a challenge to close that gap, but we have made some progress. We will continue to make that progress, and we will continue to work with our partners, with the municipal and Indigenous governments, to address these issues.

MR. TESTART: The Minister just mentioned the federal government's role in this funding. His predecessor also spoke of leveraging federal funds to close this gap. I would just like to get a better

understanding of this. Is the Minister saying that this formula that has been developed isn't the responsibility of the GNWT to fill? Can he answer that question?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Mr. Speaker, one of the, I guess you could say, the reputations that I have built as being a Minister is developing strong partnerships, and those partnerships do involve federal government. They involve municipal governments, Indigenous governments. We all have a role to play in this. GNWT cannot be the one-and-all to provide the services. We've got to work together to identify priorities and also address some of our core needs. It takes a partnership between all levels of government, but we do definitely play a significant role in this in terms of working with our municipal governments but also lobbying the federal government to get the funds needed to address some of the concerns that we have been hearing.

MR. TESTART: I agree. We need to support all of our communities and work together to do that, but this funding gap is no one's responsibility but the Minister's, so I am going to ask: what is he actually doing to address the other shortfalls? We have a plan for water and sewer or environmental that is 50 percent complete. It shouldn't be too hard to fill the other 50 percent, but the vast majority of the funding, there is no plan. What is the Minister doing to address this?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: We have been working with our partners within the NWTAC. Since I have taken this role on, I have sat down with them, the executive, and have had these discussions. We continue to lobby the federal government. We are creating a strategy, a strategy that we have been working on for a number of years. As I mentioned, you know, I will be open. This government is not going to be able to, probably, close that funding gap. The next government might not be able to close the funding gap, or the government after that. I mean this is something that we've got to address, and some of these are long-term lives of our assets, so we need to address the priorities of our communities on working with other elected officials to move forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. Look, I have to compliment the Minister's honesty. It is hard for politicians to break promises on the floor of the House like that. This is our responsibility. This is something we must accomplish. Will the Minister commit to rebalancing this formula so it is a realistic formula, in partnership with the NWTAC? Will he commit to either doing that or fully funding this? There are only two options.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: First of all, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, we are creating a strategy. I don't know where I broke a promise. You know, I have only taken this position on for about a year, so I think some Members need to be walking a fine line in how they make statements, first of all. We are going to continue to work with our municipal leaders, our federal partners. As I mentioned, for the record, I did not break any promises on this strategy, and we are going to continue to work on that strategy, and we will table it by the end of this government. As I mentioned, I am being honest. I don't think this government is going to be able to close that gap. We have met with mayors and officials. I have met with the NWTAC executive to address the funding gap, and I think there is a good understanding of everybody involved at the table. We will continue to do that, and we can't tie the next government into funding dollars that are going to be tying their hands together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's opening address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of standing and special committees. Item 13, reports of committees on the review of bills. Members for Kam Lake.

Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills

BILL 29:

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY ACT

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee would like to report on its consideration of Bill 29, an Act to Amend the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Bill 29 received second reading in the Legislative Assembly on October 30, 2018 and was referred to the Standing Committee on Government Operations for review.

To permit time for the legislative drafters to complete the proposed amendments, I would like to advise the House of the committee's wish to extend our review of the bill, with the intention of reporting back to the House on or before March 11, 2019. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in accordance with rule 75(1)(c) of the Rules of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that the review period for Bill 29 be extended to March 11, 2019. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Masi. Reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 359-18(3):
EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT:
MEASURING CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL
HEALTH – NWT CHANGE OVER TIME 2012-2017

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document entitled "Early Development Instrument: Measuring Children's Developmental Health, NWT Change Over Time 2012-2017." Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Minister of Infrastructure.

TABLED DOCUMENT 360-18(3):
FOLLOW-UP FOR ORAL QUESTION 517-18(3):
NEW MINE POTENTIAL RESOURCE REVENUES
FORECASTING ANALYSIS

TABLED DOCUMENT 361-18(3):
FOLLOW-UP FOR ORAL QUESTION 541-18(3):
TSIIGEHTCHIC ICE BRIDGE

TABLED DOCUMENT 362-18(3):
FOLLOW-UP FOR ORAL QUESTION 553-18(3):
SPEEDING ON THE DEH CHO BRIDGE

TABLED DOCUMENT 363-18(3):
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY FOR 2018 UNDER THE
TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS
ACT

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the following four documents entitled "Follow-up for Oral Question 517-18(3), New Mine Potential Resource Revenues Forecasting Analysis;" "Follow-up for Oral Question 541-18(3), Tsiigehtchic Ice Bridge;" "Follow-up for Oral Question 553-18(3), Speeding on the Deh Cho Bridge;" and pursuant to section 6-2(2) of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, I wish to table "Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly for 2018 under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Item 16, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 17, motions. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 40:

SMOKING CONTROL AND REDUCTION ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 40, Smoking Control and Reduction Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 40 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Minister of Health and Social Services.

BILL 41:

TOBACCO AND VAPOR PRODUCTS CONTROL ACT

HON. GLEN ABERNETHY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 41, Tobacco and Vapor Products Control Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is in order. The motion is non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? Motion carried.

---Carried

Bill 41 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Bill 31, Northwest Territories 9-1-1 Act; Minister's Statement 131-18(3), Sessional Statement; Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement; Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates, 2019-2020; Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services, with the Member for Hay River North in the chair.

Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Committee would like to consider Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates, 2019-2020, with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We will consider the document after a brief recess.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have agreed to consider Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates 2019-2020, beginning with the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. I will turn to the Minister for opening remarks. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to present the 2019-2020 Main Estimates for the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Overall, the department's main estimates propose an increase of \$3,236,000 from the 2018-2019 Main Estimates, which is a 3 percent increase.

The 2019-2020 Main Estimates reflect:

- an increase of \$111,000 to support the need for increased grants in lieu of property taxes payments to community governments; and
- an increase of \$1,400,000 for community governments to support their operational needs and the delivery of water and sewer services, which continues our support to community governments, which has seen an increased investment of more than \$6.7 million during the life of the 18th Legislative Assembly.

Municipal and Community Affairs will continue to work with key stakeholders such as the NWT Association of Communities on the development of a plan that will help to address the municipal funding gap. As part of this plan, we are reminded that this Assembly has also previously approved an annual increase to Community Public Infrastructure Funding of \$1.8 million to provide enhanced support for community infrastructure priorities.

Additionally, the 2019-2020 Main Estimates also reflect:

- an increase of \$350,000 to support non-government organizations to stabilize operations or develop their capacity to manage programs and services;
- an increase of \$1,348,000 to implement the NWT's 911 Service;

- an increase of \$334,000 to ensure efficient delivery of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan; and
- an increase of \$389,000 to support the Deline Self-Government Agreement.

The department's proposed spending in 2019-2020 continues to support the priorities of the 18th Legislative Assembly.

Under the community wellness and safety priority, Municipal and Community Affairs has refined its implementation plan for a territorial 911 service. Our investment in this budget will result in this service coming online by the summer of 2019.

Through an increase in funding for community governments, we are continuing to provide support for municipal core needs. This funding advances the governance priority by helping to build a stronger relationship with community governments.

In support of the cost of living priority area, we will continue to support community governments as they apply for and take advantage of the suite of federal infrastructure funding programs available to them.

That concludes my opening remarks, Mr. Chair. I would be happy to answer Members' questions. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Moses. I understand that you have witnesses to bring into the Chamber. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, you may take your seat at the witness table. Minister, please introduce your witnesses for the record.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On my left, I have Eleanor Young, deputy minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, and on my immediate right is Gary Schauerte, who is the director of corporate affairs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Municipal and Community Affairs begins on page 323 of the budget document. The departmental total is on page 327, but, as is our usual practice, we will defer consideration of the total until after we consider each activity. There are seven activities, followed by two information items. The first activity, community governance, begins on page 330. Does committee have comments or questions on page 330? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My first question is: is the department still focusing its efforts on a pilot project with Fort Providence, Tulita, and Ulukhaktok, and how is the work proceeding? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are looking at continuing to do that work. For maybe further detail, I will go to my deputy minister for where we are in that area, Ms. Young, please. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are working with the Department of Lands to set up the processes for the different steps that will have to take place. We are transferring the land based on the type of tenure, type of ownership, that exists in each of those communities, and then we are working with each community to implement the pilot to transfer the land and assets that are municipal over to the community governments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I have previously mentioned, I am concerned about transferring assets to communities without them also getting the necessary funds for operation and maintenance. What is the department doing about this process? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are doing an asset management plan with each of the communities. It is something that we have been focusing on moving forward. It is not only the concerns of the communities that the Member has brought up, but it is something that we will have to have discussions with administration, as well as mayor and council, leadership, obviously, making sure that we are both working together to address the issue. We are going through an assets management plan for our communities and assure the Member that we are going to work with that. There is a responsibility on both sides. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question: how is the department planning to secure any additional funds needed for surveys or land assessment? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For surveys, we work with the Department of Lands, first off, so that we can try to identify where the Department of Lands has surveys happening so that we can try to be cost-effective with the delivery of surveys. Then the actual cost for the surveys is part of what the community funds out of either their capital or their O and M, depending on where they have the flexibility to do so. It's eligible under either expense. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are the funds needed associated with these initiatives being factored into the calculations of the municipal funding gap? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think we just had a little bit of a discussion, as well as the Minister's statement that I just put out today, which the Member was aware of. This is going to be a discussion that we're going to have with the NWT Association of Communities this weekend, and also look in terms of how do we address these, some of the shortfalls, but also what our core needs are for the communities. I know I've had these discussions with committee previously, and it's going to be something that we will have a discussion about and focus on this weekend, in a very honest and open discussion with our other elected officials. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand that there is the Minister's statement and that, but these are some of the questions that have been asked of me by my constituents to ask, so I'm just making sure I'm going through my list here. I thank the Minister for that. In correspondence with the Standing Committee on Government Operations, the department noted that Municipal and Community Affairs will need to identify a long-term process to transfer assets and lands. What is involved in this work and what is the time frame for completion? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What we have done to date is we do have a list of assets that community governments currently operate, but which they don't have tenure for. Those are the assets that we're talking about, the ones that they currently already operate. So things like the funding for those assets is already built into the formula.

