



NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
**LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

2nd Session

Day 45

19th Assembly

HANSARD

Thursday, October 29, 2020

Pages 1481 - 1522

The Honourable Frederick Blake Jr, Speaker

Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories

Members of the Legislative Assembly

Speaker

Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.
(Mackenzie Delta)

Hon. Diane Archie

(Inuvik Boot Lake)
Deputy Premier
Minister of Infrastructure
Minister responsible for NWT Power Corporation

Mr. Ronald Bonnetrouge

(Deh Cho)

Ms. Caitlin Cleveland

(Kam Lake)

Hon. Paulie Chinna

(Sahtu)
Minister responsible for NWT Housing Corporation
Minister responsible for Homelessness
Minister responsible for Youth
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs
Minister responsible for Youth

Hon. Caroline Cochrane

(Range Lake)
Premier
Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs
Minister responsible for the Covid-19 Secretariat

Hon. Julie Green

(Yellowknife Centre)
Minister of Health and Social Services
Minister responsible for Seniors
Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities

Mr. Jackie Jacobson

(Nunakput)

Mr. Rylund Johnson

(Yellowknife North)

Mr. Jackson Lafferty

(Monfwi)

Ms. Frieda Martselos

(Thebacha)

Ms. Katrina Nokleby

(Great Slave)

Mr. Steve Norn

(Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh)

Mr. Kevin O'Reilly

(Frame Lake)

Ms. Lesa Semmler

(Inuvik Twin Lakes)

Hon. R.J. Simpson

(Hay River North)
Government House Leader
Minister of Education, Culture & Employment
Minister of Justice
Minister responsible for the Public Utilities Board

Mr. Rocky Simpson

(Hay River South)

Hon. Shane Thompson

(Nahendeh)
Minister of Environment and Natural Resources
Minister of Lands
Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

(Yellowknife South)
Minister of Finance
Minister responsible for the Status of Women
Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment

Officers

Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. Tim Mercer

Deputy Clerks

Mr. Glen Rutland
Ms. Kim Wickens

Committee Clerks

Mr. Michael Ball
Ms. Cynthia James
Ms. Jennifer Franki-Smith

Law Clerks

Ms. Sheila MacPherson
Ms. Alyssa Holland

Box 1320
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
Tel: (867) 767-9010 Fax: (867) 920-4735 Toll-Free: 1-800-661-0784
<http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRAYER	1481
MINISTERS' STATEMENTS	1481
80-19(2) – Marine Transportation Services 2020 Sailing Season and Community Resupply (Archie)	1481
81-19(2) – Anti-Poverty (Green)	1482
82-19(2) – Aurora College Transformation Implementation Plan and Areas of Specialization (R.J. Simpson)	1483
MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	1483
Evictions and Use of Limiters (Jacobson)	1483
Healing Centre (Lafferty).....	1484
Support for Entrepreneurs (Johnson).....	1484
Housing (Norn)	1485
Infrastructure (Nokleby)	1485
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation Client Services (Martselos)	1486
Medical Travel (Semmler).....	1486
Midwifery Services (O'Reilly)	1487
Northwest Territories Housing Corporation and Education, Culture and Employment Working Together (Cleveland)	1487
ORAL QUESTIONS	1488
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	1498
TABLING OF DOCUMENTS	1498
NOTICES OF MOTION	1499
21-19(2) – Establishment of a Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs	1499
NOTICES OF MOTION FOR FIRST READING OF BILLS	1499
Bill 17 – An Act to Amend the Corrections Act	1499
Bill 18 – An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act	1500
Bill 19 – An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act	1500
FIRST READING OF BILLS	1500
Bill 15 – Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020	1500
SECOND READING OF BILLS	1500
Bill 12 – An Act to Amend the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Act.....	1500
Bill 13 – An Act to Amend the Interpretation Act	1500

Bill 14 – An Act to Amend the Securities Act.....	1500
CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF BILLS AND OTHER MATTERS.....	1501
REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE	1521
ORDERS OF THE DAY	1521

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES**Thursday, October 29, 2020****Members Present**

Hon. Diane Archie, Hon. Frederick Blake Jr., Mr. Bonnetrouge, Hon. Paulie Chinna, Ms. Cleveland, Hon. Caroline Cochrane, Hon. Julie Green, Mr. Jacobson, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lafferty, Ms. Martselos, Ms. Nokleby, Mr. Norn, Mr. O'Reilly, Ms. Semmler, Hon. R.J. Simpson, Mr. Rocky Simpson, Hon. Shane Thompson, Hon. Caroline Wawzonek

The House met at 1:31 p.m.

