

## RESPONSE TO PETITION

1-16(6)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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Petition Tabled by Mr. Kevin Menicoche on May 11, 2011

Response by the Honourable Michael McLeod  
Minister of Transportation

### **Funding for Upgrades to the Liard Highway**

The Liard Highway was constructed by the Federal Government in the late 1970's and early 1980's to minimum standards. Its integrity has been an ongoing concern of the Department of Transportation due to its aging condition, extremely poor soils in the roadbed, poor drainage and a lack of surfacing gravel. All of these factors have contributed to a lower loading capacity and to increased maintenance requirements. The Liard Highway is especially vulnerable during spring thaw, despite enhanced maintenance and road bans. Rainy conditions exacerbate the situation.

During the life of the 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, the GNWT has allocated almost \$14 million to the reconstruction and repair of the Liard Highway. In addition, the Department has identified more than \$100 million of capital needs in the twenty year needs assessment.

The Department has contracted with an engineering consultant to carry out a full engineering assessment and to prepare a functional design study report. This will include a rehabilitation plan that will help determine our next steps for meeting current and future traffic needs. Based on the functional design report, the Department will prioritize the potential future rehabilitation works.

Engineering and maintenance staff will continue to monitor the highway and carry out repairs as they become necessary to allow for safe and reliable travel on the Liard Highway. The Department of Transportation will also endeavour to secure long term funding for the repair, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Liard Highway.