What we've done is created a master list of which assets need to be transferred to the community government and what type of land they currently sit on. As mentioned earlier, we have a pilot with three communities to nail down the process by which that land transfer can take place in each community, what steps will need to be done, and then, once we complete the pilot, we'll be able to move on to other communities for implementation. At this point, until we work through the pilot and determine how long it takes to work through a process in a single community, we don't have an estimated timeline. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Young. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What other progress has the department made with respect to addressing the issue of derelict properties in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's always been an ongoing issue, I think, in every community, and that's something that we need to work with our local governments on addressing. Obviously, we want to play a strong role in that. Any administration or municipal government that does feel that they need support and work on our behalf, I encourage them to come and speak with us to address those needs in terms of derelict properties and areas in their communities. I know, since I've been in the position, we have made some adjustments for some small communities to address these needs. Like I said, I encourage leadership and membership to contact our office, and we'd be more than willing and happy to work with them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hopefully this will be my last question for this topic. In regard to community planning, am I correct in understanding that community planning has a responsibility for assisting communities with civic addressing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that can be part of the community planning exercise. We find it is easiest to do it at the time we're updating a plan, because then the cost of doing the civic addressing can be built into the community plan. We have a number of different funding sources that can pay for community planning, and that's why we

suggest that the two be combined. We have a guidebook for how that can proceed, so any community that is ready to take that on, I believe we have about nine in process currently to update their community plan, we can update their addressing at the same time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Ms. Young. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I've heard that civic addressing is not necessary for the implementation of 911, but I still think it's important to be included in the 911 implementation plan, for those municipalities that want it. Are you guys working with them or encouraging them to include this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, this is something that we are working on. Obviously, we want to make sure that anyone who accesses 911, we have their address in place. We are working with communities currently to address these needs. As 911 is, hopefully, going to come through, we are making sure that our residents are more than, I wouldn't say happy, but that their concerns will be met. That is something that we are working on right now, yes. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Next on the list, we have Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I see this is the governance section. Is this where I would find funds that would support a community such as a hamlet or a municipality in their negotiation of an IBA? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We provide different services. In terms of IBAs, that's more associated with the Executive, the EIA. We provide different services, so that wouldn't fall under this one. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you. So I guess municipalities and hamlets aren't eligible to enter into an IBA? Is that what I'm understanding? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not through our department. That would be more through the Executive and Indigenous, with

Indigenous government services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So this department wouldn't advise a community that they could enter into an IBA if there was a large industrial project within or near the boundaries of the community. Is that correct? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct. We do approve community plans, and in the community plans, there is a Section 35 that focuses on consultation, so that would be where it would focus. In terms of any IBAs or anything there would be consultation about, we do work with municipalities on their community plans. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to get all of that on the record. There has been some confusion about who can enter into IBAs and who is advising who to do what. I wanted to clear that up. Nothing further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Next on the list, we have Mr. Testart.

Mr. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Under the community planning function, the department provides support and advice to communities on their community plans and community planning. Previously, the department also managed the public land and would review any applications for access to that land. Now, that is a function of the Department of Lands.

We have heard concerns over a number of years that communities aren't able to access land for development reasons. Obviously, that is a live issue here in the city of Yellowknife, where my constituency is located. I have heard concerns from colleagues in other communities such as Hay River. What is the department doing to support communities in accessing more land for development opportunities? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think there are a couple of department that work in this area. We would definitely work with the municipality to identify what their needs are. As

they develop their community plans, we would work on supporting them. As previously mentioned, there is a Section 35. Depending on which community is putting their community plans forward, there might be some consultation that would be needed to take in with our Indigenous partners, Indigenous governments and also working with the Department of Lands to address the needs moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: If a community came forward with a request just to access large parcels of land for the sake of their own, internal development, what would be the advice of the department? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Obviously, we are going to be working with all of the municipalities that want to come forward with a community plan. We would facilitate the discussions with all stakeholders and ensure that the plans that are being proposed, whether there needs to be any Section 35 consultations or anything further that needs to be done, that we would be more than willing to facilitate those discussions and approve them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. Under what circumstances are community plans rejected by the department? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We compare the community plan to the provisions under the Community Planning and Development Act. As long as the community has met what is required of them under the act, then we would bring the plan forward to the Minister for consideration. The content of the plan per se is really up to the community and their planning experts to fulfill. As long as they meet the provisions of the act in terms of public engagement, et cetera, then we would be supporting the approval of the plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Would it be fair to say that the department's role is more to provide compliance with legislation than to actually make decisions over the contents of a community plan. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. We would comply with legislation. Just to let the Member and Members know that, this weekend, we will be meeting with the NWT Association and communities and leaders and ensure that some of this information and discussion will be had over the weekend. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you. That is fine. I appreciate that the Minister has shared that information with the House. I have met with several municipal officials from across the territory just this week. It is great that we have that opportunity to discuss these issues. My concern is the availability of land to develop for economic purposes. It is a crucial component if we are going to diversify the economy and expand economic opportunities. Local governments are often in the best position to make those decisions.

Now, I know this isn't the Department of Lands, so there is a limit to the range of these questions. Are there any practical difficulties, from the department's perspective, within the legislative framework it is responsible for and its knowledge of community governance operations on the ground that would prevent communities from being transferred GNWT-owned lands and allowing them to make the decisions around them without the need for piecemeal transfers as approved by the GNWT? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, we would facilitate a discussion. That is really up to the communities, in terms of when they work on their community plans. We would facilitate it, and we would work with the other departments that are associated to address those concerns. Obviously, that is something that we would like to work on in terms of addressing the economic development in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think of this kind of proposal somewhat as a New Deal "part 2," where we devolve further responsibility to our municipalities and allow them to make more decisions around what decisions they actually want to make, that they think are going to grow their communities. My question was more: does the Minister believe there is any impediment to our

communities taking on that responsibility? Granted, not everyone is on the same level, but at least in the larger centres or the centres that are dealing with chronic land-management issues that have been brought to the floor of this House before, if a political decision was made to transfer all that land, would the department be in a position to support municipalities in dealing with that new reality, and how would they do that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, our department will be more than welcome to facilitate a discussion in that area. A New Deal "part 2" sounds interesting. First of all, the first new deal put more responsibility on our municipalities. We still need to continue to work and evaluate how that is going. In terms of the second part of the question and how we are focusing on that, through you, Mr. Chair, I will ask my deputy minister to get into a little bit more detail.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To answer the second part of the question, there isn't an impediment. What Municipal Affairs would do, obviously, first is: we would have to have a discussion with whomever the landowner is and facilitate that conversation about a transfer of land, whether it is Commissioner's land or otherwise. The second part is: under legislation, they would be required to have a land administration bylaw, which we already have templates of that we can work with the community to tailor to their needs.

Then the third part would be training and land administration, which again is something that we have delivered in the past. It is not currently on our course delivery schedule. Should the need be there, that could be re-entered into building capacity for land administration at the community level so that they could do that function. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That was an excellent response, and I am very satisfied with that. This is a big issue for me. Many people have told me that they share a similar perspective. If we are going to again diversify the economy, it is not just going to be with funding pots through ITI. It is going to be with big, transformative change like that. It is good to know that the department is there, standing beside our communities, behind our communities, and would help them make such a transition. If the Minister of Lands is listening, I will

have questions around this topic when we get to that department. Nothing further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Seeing no one further on my list, I will call this activity. Municipal and Community Affairs, community governance, operations expenditure summary, \$2,016,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. The next activity is on pages 334 to 337, community operations. Comments or questions? Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department business plans noted that a complete asset management strategy for the NWT community governments has been approved by Canada for use under the gas tax agreement to guide the distribution of targeted capital business building funds. Has MACA completed its work with the first intake of the 11 community governments? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we have made significant progress. I believe only eight of the 11 actually finished the pilot. Based on capacity and changes at the community levels, some had to withdraw their participation in the first phase, but we have eight communities which are now trained and working with the software or are about to, and we are getting ready to start this second round of intake of communities ready to start with the implementation, so good progress is being made. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to inform the Member and all Members that we are strongly advocating for this asset management in all the communities, and all the other programs that we do provide. This weekend, I think, is going to be an opportunity to provide the services that MACA delivers to our partners. I just wanted to ensure the Member that we are on top of this and that it is something that is, I think, going to help us move forward in terms of the work and the support that we provide to our municipal governments. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the 11 for the first intake, what communities are being