Prayer

---Prayer

SPEAKER (Hon. Frederick Blake Jr.): Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Item 2, Ministers' statements. Minister of Infrastructure.

Ministers' Statements

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 80-19(2):
MARINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES 2020
SAILING SEASON AND COMMUNITY RESUPPLY

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: [English translation not provided.]

Mr. Speaker, four years after the Government of the Northwest Territories launched its Marine Transportation Services, or MTS, we continue to improve our capacity to operate a reliable and professional marine shipping service in the North.

I am pleased to report that the 2020 resupply has been successfully completed. The first shipments of the season departed Hay River on July 10, and the last delivery took place on September 19. Nearly 28 million litres of fuel and more than 63 hundred tons of cargo were delivered this season to communities on the Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River, as well as the coastal communities. Mr. Speaker, these deliveries were made possible by our able marine crews who worked tirelessly to overcome challenges posed by high water levels and bad weather.

From the beginning of this season, MTS developed and executed a robust COVID-19 mitigation plan. Access to our cargo terminals was granted by appointment only and only those free of COVID-19 related symptoms. Customers were encouraged to use the online system to avoid contact. To protect communities, designated drop-off cargo zones were created for the delivery of cargo so that vessel crews would avoid contact with residents. Regardless of the challenges posed by our Arctic environment, MTS remains committed to providing the best service possible to all our customers. Our

crews know that communities depend on our services for the delivery of essential goods.

Mr. Speaker, from deck hands to cooks, 171 people were employed at the peak of the resupply season. Ninety-two of these workers are Northwest Territories residents, and 64 are Indigenous. We will continue our relationship with Transport Canada and the Nunavut Fisheries and Marine Training Consortium to promote the Marine Training Centre in Hay River. Programs that are offered at the training centre include the bridge watch rating program, small vessel operator proficiency, and a fishing master's program. Recent graduates have been employed on Canadian Coast Guard Arctic icebreakers and on our research vessel, operated by the Arctic Research Foundation. Nine graduates were employed on our own tugboats this resupply season. These employment and training opportunities positively impact families and communities and support the long-term sustainability of the marine industry in the North.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to supporting training opportunities, the GNWT recognizes the need to support the marine industry by improving marine infrastructure and services. For decades, fuel has been carried through our northern waters to northern communities in single-hulled barges. Marine Transportation Services is improving our marine fleet with double-hulled barges to minimize the risk of a fuel spill and better protect our environment.

In August, four new double-hulled barges were delivered to Tuktoyaktuk. These new barges carry cargo on the deck and, below the deck, can carry several types of petroleum products at the same time. I would like to thank the Government of Canada for providing \$19.5 million, or 75 percent of the costs, through the Oceans Protection Plan. Mr. Speaker, the GNWT will continue to work with public and private marine partners to strengthen and support marine infrastructure and services in the Northwest Territories for the benefit of all Northerners. Quyanainni, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister of Infrastructure. Ministers' statements. Minister of Health and Social Services.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 81-19(2):
ANTI-POVERTY

HON. JULIE GREEN: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Poverty reduction is an urgent challenge that everyone needs to be aware of. Poverty levels have further increased with COVID-19, which could push more residents into poverty due to an uncertain economy, food insecurity, and the high cost of living. To support residents during the pandemic, the Government of Northwest Territories took a whole-of-government approach on several fronts. During the month of March, income assistance recipients received a one-time emergency allowance. The GNWT is also taking action to provide supports and protection for individuals requiring shelter. Shelters are often crowded, which can present a risk to both individuals and staff. The GNWT is working with shelters to implement supports for physical distancing and isolation for individuals waiting for test results or who receive a diagnosis of COVID-19.

To address homelessness and housing stability, the GNWT provided \$600,000 in funding over four years to support a Housing First program that rents apartments in Yellowknife to house and support up to 25 individuals who were previously homeless and have concurrent mental health and addictions. The Northern Pathways to Housing is a supportive housing program that supports communities to provide stable housing for single adults and helps them in integrating them into the community. In recent years, the Northern Pathways to Housing program has provided funding to Aklavik, Fort Simpson, Behchoko, and Fort Good Hope to construct or renovate housing for 16 single adults experiencing homelessness. We look forward to more communities coming on board.