engaged with the second intake? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this moment, we don't have the detail for all the communities, but we can get that information, and we will share it with the Member to let him know the work that is going on, being undertaken, with asset management. We will share that information with the Member as soon as we get it. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Being an MLA for designated authorities, four of them anyway, what is the status with respect to designated authorities with this program or with this strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They are fully eligible to be part of the program, as well. They have received gas tax funding through us, as well. One of the things we tried to make sure we did with the creation of this program was make it scalable. If they want to do asset management with software, that is available to them. If they would prefer to do their asset management exercises through paper-tracking, we would do that, as well. Depending on the capacity and the desire of the community, the program is scalable to what their needs would be. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The designated authorities, have we started approaching them? Because this is actually a very important program. I mean it helps them monitor equipment, facilities, and that, so have we been approaching them to encourage them to be part of this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Obviously, all of our communities in the Northwest Territories, we have been approaching. The designated authorities are one of them. With our gas tax, we have been focused on making sure that they have the same opportunities as tax-based communities and municipalities. So, obviously, we are reaching out to all of our 33 communities, and this is something, concerns from the Member but probably some concerns from our leadership, that

we will be having discussions with this weekend. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, when we talk about gas tax, there are challenges, and, you know, we have had conversations about this, where communities' the funding has been withheld there. Can the Minister update us with the designated authorities, what is the status, whether it is today or a follow-up? I know we have had a conversation, but can we get that follow-up to tell us where we are? It is just not designated authorities, but any communities out there that are being impacted by this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I will commit to doing a follow-up on the gas tax. I have had meetings with the Member on communities, and not just in particular in his region but communities across the NWT, and, like I said, if it comes up this weekend, we will have those discussions. I know there has to be more than just us being at the table; right? We need to have reliable staff working at the municipal governments, Indigenous governments, with the designated authorities, to address some of these issues, but I think that is something that needs to be addressed because, if we are not going to be able to flow that funding out, then the needs of the communities might not be met. Hopefully, we will have those discussions this weekend with the elected leaders across the Northwest Territories. We will follow up with the Member and give them an update. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I am assuming this is where we would be talking about the Auditor General's report and from previous. So MACA agreed with the number of recommendations and made commitments to do a number of things, including reviewing and improving contribution agreements by April 2017 and consult with INAC. What has the department done to implement the OAG's findings with respect to designated authorities in these contribution agreements? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are working on this. We have had a little slower process than I think we had hoped in engaging all of the parties to talk about what changes need to be made

to the contribution agreements. If I am not mistaken, the timeline for the designated authority agreements was actually at the end of 2019-2020, that we would have had all of the changes complete. That is still our target to have that work done. The work that we would be doing over the coming year would be to engage with communities on proposed changes with the contribution agreements. Overall, with the Office of the Auditor General, of course, we continue to implement all of the recommendations that were there. I think the biggest challenge is that, the Minister has mentioned, is the capacity of communities. At times, they are in great shape to engage with us, and, other times, they have other priorities on their mind. Staff turnovers have been significant in the past couple of years again, and that is having an impact on our ability to engage with communities. However, as soon as they are willing to work with us, we are willing to work with them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize if my notes said "2017." That is what I had down in my notes, so I apologize, and I thank the department. That is my last questions for this section. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I have a couple of questions about the municipal funding gap, and I apologize if they were already covered. Has the Minister or his staff indicated when there is going to be a physical document made public for filling this gap? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know this has been a concern for not only MLAs and the government but also with municipalities. As I answered questions in the House earlier today, I am just going to be open and honest. I don't think we will be able to fill that gap during the life of this government. We have only got about seven months. Honestly, future governments are probably going to have a hard time filling this gap as well.

In my Minister's statement, I did mention that we have made some very significant improvements in terms of infrastructure, as well as O and M. I am more than certain that it will be a discussion that we will have this weekend when we meet with the NWTAC. We have already met with them, myself in capacity as Minister, on two different occasions with the Executive, and we have had those discussions.

I have informed them that it is going to be a challenge.

It's reality. Our fiscal realities throughout the North, we all know what they are, but we also know that the economy isn't what it used to be, and our aging infrastructure is something that needs to be taken into consideration. I will be honest with the Members, and I will be honest with the mayor, council, and membership this weekend that we are not going to be able to fill the gap that the Member has referred to. It is something that we will have to work collectively together to address, and not only municipal and territorial. In my answers earlier today to questions, we are continuing to lobby the federal government to help us address some of those needs.

For the record, I will just let the Member know that we are continuing to work on it. We will have a strategy. That strategy, we will hopefully be tabling in the House in the May/June sitting, and we will share that with committee. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. That was a short question to get a long answer. I am not asking the Minister to fill the gap in the next year. I want the plan to do it. I understand that the plan is now going to get delivered in the May/June sitting. That is good; I want to see the plan. I don't expect this Minister or this Assembly to make up the total gap in the year that is left.

The shortfall that was calculated, I think, back in 2014, was around \$32.5 million. Is that new document going to include a recalculation of what the gap is? A lot has changed, probably, in five years, in terms of the assets that our community governments have, their condition, and so on. Now that all of that system is in place, it should be easier to recalculate what the gap is. Is that gap going to be recalculated, and is that part of what the Minister is going to give us in May/June? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it will include that. It will also include us having those open dialogues and discussions with our municipalities. I thank the Member for keeping us accountable in terms of the report that came from 2014. As you have known, we do have this asset management plan that we are addressing. All of those are going to be taken in account as we move forward.

I do want to say that we have made some improvements in terms of working with municipal governments to address some of these needs, as

was mentioned in my Minister's statement earlier today. We will continue to address those, but as I said, it can't always be solely on us as the government. We need to make sure that municipality governments, Indigenous governments, and the federal government come to the table as we lobby them for funding to address some of the concerns that we are hearing this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the Minister. I look forward to getting the recalculation of the municipal funding gap to update the 2014 calculations. That will be great. I have got a couple of suggestions for him in terms of what that strategy should contain.

There should be, in my view, an annual update of that gap, and it should be made available. The Minister might want to table a report in the House or something about the progress that is made towards that gap on an annual basis. It is going to require a pretty sophisticated tracking system. You have already got the asset side of it down, but the money coming in. Some of this could be, and the Minister has alluded to this, made up by the federal government through some of its infrastructure funding programs. You are going to need to have a more sophisticated system to track the incoming money and how it is helping you to reduce this gap.

The last point I guess I want to make is that we have got to make sure that the MACA Minister gets to the table at Cabinet to make sure that more of the federal infrastructure funding actually goes to the communities instead of building roads. That is what it has got to come down to. Are we going to put our communities over building roads? It is that simple in my mind. The big mega projects that Cabinet keeps pushing are taking money away from our communities, quite frankly, and that is what it comes down to.

I want to urge the Minister, and I am glad the other Cabinet Members are here to hear me say this because I make the same point on housing all of the time, we have got to meet the needs of our people, and that has to come over the mega projects that Cabinet keeps pushing.

I look forward to the Minister's response on this. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since I have been in the role as the Minister of MACA, I have had pretty good discussions with the

executive of the NWTAC. I have told them that we have got to work together to get this addressed.

At the same time, our staff have been taking on some administrative roles for some of the municipalities because they aren't able to find SAOs or find people that can do financial work for them. That takes away from the work that we do at the department level, and it is something that I have been pushing. We need to make sure that the resources that our municipal governments have are adequate to address the concerns that the Members have raised. We want to promote that. We do that through the School of Community Government and getting our district offices out promoting our programs and services that we provide.

In terms of communities over roads, we all have got to work together, and I think that, as elected officials, and this is something that I will say this weekend when I meet with the mayors and council, they have a role to play as well, being elected for their constituents.

MACA has done a great job in working with our municipalities. In some cases, we have had to take more responsibility on than we would have liked to, but we are working to make sure that all communities have the resources to implement this.

I do appreciate the suggestions from the Member, but really, when you look at the realities, there are resources issues that we need to address, and we are working on trying to address those through the programs that we provide. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Before anybody says this, I have the greatest respect for our staff within MACA. I think they have been working flat-out on this work. The problem is the priorities that the Cabinet sets as a whole. The mega projects dominate what we apply for, for infrastructure money, and that is what is driving this government now. It is not the needs of our communities. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize if this should have been asked in the previous activity, which I don't think it is. I think I can get away with it here.

I asked a question the other day to the Department of Infrastructure. Recently, we received some correspondence. It was from the City of Yellowknife, and it was with regard to the ability to create new NWT building standards. I don't have

the letter before me, so I am kind of paraphrasing, but I'm sure you are aware of the correspondence. I don't know, I guess they're trying to ask for the government to enable them, or in fact asking us develop NWT building standards. I put this to the Department of Infrastructure, as I said, the other day. They are not really in a position, nor wanting, I suppose, to do such an undertaking and develop these standards. We currently work through the National Building Code, the National Fire Code. We have electrical codes. There is EnerGuide 80 and the Good Building Practices for Northern Facilities, and that sort of thing. I'm wondering: what is the department's response to that correspondence? Is it something that we're looking into, or is it something that we're looking to enable communities to do? What is the response of the department with regard to that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I may go to my deputy minister in a bit, here, but, as the Member had mentioned, obviously we do have to comply with national building codes. He mentioned fire safety, electrical, and really what it comes down to is the safety of our residents. We want to make sure that they are safe when we're looking at building new infrastructure. The work that we're continuing to do, obviously, we started really complying lately, but we are doing some great work within MACA over the last few years to make sure that we are compliant. I know there have been some issues from contractors and other people in the North. To get a little bit more detail, I'll ask my deputy minister to speak, but we have started really working on making sure that we are compliant here in the North. What it really comes down to, Mr. Chair, is the safety of residents, and that's what we want to ensure. For a little bit more detail, I'll go to my deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Members know, the department, one of its mandate items was an update of the Fire Prevention Act, and you may have noticed that we have delayed the work on that into the next Assembly. This topic is part of the reason for that. As we had started our first phase of review of that act, one of the biggest things we noted was issues around the whole plan review fire inspection function and how that relates to functions that are within the Department of Infrastructure, but also functions that operate at the city level within their development approval process. It became clear that we need to do some additional work in that area before we bring that legislation forward, because there is some problem-solving to do about how all of those things work together. I do anticipate that those conversations