Mr. Speaker, to successfully reduce poverty, we must work together with our partners to make better use of limited resources. Where there is an overlap of programs and services between organizations, we must have better coordination for residents accessing the supports they need. To accomplish this, the GNWT hired a territorial director of integrated service delivery to guide a whole-of-government approach to enhance service delivery across the NWT through a coordinated, person-centred approach. The GNWT also increased funding available for the NGO stabilization program from \$300,000 to \$700,000. This funding supports non-governmental organizations who deliver critical GNWT-funded programs or services to the public to stabilize or develop their capacity to manage them.

Mr. Speaker, the GNWT recognizes its central role in providing a coordinated approach with Indigenous and community governments, business and industry, and NGOs to take action on reducing

poverty in the NWT. Last year, the GNWT released its renewed action plan, Working Together II, An Action Plan to Reduce Poverty in the NWT 2019-2022. This action plan was developed in collaboration with the GNWT and its partners and focuses on five priority areas: children and family support, healthy living and reaching our potential, safe and affordable housing, sustainable communities, and integrated continuum of services.

The GNWT has many programs and services in place that advance these priority areas and provide a path out of poverty for residents. They have already helped thousands of Northerners. These include initiatives like the Anti-Poverty Fund, which has an annual budget of \$1 million to help eligible organizations and Indigenous governments and communities to support their poverty-reduction initiatives.

This year, 28 recipients were awarded funding through the 2020 Anti-Poverty Fund. Because of COVID-19, proposals were reviewed by the Anti-Poverty Advisory Committee through a virtual meeting. The committee is comprised of nine individuals from across the NWT and who represent community governments, Indigenous governments, non-government organizations, the private sector, and the GNWT.

This year's successful proposals aim to reduce poverty by supporting food security; assisting those experiencing homelessness; early childhood development; employment and training; healthy living; supporting traditional knowledge; and on-the-land activities. The interdepartmental anti-poverty team is currently working to plan a virtual anti-poverty roundtable in order to proceed with the event while still complying with public health orders. The roundtables will be revised and will now focus on a key poverty-reduction issue for each event. This year, we will be examining how to best address food security at the community level.

Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that residents have access to supports they need so that they can live in dignity, are free from poverty, and are active members in their communities. We can achieve this through the coordinated and collaborative effort of all partners. By working together, we can learn more about what is being done in communities and support better futures for our residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

MINISTER'S STATEMENT 82-19(2):
AURORA COLLEGE TRANSFORMATION
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND AREAS OF
SPECIALIZATION

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am excited to announce that today the Government of the Northwest Territories is releasing the Aurora College Transformation Implementation Plan and the initial areas of teaching and research specialization for the polytechnic university. These foundational documents, along with input from our residents and partners, will help guide the transformation of Aurora College into a polytechnic university and beyond over the next six years. Later today, I will table the implementation plan, which identifies the critical milestones along the path towards the establishment of an effective and sustainable polytechnic university capable of supporting the aspirations of Northerners, diversifying the economy, and contributing to the long-term prosperity of the Northwest Territories.

Mr. Speaker, maintaining a high level of transparency and accountability is critical to the success of this project, which is why today we are launching a new "Aurora College Transformation" website. This website enables residents to learn about the transformation, follow the progress being made through various dashboards and tracking tools, and provide feedback. Mr. Speaker, in August, we sought feedback on a discussion paper about the areas of teaching and research specialization for the new polytechnic university. Feedback from Indigenous government partners, business, industry, post-secondary institutions, non-government organizations, and members of the public has informed these four initial areas of specialization, which are:

- skilled trades and technology;
- earth resources and environmental management;
- northern health, education and community services; and
- business and leadership.

These areas of specialization are not programs or classes. They are broad, overarching themes that will provide the structure and focus required to maintain high-quality programming and operations.

Mr. Speaker, the polytechnic university will be focused on learners, meeting them where they are in their education journey and supporting them through a ladder approach as they work to achieve their own education and career goals. There will be a place for every NWT resident at the polytechnic university through access to adult basic education, upgrading, certificate, diploma, and degree programs. It will give them improved and expanded access to quality post-secondary education opportunities close to home, as well as

the confidence and experience to move on to additional degree and advanced degree programs.

None of this can be achieved without also increasing the availability of programming in our small communities. Through a new and innovative approach to community learning, the polytechnic university will have a clear and meaningful presence in every community in the Northwest Territories. From our smallest communities to our regional centres, new made-in-the-North programs and research initiatives will increase access to education and research opportunities through a network of learning centres, remote research facilities, and campuses.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all those who have been supporting the work of the transformation, including those who have taken the time to help shape the path forward through engagements. This transformation is one of the most promising ways we are preparing the Northwest Territories and our residents for future prosperity. As the institution emerges from transformation, it will be stronger and more accessible, able to attract a greater number of students from within the NWT and beyond, and provide lasting economic benefits to the territory and our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Ministers' statements. Item 3, Members' statements. Member for Nunakput.

Members' Statements

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON EVICTIONS AND USE OF LIMITERS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been clear in this House that I oppose the NWT Power Corporation using power-limiting devices in the winter months. Life is hard and expensive in our small communities and a lack of heat life-threatening. People have their power throttled, and they don't know when the power will be turned off. This makes it impossible for a family to heat their homes properly and feed and care for their families. After I raised my objections, I was pleased to see power corporation responded positively in mid-March. Cabin Radio reported, "NWT Power Corporation has promised to disable all power-limiting equipment to residents' homes for the duration of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic."

Mr. Speaker, did I miss something? Has the pandemic ended because NTPC has announced last week, starting November 9th, they'll be starting to use these power-limiting devices and starting collections? The timing is off, Mr. Speaker, right when the cold weather is setting in. This announcement in March, was it a public relations stunt because we don't sell too much power in

summer months? The GNWT has to step up and stop this inhumane practice of using power-limiters.

The use of load-limiting devices is standard practice in Canadian utilities, they say. I say that it doesn't make it okay. This is the North, a harsh reality, a different climate, and other parts of Canada are a lot warmer than where we're from. It's minus 26 back home right now. That's not including the wind. NTPC has \$2 million overdue accounts, but the government can find \$9.3 million to give to Canadian North, an asset for-profit business, through this pandemic. We could find \$2 million to help our people. The dollars for helping struggling residents in remote communities through winter months made tougher than most ongoing COVID crisis. Otherwise, I'm going to proceed with the plan to introduce the motion to make load-limiters illegal in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the appropriate Minister at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Members' statements. Member for Monfwi.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HEALING CENTRE

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Today, I would like to talk about healing. I'm talking about our constituents, people in our area. People in my region have talked to me. That's one of the reasons why I'm asking. People want to have a healing centre so people can talk about healing. [Translation ends]

[Microphone turned off] ...in May that three-quarters of those 200 southern referrals return sober. That sounds like a major success story, but it is not because, sadly, while they might step off the plane sober, they do not remain sober because of the failure of the southern treatment. They fall off the wagon again and again and again. Mr. Speaker, I already spoke about a constituent who received treatment in the South, returned to the North, received zero after-care, fell off the wagon and sadly was discovered deceased here in Yellowknife this past summer. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you again today to tell this House that my region lost another beautiful soul to addiction over the weekend.

Here we are today, still debating whether or not we need a treatment facility here our territory. This is far too real, Mr. Speaker, we need a northern-based treatment centre, one that respects where our people come from, one that respects who we are, one where our language is a part of our working language, a treatment centre linked to the land, linked to our culture, linked to our elders. Otherwise, our people will continue to backslide when they step off the airplane. Northerners

demand an end to this sad state of affairs. Northerners demand healing for Northerners by Northerners in a northern setting. Northerners want an annual sum of \$2 million to be spent here in the North perfecting administering our own home-grown programs, developing our own home-grown counselling professionals. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services at the appropriate time on this particular very important matter to me. Masi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Members' statements. Member for Yellowknife North.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NWT regularly has one of the highest GDPs per capita in Canada, and we would regularly be in the top 10 in the world. No doubt that impressive figure has helped many of our residents get ahead and has helped this government fund many life-saving services. However, sadly, with many of our diamond mines facing closure and the economic recession of COVID-19, that economic prosperity is likely to diminish. To be honest, Mr. Speaker, there is only so much we politicians can do about that. The further we head up the economic ladder, the less ability we have as a government to influence. I would love if I had any control over the market price of diamonds. I would raise it through the roof. I would also love if I had an operating surplus of a few billion dollars for infrastructure, but we don't. That decision requires paying for infrastructure with debt. A debate, no doubt, we will have many times in this House.

The other side of those large economic debates are the small economic debates. That is where we do have the ability to influence and localize our economy. It is much easier to ask 100 small businesses to add one job each than it is to ask our largest company to add 100 jobs. This is the essence of diversification. It's not just the industries, but it's increasing overall employers and competition within the NWT. This is why our economic recovery must focus on entrepreneurs and small businesses which, to be honest, is the overwhelming amount of companies in the NWT.