will continue this summer, as we work with stakeholders on what to do specifically around the Fire Protection Act, but I expect the broader plan review building approval process will become part of that conversation, and we will be bringing that information forward for changes in the act in the next Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Nothing further from committee. I will call this activity. Municipal and Community Affairs, community operations, operations expenditure summary, \$2,166,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Moving on to activity 3, directorate, pages 338 to 341. Municipal and Community Affairs, directorate. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think this is the part of the department that is responsible for, as it says here, overall direction and planning. This is a big department, in that they have a whole bunch of legislative responsibilities that include things like consumer protection and a number of other areas that I just can't put my fingers on, but legislation coming out the other end hasn't been very quick. I know the previous Minister had talked about sort of a legislative priority-setting exercise to look at the big backlog of requirements in terms of legislative change. I haven't seen anything happening over the last several months, that I'm aware of. Is this something that's still going on within the department to help set legislative priorities? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we do have a list of legislation through the department. Obviously, we want to prioritize them. We have one before standing committee right now, and it's something that I will continue to work on. As I mentioned, the department, we only have so many resources to do the work that we can. There is a list of legislation that needs to be done, and we are working on it. When we did get the mandates from the 18th Legislative Assembly, it did take away some of our resources to focus on getting this mandate done. At the same time, as you heard earlier, we are continuing to work with municipalities on addressing some of the issues there. It is a challenge to get all this done, but I just wanted to inform the Member that we do have a list of legislation that will need to get done, and we're doing the best that we can in that area. I think 911 is one of the areas that we are focusing on, and I appreciate the committee for working with us on that. I'm looking forward to getting that one passed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I recognize the good work that the department has done in terms of implementing, or beginning to implement, 911, and I commend them for that, but there is a number of other things here; the Fire Prevention Act, Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act, Home Ownership Property Tax Rebate Act, Consumer Protection Act, further changes to the Cities, Towns and Villages Act. The Minister knows the backlog better than I. Does the department have a process for setting priorities amongst those? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, I know that there are a lot of acts within this department that need to be addressed. I think 911 is going to be one that is going to be very successful, and one that we're going to monitor and evaluate as it proceeds. Yes, we do have a plan, based on our resources, that we can address some of these legislation priorities. We will deal with them the best that we can. I know, during business plans, we did have questions whether or not our department was resourced well enough to address some of these issues, and as I just previously mentioned, we're doing the best that we can with the resources that we have.

I know there are some concerns. I know we're going into a new election this fall. We do have a transition committee and, if there is any legislation that Members would like to see moved forward into the next government, I encourage them to bring them forward. We only have about seven months until the writ is dropped, and I know some of our committees have a lot of bills on their plate at the moment. We do have a plan. We're working on it. We're doing the best that we can with the resources that we have. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister share that plan with standing committee? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we are working on this legislation, once we have a document done, we will share it with committee. We will make sure that it is shared before the transition documents are completed so that the next government that comes in knows what legislation needed to be completed within our department. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I want to thank the Minister for that commitment. I look forward to seeing the priorities that the department has set for legislative change. That will be a very helpful and interesting document to look at for transition planning. Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is all I have.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have one comment, and then one question in this area here.

First of all, I would like to commend the department for making progress on long-overdue legislation updates and that you have completed Bill 1, the Western Canada Lottery Act; Bill 8, Emergency Management Act; Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Cities, Towns and Villages Act; and you are now close to doing 911. I am very happy with that. It has been long overdue, and I give kudos to the department and the staff for doing a great job on that there.

Departmental consultations with partners in the development of legislation is important, but the department should bear in mind that the proposed legislation is also consulted on by the standing committee. Has the department given any consideration to what it should be doing to assist community governments to understand their responsibilities under the amended ATIP act? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned previously, I have met with the executive for NWTAC. That was an agenda item that we had discussed. I know it is a bill that is under the Department of Justice. I also appreciate the Member's comments about the bills that we have passed. For the Department of MACA, this is the most bills that have ever been passed during one term of government. We are continuing to work on that plan, which we will share with Members before the end of this legislation.

Yes, we have been meeting with our stakeholders. I would say that the City of Yellowknife has probably the biggest concern with ATIP moving forward, and we have got to make sure that they have the proper training and that they have the proper resources to do ATIP. Moving forward, those are the discussions that we have had. We will see how that applies. Maybe for a little bit further detail on the work that

has been done, through you, Mr. Chair, I will go to my deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Very quickly, our intention is to work with the Department of Justice and create a working group of community government stakeholders to talk about what an implementation plan will look like under the new legislation, because the legislation allows us to bring communities in under regulation. The plan is to work with communities to identify what training will be required, what other capacity may need to be done in terms of the creation of filing systems, et cetera, and what resources may be impacted with communities with the implementation of ATIP and put a plan in place for communities. We are starting with a working group to flesh out what all of those details will be, and then we will come back with a recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. Hopefully just one quick follow-up here. Has the department started looking at developing a course or a training program that will be able to help municipalities deal with ATIP? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this moment, no, but it will be something that we will have to look at addressing and providing. I don't want to beat a dead horse here, but we only have so many resources within our department to provide the services, but it is something that we have taken into serious consideration, that, when ATIP goes through, we are going to be one of the partners at the table that is going to be providing the training for our municipal governments. We will definitely be doing that. I just want to assure the Member that it is something that our department will be undertaking. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have heard the Minister beat the dead horse, but this is a new thing that we, as the Government of the Northwest Territories, are imposing onto the municipal governments. I appreciate the Minister, understanding that we have short resources and that, but we have to make sure that we are prepared. I am hoping, and I am going to take the Minister's word for it, that we are actually going to start looking at this, to develop a course that people are able to take. That will be my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Just a comment from Mr. Thompson. The Minister would like to respond. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will continue to work with the Department of Justice to address some of these concerns and look at how we can offset some of the training costs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Municipal and Community Affairs, directorate, operations expenditures summary, \$3,805,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Please continue to the next activity.

Activity 4, pages 342 to 345, public safety. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the department if they could maybe provide us a little bit of insight on communications as it relates to emergencies or safety matters. In 2014-2015, we had very significant forest fires. I just remember at the time that, between MACA, ENR, who would be responsible for fighting the fires, and then, say, Infrastructure would be responsible for highways and what-have-you that might be inhibited by the fires. It was often a bit of a challenge to understand who was leading communications and how communications were being done. Can the department maybe explain a little bit about what their communications plans are when it comes to emergency response? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the comment, because one of the things that we are really focusing on is community emergency management plans and making sure that our communities are doing an annual practice. We are also working with the federal government on some of these disaster mitigation plans, looking for funding to push through that, really, based on the region where the emergency might occur. We work with our superintendents. We do have staff, who Members met when we did our 911 presentation the other day, who are on top of things. As a resident of the NWT, and as the Minister responsible, I am pretty confident that we do get the information out to all of our communities that are experiencing any type of emergencies. We work very closely with our superintendents, and we do have a strong response.

The main thing, and something that we are going to be focusing on, is the emergency management plans with our communities. We do have communities that are at flood risk, but also, you never know when we are going to get big fires like we did in 2014. I think it was an interdepartmental focus within that government to get that information out through Twitter, through Facebook, as well as on our websites, and I think we all saw that information. For a little bit of further detail, maybe I will ask Mr. Schauerte to add a little bit more.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In addition to the answer provided by the Minister, following the 2014 wildfire season, we did do an after-action review out of that event. One of the major things as it relates to communications coming out of our analysis of that event is that we have worked very closely with corporate communications and the Department of Finance to establish a protocol around how communications would exist in the event of an emergency. Very clearly, until an emergency event occurs, communications for all of the respective mandate areas are the responsibility of individual departments. Using the example provided by the Member, the Department of Infrastructure would have responsibility for road notices or any of those kinds of things. Once an emergency event has occurred and we are in the process of declaring a state of emergency, then our emergency management organization kicks in under the territorial emergency plan, and it is then that organization which will coordinate communications on behalf of our government in an integrated consolidated fashion so that, when we are in an emergency event, we are speaking to one voice about all matters related to government services. So it really is, the trigger point or the key is, whether or not a state of emergency is declared at that point. That is when MACA would take the primary role in communications. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to ask about the consumer affairs program. Can we get a bit more detail on how this appropriation supports consumer rights in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Municipal and Community Affairs administers the Consumer Protection Act. The role of the department really is a role of advocacy. We do encourage consumers to raise their own complaints around how they may be

treated within the business community or how they might have financially been impacted. When a resident reaches a point where they feel that they may not be able to address a consumer issue on their own, the department could certainly have some kind of role where we could have some kind of a negotiated process between the person who may be bringing an issue forward and the vendor or the person whom they might have an issue with. We don't have any binding authority under the Consumer Protection Act to regulate in this area or to render judgment one way or the other, so, really, our role is in terms of advocacy or negotiating some kind of mutual agreement between an individual resident or a vendor. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you for that thorough description. I appreciate having a clear understanding of it, but what kind of advocacy is done, then, if as you said, there is no binding authority in the act? I mean, if a consumer feels that they have been treated unfairly, what can they do? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is something that we can really put some more work in. I'll just asked my deputy minister here, but what I can't provide Members is the amount of consumer affairs concerns that we have had, how they have been dealt with, and then also making sure that we can, I guess you could say, do more of an advocacy role on our websites and through our regional offices.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Certainly, as the Minister suggested, we could continue to provide more communication about our role. I think, in respect to the question raised by the Member, I would cite one example that our consumer affairs office did when concerns about gas prices were brought to our attention in the department. Through that consumer affairs unit, we undertook an analysis of gas prices in the Northwest Territories, in market communities. We did see that there were certain vendors who continued to keep their gas prices at the same price forever, regardless of what they might have been paying for the commodity, and so you really wondered about whether or not there was an active market economy going on where you would expect gas prices to fluctuate. As a result of our investigation in this area, we went and met with a number of vendors, and we specifically talked to them about how they set their gas prices. It was actually an interesting example of having the

government go and meet with vendors. We actually started to see fluctuation within the gas-price markets as a result of our intervention in that case.

Sometimes, it is as simple as the government asking questions and raising concerns on behalf of the resident that compels the vendors to perhaps adjust how they are setting prices or things like that, so that is an example, Mr. Chair, of how we would apply advocacy on behalf of a resident. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: How many people or positions are employed by this program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. From my understanding, in terms of the staff positions, it is less than one position, so it is something that we do need to look at and address. As I have said, moving forward, we do have a lot of responsibilities. We have taken a lot of work on. This is the most legislation we have done, so, you know, our resources are stretched, I would say, pretty thin, but we are doing the best with the resources that we do have within this department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): A dead horse has taken a beating tonight. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair, and I think the Minister's response indicates, you know, a sheepishness around this activity. The actuals, if you look at the budget document, you know, the actual from 2017-2018 was \$233,000, and it is down to \$150,000. Clearly, the department took a look at this function and cut the available resources, and that might have been because of a fiscal discipline activity or an austerity measure. I am not questioning that. What I am questioning is our government's commitment to the Consumer Protection Act when we have less than a person working on this advocacy. We just heard one of our witnesses give a very good reason why this is an important function and the department's past success in this. Why aren't we seeing more resources being put in this for a government that has a stated mandate of controlling the cost of living, which is correlated with competition rates in the Northwest Territories? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will continue to keep this as a priority and a focus within the department. As I had mentioned, this is something that we will continue to work with and

get that information out of how many concerns that have we have had. I did tell the Member that we will get that information to all Members and see how many complaints that we get every year. We will also work with our regional offices to get this information out on consumer protection for our consumers, to let them know what they are entitled to. Like any other program, I think this is one that needs to be looked at and evaluated and monitored, and we will commit to, I will commit to, doing that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: First, I thank the Minister for looking into it. I think the point here is that, if we have legislation that protects consumers and has had proven success in the past in doing that, then we should be looking at how we can advance that. I don't think a lot of people know about their rights under that act or what the department does in this regard. I would like to know why the appropriation has been reduced this year or why the budget has been reduced for this function this year. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Schauerte.

MR. SCHAUERTE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I understand the question correctly from the Member, he is referring to the 2017-2018 actual of \$233,000. That represents what the department spent in that activity during that fiscal year. The \$150,000 is what we have proposed in our budget. There is no reduction per se, Mr. Chair, but the activity in 2017-2018 represents an over expenditure in that activity. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you for that clarification. Okay, yes, I see that now. All right. What explains the increase? What was the additional spending? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Does the department have that information, Minister?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, we don't have that detail. I will make sure that staff get that information for the Member, and we'll share it with the Member. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Nothing further, noting the clock. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The main estimates include a budget of \$1.417 million for the first year of operations of 911 emergency services. Can you please give the Members a breakdown of this figure? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned when we went before standing committee, there are going to be some positions that need to be put in place, so we're going to be looking at emergency medical dispatchers, an emergency system officer, a manager, as well as premiums for shift work that people will have to do. There are also ongoing operation costs, such as program requirements of, for example, leasing spaces, communication, and obviously our information technology systems. Then obviously there are going to be one-time start-up costs that are initial training, as well as signage. I could give this document with the specific breakdown to Members, of what this is going to entail. As all Members know, this is before the House, and I know we will hopefully pass the reading in the clause-by-clause in the next little while, but we will share that detailed information with Members. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, and I greatly appreciate the Minister's willingness to share that information with us. What does the department estimate the ongoing annual costs of this service to be, moving forward? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I had mentioned in standing committee when we did do the presentation, we are going to be doing a reporting system as well as evaluating the program itself. As it is going to be the first year of operations, we really don't know. As we evaluate the program, we'll have a better understanding of what those costs are going to be, and definitely going through the process what we're doing right now, of putting it through the budgetary system. Right now, we're really not sure what we're going to be looking at, but if we were going to put it on average, it would be about \$1.2 million a year. Like I said, we'll be evaluating this program. Who knows how many calls we'll get, but that's a commitment we've made. We will do the evaluation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Moving on to another area, here, I'd like to acknowledge the budget contains \$185,000 for ground ambulance

and highway rescue. I thank the Minister and the department for ensuring funding for this important service that benefits everybody who travels on a NWT highway. Has the department given any consideration to how the needs in this area are going to grow as a result of the highway construction projects that are under way or in the planning stages for the GNWT? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This is something that has really taken the forefront over the last couple of years in terms of how we provide ground ambulance and highway rescue. With the new infrastructure that is being proposed, obviously, we are going to be taking that into consideration. Protection and safety of our residents, not even our residents, but people who travel throughout the North, even our tourists, we want to make sure that they are able to feel safe driving on our highway systems. As Members know, we did put out an RFP to get some work done. That didn't work out initially as planned, and we are focused on getting that report completed, but this is something that, like I said, and I'm sure we're going to hear this weekend when we sit down with the NWT Association of Communities. Obviously any new infrastructure that we build in the Northwest Territories is something that we're going to focus on, and how we can address that.

Just for a head's up, we were just recently at an FTP meeting in Edmonton on emergencies, and we did make sure that this was a priority that we did lobby and focus on the federal government to come and see how we live and travel in the North, and that it needs to be addressed. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for that. Yes, I totally agree that we have all this new infrastructure and, you know, with new infrastructure come issues such as accidents that happen. Especially with tourists; they don't understand that you come up with a bike, and we're on gravel highways in some parts, so I'm looking forward to the department and hearing how we can actually enhance this. Because I know, in my riding, the community of Fort Simpson is actually the one that looks after it and, you know, it's a huge cost to them and they work on it. They're very good at it, so I have to give them credit for that. So I thank the Minister and the department. There will be no further questions from me in this area.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Municipal and Community Affairs, public safety, operations expenditure summary, \$2,931,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Moving on to activity 5, regional operations. This can be found on pages 346 to 350. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Let's talk about the community government funding formula that currently has the \$32-million gap. The Minister is committed to a strategy; that strategy has been committed to for quite some time. Can we get more details on that strategy and any costs associated with it? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Members are aware, I did give a Minister's statement earlier today about the work that we are doing with the municipalities, trying to address that gap. I have said it openly to all Members here this afternoon, that I really don't think we're going to be able to address that gap during this government. I'm not tying the hands of any future governments, and we will have a strategy. As one of the Members asked earlier today, we will have that strategy report ready for tabling in the May-June sitting. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to get at what I think is the real heart of this issue. This is not a shortfall created by any other calculation than the one that the GNWT has created for itself to follow, with consultation from the NWTAC. Is that correct? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As a government, we have a lot of priorities. You look at every department that we are having discussions with, whether it's Health and Social Services, Education, Housing, and, our partnerships that we have with MACA. This is something that we have been working on since 2014. As I have mentioned, Mr. Chair, I have had chats with the executive of the NWTAC and have a good understanding that this is something that is going to be hard to fix in terms of the funding gap, but we have made some really significant improvements in terms of the work that has been done to address the needs of some of our municipalities. Just to bring it to the forefront,

a lot of these priorities are really coming out of our bigger centres. How do we work and fix things when addressing some of our issues with our small communities is something that needs to be discussed. I am sure we are going to have a really good heartfelt discussion this weekend when we sit down with the mayor and council and our elected officials with NWTAC this weekend. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Standing Committee on Government Operations, which has oversight over this department, has also spoken with many municipal leaders in the course of our consultations on various pieces of legislation. One consistent message that comes back to the committee every time that we consult on a new feature or new authority that the municipalities are getting is this municipal funding gap and the need to fill it. You can have as many conversations as you want, but it is not going away. I think that, unless the strategy is a costed strategy that indicates incremental funding year on year until the gap is closed, we are never going to get away from this problem. I will ask: does this strategy come with any dollars attached to it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think that the Member has said it very well. It is going to be hard to close the gap, working with our municipalities. We do have a strategy to address the issue. I was open with Members today when I answered questions in the House, as well as made my Member's statement, and this is going to be the same dialogue that I do have with the NWT Association of Communities. Within this government, we have seven months left. I don't think we are going to be able to close that gap, but we have made significant impacts to address some of the needs of our municipality governments. We will continue to work with them and continue to support them. I think that all of that information was outlined in the statement that I gave earlier today. We will continue to work with the municipal governments to address this issue, and as I mentioned to the Members, we will be tabling a strategy in the May/June sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to be very clear: I don't fault the department for this gap. We have heard a great deal from this department over my time in the legislature about how they

struggle with their appropriations at times and that Members are asking for additional resources that they simply do not have. I see this more as a political decision. It is a decision to fund other priorities, and I think that the Minister has said something similar to that. My big problem with that is that this is not a request that has come forward. This is not a third party or a major infrastructure project that people are asking for that doesn't exist. This is an outstanding commitment that the GNWT has committed itself to in funding this formula. I am really confused as to why it is so hard to get that across. You have a funding formula that you worked very hard with community stakeholders to produce that says what the appropriate funding is per community throughout the Northwest Territories, and it is not being funded at that level.