The other day, MLA Norn talked about a constituent who makes woodstoves, and he hopes that, one day, we can build an economy where that constituent could compete with the Amazons of the world. Mr. Norn's comment resonated with me, Mr. Speaker, because that is the goal and is an achievable goal. I will gladly pay a few dollars more if I could get my woodstove down the road in Detah. I will pay for that economic security, and I know many others will, too. COVID has shown just how

brittle our supply lines are. Localized competition and creating redundancy protects us. Resilience must sometimes be prioritised over efficiency. Thomas Friedman, in describing Carlson's Law, describes this balance between autocracy and democracy in an organization. Mr. Speaker, I am seeking unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MR. JOHNSON: Thomas Friedman writes, "In a world where so many people now have access to education and cheap tools of innovation, innovation that happens from the bottom up tends to be chaotic but smart. Innovation that happens from the top down tends to be orderly but dumb." Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that, far too often, the GNWT is orderly but dumb, but our entrepreneurs are prime example of bottom-up innovation. Our economic supports must do more to foster that kind of growth. I will have questions for the Minister of ITI how we are making sure our economic recovery is chaotic and smart, as opposed to our love of orderly and dumb. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Members' statements. Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON HOUSING

MR. NORN: Mahsi cho, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the colleague from Yellowknife North for those kind words. Just something to think about, we are a G7 nation, and we are still sitting on some of the most resource-rich areas on the planet. Something to think about for our budgets for the springtime and here in the fall-time. I just wanted to mention that.

I'm going to go back to my Member's statement here and just follow up with my comments yesterday on housing. I want to speak a little bit about housing. I did have quite a few of my constituents yesterday who reached out to me about the various housing issues that they had, and I did notice a common theme. That theme is that there is a large number of preventative maintenance issues that are popping up in my riding. A lot of these can be easily solved with planned and preventative maintenance. These are mainly units that are under the care of the NWT Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it's starting to get cold out there. The NWT Housing Corporation needs to really make a push and take proactive measures to get ahead of any heating and plumbing issues that may pop up during vulnerable times, such as Christmas. Through that, I had a constituent who had a great

idea, and that idea was to reach out to the LHOs in the communities and earmark a handful of elders and get their furnaces serviced; their oil tanks checked and replaced; and make sure their plumbing is in order. I know that there are programs out there like the CARE program and the SAFE program, and they are important programs. At the same time, they do require an unnecessary amount of time and red tape to get through just to apply for them, let alone the long wait times for approvals.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share that my constituents and I do get irritated with government departments are perceived to be taking knee-jerk responsive action whenever something breaks down. My constituents have voiced that they would like to see more preventative work done to show that the NWT Housing Corporation cares for the people and their assets so they last and they house those in need for a long time. With that, I will have questions for the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation and the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Members' statements. Member for Great Slave.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON INFRASTRUCTURE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Infrastructure. When I say that word, one's mind often turns to roads and buildings, airports, and bridges; but really, Infrastructure encompasses so much more than that. It is the pipes that bring you water and carry away your waste, the fibre optic line that allows you to instantly communicate or watch that football game from Europe, the solid waste facility where you take your garbage, or the water treatment plant that provides your community with fresh, clean water to drink.

One only needs to look at the budgets associated with the GNWT's departments to understand the sheer enormity of the Department of Infrastructure and all they do for our people and the territory. During the initial stages of COVID, this was the department that had over 60 percent of its employees continue on at their work sites while everyone else was sent home. The department that completed the community resupply, despite the challenges of a far from normal year and ensured that the heat and ventilation stayed on in our buildings. They ferried us around, kept our planes in the air, and patrolled our highways.

Yesterday, in the Committee of the Whole, we heard a lot about the infrastructure gap in our communities, how our hamlets and towns are in desperate need of funding to build new fire halls and recreation centres, roads, and waste facilities. However, what good is building new infrastructure if

we are not properly caring for what we already have? Everywhere you go in this territory, the eye is met with crumbling, aging buildings and roads in need of repair and what appears to be very little money or political will to address this issue. Every year that we fail to provide the funds to upkeep and properly maintain our assets, the costs for repair and replacement will exponentially increase. To allow this to continue is negligent and speaks to poor fiscal management. Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Infrastructure at the appropriate time. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Members' statements. Member for Thebacha.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING CORPORATION CLIENT SERVICES

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, today, I am talking about housing and the need for improvements to be made within the area of client services. The NWT Housing Corporation is a government agency that administers and oversees all of the territory's housing programs and housing options available to residents of the NWT. Based on its structure and function alone, at the end of the day, this agency, the NWT Housing Corporation, is a client-service-based organization. It is about serving the people of the NWT in the best possible way for all of their housing needs.