The only appropriate course to take is to either fund it, to fund it incrementally, so that we know when the gap is going to be plugged, or to rebalance the formula so that it is more realistically achievable through the means of this government. Saying that when our revenues increase, we will be able to fund communities appropriately according to our own formula, well, I mean, you could say that when our revenues increase, we will build all of our infrastructure projects as well. That's obvious. We have an obligation. We have committed to filling that obligation, and we are simply not doing it. \$8 million out of \$40 million is not very much in the grand scheme of things, and these dollars, especially the infrastructure dollars, go directly to stimulating local economies, and not just in larger centres, but in smaller communities as well. This is money that is vitally important for the health and well-being of our local economies, and they employ people, create jobs, and create prosperity. It is crucial that we plug this gap and not just keep talking about it. We have been talking about it for three years. It is a priority. It is more than a priority; it is the fiduciary responsibility of this Minister and this government.

A strategy is not going to cut it for this Member. I don't think that a strategy is going to cut it for the communities that are looking for this additional funding. We need to do a better job, and this budget fails in this regard. Nothing further. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I didn't know that the Member spoke for all of the communities across the Northwest Territories, first of all. Secondly, it is not about stimulating economy, it is about addressing core needs that our communities have. Filling in the gap, as I mentioned earlier, when we look at what those gaps are, it is really the bigger centres: Yellowknife,

Hay River, Inuvik, Fort Smith. We also want to make sure that we take care of our smaller communities, Mr. Chair. The Member spoke on it, and the reality is where our economy is right now, what our revenues are right now in the GNWT, and we have got to make sure that we make the best decisions across the Northwest Territories in terms of how we address this community government funding.

As we go through this budget, I just want to remind the Member that we also have other priorities: Health and Social Services, Education, and Housing, for one, my other portfolio. I just wanted to mention that. Really, when we come down to it, it is core needs for our communities across the Northwest Territories. We will be releasing a strategy in May/June. In my Minister's statement, I did mention that, over the last four years, there has been an increase of about \$8 million, working with our municipalities and our leadership to address the priorities and needs that they have, as well. We are continuing to work with our stakeholders, and we will continue to work with our stakeholders moving forward to address these needs and priorities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Next on the list, we have Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is my turn to beat a dead horse. This is an issue that I have brought up in this House many times. I have brought it up one-on-one with Ministers in their offices; I have brought it up as we were walking home after work; and it is the lack of available land for development in Hay River. I know that the Minister is well aware of this. I see ads in the paper every week put in there by the Housing Corporation looking for land to purchase in Hay River. I have talked to the health authority, and they can't recruit doctors and nurses to move to Hay River, because there are no places for them to live. The cost of rent is, in many cases, equal to what rent is in Yellowknife. We have a lack of housing. The land has been cleared years ago. It is ready to be developed, but there is no one who is able to develop it right now. I want to lay this out so that everyone knows why this is the case. People say, "Well, if there is a demand for housing in Hay River, a developer would step up and develop the land." In Hay River, we have the high-rise, and I know that the Minister is familiar with the high-rise. I think that there are 100 units or something, and a lot of them are vacant. I think most of them are vacant. When a bank looks at that, they say, "You have a high vacancy rate in your community. Also, you're in the Northwest Territories; you're a remote community. For those two reasons, we have no interest in lending you money to develop land. We don't see any payback in that." It is not like developers can just go to a bank, get a loan, and develop this

property. I have talked to multiple developers of different sizes in Hay River, and I hear the same thing from all of them.

What is needed is for the town to develop this land, but what is required is some money. They are just looking for, I believe, an extension on their borrowing limit to fund development. As the lots are developed and sold, that money would be paid back. I don't see anything in this section here that would lead me to believe that is happening. This is not just in the town's best interest. This is in the best interest of the Northwest Territories. The GNWT wants to build a 48-bed long-term care facility. The Minister of Health has indicated that would be 60 jobs in Hay River. Those aren't all going to be people from town. People will have to move to Hay River. If they all bring maybe a spouse and a child, you could be looking at 200 people for that one project. If 200 people move to Hay River, they need to live somewhere. Right now, there is nowhere for them to live. If 200 people move to the Northwest Territories, that is \$6.5 million in annual transfer payments from the federal government that the GNWT would receive.

We also have a fish processing plant that the government has committed to build. I think there are a couple dozen jobs there. There is a pellet mill that looks promising. I think there are another 60 jobs there, at least. Then there is Pine Point Mine, which could go through. We could have 1,000 people in the South Slave in the next few years if these projects go through, but, right now, they have nowhere to live. We might see the mine setting up a camp instead of setting up in the community or having people buy homes in the community, which would mean more fly-in, fly-out workers. I am highlighting this once again for everyone because this is an important issue, not just for Hay River but for the territory. We have an opportunity to support a community and support economic growth in the territory, something that we always talk about. I don't see it in this budget. I know that the Minister has met with the town. I understand that there are some next steps that are being taken. I would like to know if the Minister could let me know what the timeline is for those next steps and when we can expect a positive response to this request. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you for the long question there. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is correct. We did have a meeting with the last administration and, most currently, with the new administration and the new mayor and her staff. I would say the next steps: we did give some direction for the interdepartmental group committee to work with the staff over with the Town of Hay River and get us some information before we can

make any decisions. Really, there isn't a timeline that I can commit to, but I will inform the Member that we have had those discussions, and it is something that we have discussed. One of the discussions is also looking at a phased-in approach in terms of what is needed in Hay River.

On the other side of things, with the housing issue, I know that we are working with the community to address looking at the community housing needs and plans should certain things happen. Really, we need to make sure that other things are confirmed with all the economy and industry but also, like I mentioned, just continue those discussions on what is needed right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for the answer. I would like a timeline. I would like to see this happen within the life of this Assembly. The town doesn't have the money to develop the area that they want to, but they do have money to knock down probably the most beautiful green space in Hay River and build a few lots there. I think that is the plan if this doesn't go through. It is going to affect the quality of life of residents there. We have this beautiful trail system, kilometres of trail through the forest, right on the river, that is going to get bulldozed to make room for this much-needed housing.

Can I get a commitment from the Minister? I guess I am not even sure what I am looking for a commitment for because this has been going on so long, and I don't want to rush them through it because I want to make sure this is done right, but I need this done, we need this done, sooner than later. I am just working this through, here. This would have to be done through supplementary appropriations, I guess. How about this: can I get a commitment that we will get this funding done in the life of this Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Moses.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned, we do have the interdepartmental committee that is working with the staff and the mayor of Hay River. We have to wait until we see what comes out of those discussions. I can't commit to a timeline. This is an interdepartmental commitment, so I will have to also chat with my Cabinet colleagues moving forward. What I can let the Member know: we have had those discussions. We will continue to have those discussions. Moving forward, we will see what our next steps are, and we will keep the Member informed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake): Thank you, Minister Moses. Next, we have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. During business plans, the Minister advised the committee that the department would be undertaking review of the North Slave regional office and look at service delivery requirements and needs of the community governments. Has the department started this work? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we are looking at getting that work done. We did have some of our senior management at headquarters. We are very busy. I made sure that we are addressing those issues with the Member and the concerns that he brought forward. We will get that information to the Member as soon as we can. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister give us a timeline when he feels that will be done? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we are debating the budget here, we will definitely get it done in 2019-2020. The sooner that we can get it done, the better. That way, we can continue to provide services to the South Slave region. As committed to other Members, we will make sure the Member is kept up to date on how we are moving forward on this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. SIMPSON): Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I may have provided the wrong information to the Minister there. I was talking about the North Slave regional office. You kind of answered my second question. I will go ask the North Slave question, then. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Same answer for the South Slave. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: That is the answer. In regards to the South Slave region and that, I did have a meeting with the Minister and a commitment to get information on certain positions. When will that

information be brought forward to myself? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know I have had meetings with the Member on certain concerns that he has brought forward. We did get our staff to start working on addressing those positions. As soon as we do have a plan, we will share that with the Member so that he can share it with his constituents and the communities that that office represents. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are all my questions for this section. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. SIMPSON): Thank you, Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move that, pursuant to Rule 6(2) of the Rules of Legislative Assembly, that Committee of the Whole continue to sit beyond the daily hour of adjournment for the purpose of concluding the item under consideration, Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates, 2019-2020, Department of Municipal and Community Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): There is a motion on the floor. The motion is in order and non-debatable. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