Mr. Speaker, based on the feedback I am hearing from various constituents, as well as junior housing authority staff, both past and present, I believe that the NWT Housing Corporation is lacking in the area of client services. Specifically, I am concerned about some of the behaviours, actions, and decisions coming from the managerial level within the local housing authorities. Again, my constituents have told me they felt a lack of basic courtesy, respect, and service delivery from management. This is not acceptable. Therefore, I believe there need to be some changes with how things are done within the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. For one, I think there should be a neutral mechanism put in place to deal with housing managers. Secondly, I think the NWT Housing Corporation should consider initiating independent, external investigations into some of the complaints. Systemic racism in dealing with vulnerable, often elderly, clients and junior housing staff is not okay.

Mr. Speaker, I know the housing Minister has spoken about offering client training for Housing Corporation staff. However, this is not enough. Unfortunately, I don't think this training has been effective enough to change much of anything. Staff need to be told how to act better and more

appropriately, and if this does not work, then I think the Minister should create a positive solution to address this. I will have questions for the Minister of housing at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Members' statements. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MEDICAL TRAVEL

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring up concerns about medical travel. Since being elected, I have had many complaints, not just from my constituents, but other constituents in my region. Here are just a couple of common concerns.

Elders are being sent to Inuvik, Yellowknife, or Edmonton from regional or small communities without escorts. This is unacceptable. I consider myself knowledgeable in the medical system, but I, too, have experienced some anxiety and stress, missed appointments, and even missed a surgery for my own child when I arrived at the hospital in Edmonton, trying to locate a desk, and then get someone to look at my papers that they sent me with. I could not imagine an elder arriving there after the boarding home driver drops them off, as the boarding home is considered their escort. Some of these hospitals are larger than some of our smaller communities. GNWT needs to make this change.

I have heard from families that their family member went to appointments, returned without knowing what happened, don't know what was said, never asked any questions. When they tried to help the family member get information, they were told by the health centre or hospital, "It's confidential. We can't tell them." This is unacceptable and should not be happening in this day and age. They should not have to go to their MLA to raise the issue so they can get escorts. This has been an ongoing issue for as long as I can remember, and it is time to do something.

Another concern is residents being sent to the boarding home in Yellowknife and being placed in the hotel. The constituents who I've heard from have been placed in the hotel. They have no restaurant there, and the food they received was unacceptable. They are left hungry and with no choice, even if they are allergic to the food that is sent. If they are not in the boarding home, then why are they not making arrangements to have them in a hotel with a restaurant and have vouchers to the restaurant for at least three meals a day? May I add that there have also been elders put into these

hotels who had no escorts, and this is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to point out that these are mainly Indigenous people in the NWT. If they were scheduled for surgery, it would be cancelled because you cannot be put in a hotel and left alone after 24 hours after surgery, so what happens when the boarding home is full when you get there and the room is booked? Nothing. You get sent home and rebooked. Is this the best value for our money and our patients' health? Surgery patients should be given escorts, as a boarding home is not responsible and they are not going to help them clean their bandage if bleeding or care for them. Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement.

---Unanimous consent granted

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you. Surgery patients should be given escorts, as a boarding home is not responsible, or going to help them clean their bandage if bleeding, or care for them if they become ill after surgery, or even help dress them. They should be given per diems or meal vouchers to the equivalent of GNWT staff when travelling on medical travel, as all GNWT staff are put in hotels, given per diems that are set out by the duty travel rates, and at this time, they're \$136.80 per day. If going for surgery, they will get an escort due to the fact that they cannot stay alone in a hotel. Mr. Speaker, medical travel needs to have an audit and look at how we provide this service to the residents of the Northwest Territories. I will have questions for the Minister responsible for medical travel. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Members' statements. Member for Frame Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON MIDWIFERY SERVICES

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. Here's a familiar topic for my Member's statements: midwifery. This is the 13th time I've raised it as an MLA. I certainly won't try to summarize the delays and excuses that still leave us far short of the much-promised territorial Midwifery Program, but I will try to nail down where we are today and hopefully learn how this essential service will finally be delivered to all Northwest Territories families.