We will sit beyond 6:00 p.m. to conclude this item. Comments or questions? Regional operations. Seeing none, I will call this activity. Municipal and Community Affairs, regional operations, operations expenditure summary, \$90,899,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Moving quickly to the final activity or, rather, activity six, school of community government, pages 351 to 354. Municipal and Community Affairs, school of community government, operations expenditure summary. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Can the Minister tell us whether there are any new courses, programs, modules, whatever, related to access to information for municipal governments as part of the 2019-2020 budget for the school of community government? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As previously said, we are still waiting for the bill to pass through and working with our municipal governments on an implementation plan. We've got to look at the resources. We've got to look at the types of training. We are going to be playing a pretty major role in this, and we want to make sure that we do it right, so we have been having those discussions, and concerns have been brought up by specifically the City of Yellowknife. At this moment, we don't have one right now, but we are going to be looking at creating an implementation plan for this act. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I sort of wish that I could be a fly on the wall at the NWTAC meetings this weekend, where I think this is going to be raised. I am a bit surprised that the department hasn't sort of done some pre-planning around this. Is it safe to say, then, that the Minister will be bringing forward or requesting a supplementary appropriation to put some additional resources into the school of community government with regard to access to information for a little later this year? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As this is a new piece of legislation, like any other new legislation or program initiatives that we are doing, we are going to be evaluating and monitoring. As this might take over a couple or a few years, we will be looking at that. Right now, I don't think we do need a supplementary appropriation. We will be working with our municipal governments to see how we can support them and support them within the department. Who knows what kinds of requests we are going to get through ATIP, and that is something that we are going to monitor to ensure that we do have the resources available for all of our municipalities and to provide the training and, on our side, providing the proper resources to get that passed through. Thank you, and through you, Mr. Chair, maybe I will ask my DM for a little bit more detail.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to clarify that the way the act is drafted, the communities don't have to come under immediately. We would be creating an implementation plan with a timeline for when communities would come online. So, in preliminary

discussions, we don't anticipate that to be in 2019-2020. We do anticipate that to be a little further out so that we can plan for the needs for resourcing and training as part of that implementation plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Those are all my questions. I just think that the department is going to have to seek some additional resources to assist communities in terms of the implementation of this important piece of legislation, and I look forward to dealing with a supplementary appropriation later this year. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Municipal and Community Affairs, school of community government, operations expenditure summary, \$2,860,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Please turn to page 356, the final activity, sport, recreation and youth. Seeing none -- oh, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Almost, almost, almost there, Mr. Chair. I will just stand up and make sure I get recognized. Thank you, Mr. Chair, talking about the NGO Stabilization Fund, I would like, first of all, to thank the Minister and Cabinet for the significant increase in the funding, of which has been seen, you know, it was doubled, so I think that is an amazing feat. I thank them for that. I understand that the department is going to undertake an evaluation of the NGO Stabilization Fund to ensure that the funding is being distributed accordingly to the policy, including seeking input from past funding recipients when work is done. When does this department intend to undertake this work? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The evaluation process for the NGO Stabilization Fund would and will include interviews with and input by previous applicants, whether they were successful or unsuccessful. That is something that we heard clearly during the business plan review. We are hoping that this review will be completed by early summer, and any changes, potential changes, to the policy would obviously take effect in the next fiscal year. We did hear committee's concerns. We appreciate that committee did support and supports the program and that you are happy that we did get an increase for this fiscal year. The evaluation, we will be working on that, and, like I said, hopefully have some changes to present the committee early

this summer, and then they have those changes made in the next fiscal year, the next government, really. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department, are they going to do it internally or externally for the evaluation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It will be external. We will be going through an RFP for this work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I believe the Minister has already committed to bringing the findings back to the standing committee and any proposed changes. Can I just get that confirmation again from the Minister? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I will commit to bringing that information to committee as soon as we receive it, and it will probably be something that the next government is going to have to deal with, in terms of applications for the next funding. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, my favourite topic with this department, multi-sport games, I think I have asked this question every business plan here. Again, it is disappointing to see that there is no appropriation for multi-sports games in this budget. Will the department be providing any funding in this moving forward? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Earlier in the session, I did answer questions from another Member in terms of multi-sports funding and games, and we did say that we did earmark funding for the Arctic Winter Games as well as the Western Canada Games. I know there are other multi-sport games within the Northwest Territories that do need to be addressed, and I have brought it up to my Cabinet colleagues. Any other funding to address those games would be brought forward through a supplementary appropriation.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. Just to clarify, it's going to be a supplemental, but then it is going to be a budget line every year afterwards? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For a little bit more clarity, obviously, we would try to look at finding the funding within our department to address those games, first of all, before we went to a supplementary appropriation. Really, it's year-to-year, and that is a discussion that I would have to bring forward to my Cabinet colleagues and cannot make that commitment at this time.

As the Member knows, we both work together with sport, recreation, and youth, and we know the importance of these games. It is something that we will be moving forward with, and if we do need to bring a supplemental forward for games going forward, that is something that we will do. I can't commit the next government. Because this is 2019-2020 budget, I can't commit the next government to dollars moving forward.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you. I understand that you can't make a commitment, but I was hoping that it would be a budget line in future years moving down there.

Can the Minister tell us how much is going to be moving forward with the supplemental, or is it going to be in a calculation going forward? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It would have to be calculated on the type of games, where the games are going to be held, and who is all going to be involved, so I can't give a dollar figure at this moment. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wish we could get more information on that, but I understand that you've got to do your homework before you can tell us how much it is. I will move on to my next topic, which is the Youth Leadership Strategy. I understand that the department intends to renew its Youth Leadership Strategy in 2019-2020. What will this work involve? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will be renewing the strategy for 2019-2020. Creating an NWT youth advisory group is one thing that we are looking at during this process. Obviously, it falls under one of our commitments. We do have funding that is in place for certain programs, as the Member is well aware, obviously, the Children and Youth Resiliency Program, Regional Youth Sports Events, working with our youth centres, Youth Corps, Youth Contributions Program. This is something that we are definitely going to be working on with our partners in terms of developing a strategy moving forward. We want to definitely hear from people who are on the front lines and not create a strategy from government alone, but making sure that everyone that has had a stake in working with youth over the years, and you, as the chair of standing committee, who has worked a number of years with youth, definitely have that input moving forward. Once the strategy is drafted, we will obviously share it with committee to get input and feedback. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister talked about a youth council, and he did talk about it in the House. What work has been done? Is it still in the preliminary stages, or have we actually seen work being moved forward in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. First of all, we always continue to support our partner stakeholders that do work and have youth representatives, whether it is in sport, recreation, or other youth initiatives. We continue to support our partners, whether it is territorial or national. Moving forward, this is something that was brought up in the May/June sitting, developing a council. I know that the federal government has a strong interest in this, and it is something that we are starting to move on. In terms of an update, I would have to get more detail in terms of where we are with that. We do need to develop a strategy first and then start looking at this youth council. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson, closing comments?

MR. THOMPSON: Yes, just a quick question. Will the Minister share the update with us as soon as he gets it from the department? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Briefly, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we have heard and as we have deliberated through the MACA department, there is a lot going on within our department right now. As you know, a lot of our staff are currently down at the Canada Winter Games. I am sure that, once that slows down, we will be able to put more focus on the youth strategy, as well as getting that youth council together. Definitely, as soon as we get that information, we will be sharing it with committee. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you for that commitment. Next, Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister knows that a little while ago I raised in this House the issue with regard to the NWT SPCA making applications or at least inquiries to apply for the Non-Government Organization Stabilization Fund. I am not going to make any kind of monetary ask here today on behalf of that organization, but I do want to get some clarification where I can. I think, first of all, we can recognize that the SPCA does provide a number of services, and they provide it to over 30 communities in the territory. This is an organization that raises somewhere in the neighbourhood of about \$600,000 a year in revenue, but they also generate about \$800,000 a year in expenses. The difference is covered by donations and by in-kind services and volunteer fundraising. They have to do that year over year. If they don't, then they are at risk of closing their doors and not being able to provide these critical services.

Mr. Chair, interestingly enough, the Government of the Northwest Territories has what is called a Dog Act, in fact. It is a 15-page act that describes within it things relevant to duty of care, dogs in distress, abandoned dogs, protection of dogs, custody of dogs, veterinarian services, and interim custody. These are a lot of the services that sometimes end up falling on the lap of the SPCA when owners disregard their dogs or, for whatever variety of reasons, there is the need for attention for these animals. I guess the point that I am trying to raise is: how can an organization that I think most people would agree is really providing such good and critical services to our territory not be eligible to apply for stabilization funding? The answer is that one of the criteria says that, if in Yellowknife, you must be receiving \$50,000 or more in funding from GNWT annually. I find it difficult to understand: how shall the SPCA get other funding from our departments, doing work for other departments, I suppose, to make themselves eligible to get stabilization funding? Can the Minister at least start, maybe, on providing us some insight on how an organization like the NWT SPCA can work its way toward being eligible for stabilization funding? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. It is a little off-topic to ask the Minister to talk about funding sources from other departments, but I will give the Minister a chance to respond here. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As the Member knows, we had a good back-and-forth there last week on this topic, the GNWT did provide a one-time funding source for the SPCA. We also know that it is the responsibility of the municipalities. I did commit to the Member, when he did have this question, that I will be bringing it up this weekend to the NWTAC, as it is a concern, not only here in Yellowknife, but right across the Northwest Territories, and we do appreciate the work that the NWT SPCA does. We will continue to find ways. I know we have met with them. If there are other funding sources that they can apply to, we would be more than willing to share that information with them. As I mentioned, Mr. Chair, I did commit that this weekend, when I do sit down with the membership of the NWTAC I will be bringing this forward and seeing how we can find a solution. I will make sure I follow up on that commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: All right. Well, that is greatly appreciated, and I hope that they can be some meaningful discussions that actually result in a path forward for the SPCA to be able to access some degree of GNWT funding. With respect to the Chair, it is outlined actually in here, in the criteria with regard to eligibility for the stabilization funding, that, if in Yellowknife, you have to receive \$50,000 or more in funding from the GNWT annually. So that is the reason why I raised it. It didn't mean to drag in other departments or whatever for it. I know you can't speak on their behalf, but I do know this much, and that is that the SPCA, while providing good services, is not necessarily tied and/or linked by contracts of any kind with municipalities, so that might be one of the things that you are going to want to raise with the NWT Association of Communities. They are a stand-alone, registered society, non-profit NGO, what have you, that provides a multitude of services and not necessarily do they have links to the communities for which they provide services in.