Work on creating a full midwifery program began in 2013. Progress was slow and lead up to a 2017 Northwest Territories midwifery stakeholder engagement, which identified gaps in midwifery care and devised a territorial midwifery program model. Priorities for action included strengthening the existing midwifery teams in Fort Smith and Hay

River, expanding the Hay River Midwifery Program to provide services in the Deh Cho and South Slave regions, developing a territorial midwifery recruitment and retention plan, and creating a territorial midwifery program based in Yellowknife with the capacity to support regions, including Behchoko. 2018 multi-year funding was to initiate the program in 2019-2020 and implement it over three years.

Staffing has been late and stalled. A territorial manager was hired in March of this year, and support staffing is underway. Although it was apparently delayed by the move to the new Stanton hospital and COVID. The department says that implementation of the planned Deh Cho service have been delayed by staffing difficulties and South Slave community consultations have been delayed by the restrictions on community gatherings due to the pandemic.

In 2019, the government approved year one funding for two new positions at the NTHSSA: the territorial manager; and the lead for the territorial Midwifery Program. I'll be watching for approval of subsequent funds in next year's operating budget. In response to my request for an update, the department outlined at least eight major organizational, policy, and recruitment tasks leading us to the promised territorial program. Progress has been slow, Mr. Speaker, far too slow, in my opinion. Later today, I will have questions for the Minister of Health and Social Services on a definite plan to bring the option of midwifery to all families in the Northwest Territories. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Members' statements. Member for Kam Lake.

MEMBER'S STATEMENT ON NORTHWEST TERRITORIES HOUSING CORPORATION AND EDUCATION, CULTURE AND EMPLOYMENT WORKING TOGETHER

MS. CLEVELAND: Mr. Speaker, public servants can improve the lives of Northerners if they are empowered to do so. Yellowknifers have told me they experience frustration navigating government department, especially during high stress, multi-dimensional life changes. Housing and Education, Culture and Employment income assistance are the two areas causing the most frustration for my constituents. Earlier this year, Justice released the integrated case management social review on investment report. Women were slightly overrepresented at 54 percent of the program participants, while 78 percent self-identified as Indigenous. One in four participants were homeless; 80 percent unemployed; 89 percent had housing needs; and 83 percent required with income assistance.

The most common challenges clients faced were mental health, violence, food insecurity, homelessness, and poverty. The ICM social review found that common barriers to services in the NWT included cumbersome program requirements, late payments from income assistance, lack of person-centred approach, lack of communication among service providers, lost or missing documentation, delays in response from front-line workers, and service gaps. At the end of the day, much of the success of the ICM program can be traced to a public service ability to refer clients to the right programs with respect, fair access, and a client-centred or trauma-informed practice.

Mr. Speaker, government must always strive to improve its service delivery. Making the ICM program available in every community is one way to do this, but more needs to be done. Front-line staff must be empowered to do their jobs well. They must have processes for dealing with clients that need to cross departmental boundary. They must be trained in a corporate culture of help, respect, facilitation for client, rather than as gatekeepers. This changed approach in customer service also has a direct impact on our bottom line. One Canadian study found that malnutrition cost the healthcare system an additional 16 to 76 percent per year per person. Based on this estimate, food insecurity in the Northwest Territories could increase healthcare costs from \$2,080 to \$9,880 per person per year, ensuring that public servants administering housing and income security programs are empowered to work together is imperative to our health and fiscal success.

The NWT has a long history of government acting as the gatekeeper for access to information, program, and services. I believe that my colleagues on Cabinet want change in the system as much as I do, Mr. Speaker. To achieve this, Cabinet must ensure employees are empowered to apply discretion in their job, that the correct processes are in place, and that the public service knows its top responsibility is to provide service to the public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Members' statements. Item 4, returns to oral questions. Item 5, recognition of visitors in the gallery. Item 6, acknowledgements. Item 7, oral questions. Member for Nunakput.