I think at the end of the day, one thing that you could suggest, too, is that, while they are not receiving funds from any other government department, that actually could be considered a good thing in that they are not being a burden upon any of our finances but that they would certainly appreciate getting supports that are similar to those that are given to NGOs through the stabilization funding. You know, NGOs, this will assist them with

management, governance, organizational development, extraordinary operations. These are clearly things that an organization like the SPCA could use assistance with. So one of the recommendations that I will make, and you can take it if you like, is that I would suggest that in circumstances where the consideration might be made is that this \$50,000 requirement, of having to receive funds from other GNWT departments, be scratched because I think we need to commend those NGOs that don't require assistance from the government. If they are able to operate on their own, but then, when they come to us for a little bit of assistance, we shouldn't be burdening them with the idea that, "Well, you have to be receiving other GNWT funding to the extent of \$50,000 in order to be eligible for this pot." So I would just ask that the Minister and his department take that into consideration as they move into discussions with the communities and others with regard to potentially finding resources, funding resources, for the SPCA. Those are my comments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Would the Minister care to respond?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think all of Cabinet, I think all Members, have heard. I will definitely look at the policy. I think a good-news story on this one is that we have increased the funding to the NGO Stabilization Fund, but it is something that we do need to also look at. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Is there anything further from Mr. Vanthuyne? Nothing further. Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just need to clear something up in the response from the Minister just now, responding to the honourable Member from Nahendeh. The Minister said that, on the multi-sports thing, they would look internally first, before a supplementary appropriation was brought forward for the multi-sport section, which was deleted from the budget this year. We spent a lot of time as committee members talking about that, and we have talked to the Minister of Finance. We had an agreement that that will be brought forward in the supplementary appropriation for the actuals, so I need that cleared up. With one response, the Minister has put us back to where we are looking for the money internally. Our committee, priorities in planning, had said that we didn't agree with that, that it had to be coming through a supplementary appropriation in order to move forward. That is what the Minister of Finance agreed with prior to starting the budget deliberations. I need the Minister to clear that up for us. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the Member for seeking more clarity on that. Yes, we would be looking at a supplementary appropriation, for clarity, yes, a confirmation. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you for that clarification. Anything further from Mr. Beaulieu?

MR. BEAULIEU: Okay, thank you, and I guess I didn't hear the full thing. Again, this is based on actual costs of the multi-sport events? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, that is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Nothing further, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu. Municipal and Community Affairs; sport, recreation and youth; operations expenditure summary, \$5,442,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. We have a couple of information items at the end. Mr. Beaulieu, to the information item.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have a question on the information item on page number 362, referred to as, "New Building Canada Plan – Small Community Fund." My understanding is that Building Canada Plan has a different meaning for a small community. My understanding is that the small community fund is for communities over 10,000/under 100,000 population. I would like to ask the Minister if my understanding is correct. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, for the Northwest Territories agreement, the Building Canada funding under the Small Communities Fund is available to all communities, and we have an allocation identified for each community under that funding program. So each community had access to that program under the agreement with the NWT. In southern Canada, it was only communities under 100,000 that were able to apply for the Small Communities Fund, but we had a different interpretation for the bilateral in the North. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you. That is what I said. I thought it was under 100,000 but over 10,000, so what the deputy is saying is that they have removed the bottom, so it is from 100,000 to 44? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is correct in terms of the Small Communities Fund. What I can do and will commit to is I will share the information and the allocations of that funding with Members so that they know what their communities are getting in their ridings.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Beaulieu.

MR. BEAULIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe that, if it is allocated to all the communities in the Northwest Territories, I am fine with that. I don't necessarily need to see it in writing. A commitment here is sufficient as far as I am concerned. Maybe, if the Minister wishes, share it with other Members. I just knew that that was the criteria at one point when we looked at this fund, when it first came out. The only community that was eligible for this was Yellowknife, and so, at one point, all of the money in this fund went into Yellowknife. So, since then, obviously there has been a change at the federal level, so I suppose that it is now going to all communities. If it is going to all communities, I am happy with that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you for that. Minister, would you like to respond at all?

HON. ALFRED MOSES: If any of the Members want to see the allocations for the riding, just send us an e-mail. Actually, we could just get this out to everyone, just so you know where the allocations are going and what projects are in their communities. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. On page 362, on the information items, I see that national disaster mitigation for Tuktoyaktuk was \$48,000. I'd just like to get a little update on that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is right. There is an agreement with the Government of Canada to support the Flood and Shoreline Erosion Mitigation Plan for the community

of Tuktoyaktuk under the National Disaster Mitigation Program. We continue to work with the federal government and, as I mentioned, I was at an FTP meeting not too long ago where we were focusing on trying to get more support for some of these types of federal dollars. I do believe that it should be completed in March. Obviously, we just had a new election in Tuktoyaktuk not too long ago, and we are just getting their new elected officials and staff updated on the application and the plan that was submitted to the federal government, and we will continue to work with them to address that concern.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the Minister for that. I know that Tuktoyaktuk was struggling last year with the loss of an SAO and the lack of communications with this, so I'm just wondering if the community lost out on any funding dollars, whether it's from Canada or from the GNWT, on this project due to the lack of communication and change in leadership? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They didn't lose out on any money. They had an allocation to complete the plan, which is what this project is, and they are still on track to have the plan completed by the end of this March. Once we have the plan, then we will be applying for future federal dollars to implement the plan, so that will be the next stage. They didn't lose out on anything. They actually have been able to catch up on the deliverables, and are still meeting the original target of March for completion of the project. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Nakimayak.

MR. NAKIMAYAK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. I'm just thinking about, you know, I mentioned during the session we talk about climate change and our eyes are only trained enough to notice it in the summer. You know, out of sight, out of mind in the wintertime. We've been faced with a lot of blizzards all over the territory, and that's really hard on our infrastructure, whether it's territorial, municipal, or Indigenous governments' infrastructure. I think we need to look at that moving forward into 2019-2020, and beyond into the next Assembly, to see what we can do to help assist communities with their disaster planning for the winter months, as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's not a question; it's more just a comment.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nakimayak. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under the same heading, for Aklavik. I just want to make sure that that is ongoing funding. I know the community did have a lot of plans about erosion on the Bickish Road, but that more work needs to be done, so I just want to ensure that that is ongoing funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To confirm, this was a one-time application for funding to Canada to do the disaster mitigation planning. Any additional work for implementation, again, would be, like Tuktoyaktuk, we would have to apply for additional funding in future years. This specific program was just to do the planning work for communities that have flood and shoreline erosion issues, so that was what we targeted there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Okay, thank you. I know there is a lot of funding under the federal grant, so will you continue to work with the community to ensure they actually get some work done in the community? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Minister.

HON. ALFRED MOSES: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and yes, we will definitely commit to that continued ongoing work. Some of the work there includes collection of data, a hydrology assessment, hydrology modelling channel stability, and development of, obviously, the flood mitigation options. It's not only for the community of Aklavik; this is something that we want to make sure that all of our communities that are in a flood-risk zone have the option of accessing this program, and we will work with those communities moving forward. So, yes, the commitment is still there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just under the Gwich'in land claim implementation, I see it's only \$2,000, compared to other organizations at \$66,000. There's not a lot of work you can do with \$2,000 for a land claim organization. I know implementation has always been an issue, so are there plans to increase that? I believe in the past, depending on which department we were on, sometimes they'd get \$25,000, or something.

There's not a lot that can be done with \$2,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Ms. Young.

MS. YOUNG: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In each of those implementation funds, those are specific to a 10-year bilateral that was negotiated with Canada, and in each case the funding is for different things. In one case, it's to support access to granular; in another case, it's with regard to land management. All we are delivering is whatever that specific bilateral allowed for us to do, so that's why the number you see is specific to the arrangement on the Gwich'in agreement that we have with Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Blake.

MR. BLAKE: Oh, no. That's good for now, thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Seeing nothing further, we will return to the total department, on page 327. Municipal and Community Affairs, total department, \$110,119,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Does committee agree that this concludes our consideration of Municipal and Community Affairs?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, committee. Thank you to the Minister and to the witnesses. Sergeant-at-Arms, you may escort the witnesses from the Chamber. We have concluded the item under consideration, so I will now rise and report progress. Thank you, committee.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report of the committee, Member for Hay River North?

Report of Committee of the Whole

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates 2019-2020, and would like to report progress, and Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Do we have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. The motion is in order. All those in favour? All those opposed?

---Carried

Masi. Item 22, third reading of bills. Mr. Clerk, item 23, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Ball): Orders of the day for Thursday, February 28, 2019, at 1:30 p.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Acknowledgments
7. Oral Questions
8. Written Questions
9. Returns to Written Questions
10. Replies to the Commissioner's Opening Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motion
16. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
 - Motion 33-18(3), Extended Adjournment of the House to March 5, 2019
18. First Reading of Bills
19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 40, Smoking Control and Reduction Act
 - Bill 41, Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 31, Northwest Territories 911 Act
 - Committee Report 12-18(3)
 - Committee Report 13-18(3), Standing Committee on Government Operations

Report on the Review of Bill 31: Northwest Territories 911 Act

- Minister's Statement 131-18(3), Sessional Statement
- Minister's Statement 151-18(3), New Federal Infrastructure Agreement
- Minister's Statement 158-18(3), Developments in Early Childhood Programs and Services
- Tabled Document 322-18(3), Main Estimates, 2019-2020

21. Report of Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER: Masi, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Thursday, February 28, 2019, at 1:30 p.m.

---ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