Oral Questions

QUESTION 426-19(2): EVICTIONS AND USE OF LIMITERS DURING WINTER MONTHS

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, I brought up using of limiters. NTPC with \$2 million

in overdue accounts across the territory. What's the financial situation of NTPC? The public has the right to know. It's concerning for me. Power Corporation has a financial institution. The financial situation must aggressively try to collect while we're in a pandemic. Why, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Power Corporation.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure I would characterize NTPC collection activities in light of the COVID pandemic as aggressive. We are encouraging customers to enter into repayment plans to get their accounts back in order. If they honour their plan, they will not be charged interest, nor will they have limiters installed. The reality, Mr. Speaker, is: the accounts-receivable owed to NTPC by our customers are up almost 450 percent since we temporarily suspended collection activities in March. If we let clients' debts continue to accumulate, we are setting our residents up for failure and hardship down the road. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JACOBSON: I know this Minister's just received this portfolio. I'm wondering why we'd make a statement, that Power Corporation make a statement in mid-March saying that they would not use limiters during this pandemic, and why is that happening now? You are saying one thing and doing the other? Why is the government doing that?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: As I stated before, we will continue to use limiters as a way of ensuring that clients do not get too much into debt and do not have their house ruined if the power gets shut off.

MR. JACOBSON: Is this government prepared to do, to stop the use of using limiters? That's more a southern concept of cutting people off, putting load limiters on. In the winter time up North, you're trying to cook. You're on for 10 minutes, and you're off for 10. That's not right. Is the Minister willing to stop using limiters? Can I get her to commit to that through the Power Corporation during the winter months? Summer months, put them on. During the winter, from now until April, could they stop that?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: As I stated before, customers with arrears can enter into a plan, and as a result of that, they will not be charged any interest. We will not put limiters on their homes. I don't like the use of limiters, but just allowing a debt to increase to a point where customers have no chance at all for repayment ends up getting their power cut off for good. It just does not make any sense. Limiters protect the person's house and provide just enough power to run the furnace and rotate use of other appliances.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Nunakput.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am going to remind the Minister that we are in a pandemic. We have no jobs. People are living off income support, making the decisions either to buy food or pay your power or pay your rent. This government, this Minister, could make this decision right now and make it easier on everybody in the territory to stop using limiters from November to April. If not, I will bring a motion in the House, Mr. Speaker, to make limiters illegal in the territory. Would this Minister commit to that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: There are programs that are in place within the GNWT for residents who require or need assistance in meeting their financial obligations. For example, Education, Culture and Employment has an income support program, and the NWT Housing Corporation can provide one-time payment or assistance through some of their homeless assistance fund. We are also going through a review and approval process right now on potential models. We will be scheduling a meeting with the committee when we are ready. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 427-19(2):
ADDICTIONS

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. I spoke to after-care, addiction, and so forth for the past couple weeks now in my statement. As you know, it has been a very sensitive and delicate matter now, dealing with this in my region. We just lost a young individual who had six kids due to what we are faced with today, and that is a lack of treatment or after-care programs here in the North. I would like to ask the Minister of Health and Social Services about the actual numbers, people who have been sent South. How many of the 200 people sent South for treatment never finish that treatment? How many are unable to last 28 days in a foreign environment, separate from their family and community? Mr. Speaker, masi.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to start by expressing my condolences to the family who lost their person to addictions. It happens, as the Member says, too often and with heartbreaking results.

I have some numbers here to share with the Member based on his question. For the most recent

year, which is the year we are in now, where capacity has been very reduced because of the pandemic, people choosing not to go South, and limited capacity within the centres, a total of 50 people have been approved to go South; 20 people have completed the program; three people also completed the extension or extended-care portion of the program; 14 of these people are still in treatment today; 10 people left without completing the program; and six people were approved to attend but chose not to. That is for this year. If the Member would like information going back to the 2014-2015 year, I can provide that to him, as well. Thank you.

MR. LAFFERTY: Yes, I would like those actual numbers, probably for the last five years, so we can compare what is truly happening in our southern institutions versus the North. Just moving on to my next question, pertaining to the whole COVID-19 that we are faced with, the government sends people to southern institutions such as Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario for sometimes up to six weeks for treatment, exposing them to greater risk of contacting COVID-19 cases, then risks bringing them back to the Northwest Territories to go into two-week self-isolation. I would like to ask the Minister: how can that be less expensive than offering treatment here in the Northwest Territories, avoiding those high risks and paying high costs of hotel bills in the Northwest Territories?

HON. JULIE GREEN: It's worth remembering always that a decision to go into treatment is a voluntary decision. People may feel that they are ready at one point and then later feel that they, in fact, are not ready. I know that, with respect to COVID, I have heard from medical patients. They are somewhat reluctant to go South to the Alberta hospitals, for example, because there have been hospital-based outbreaks, and there is a perception of increased risk. I would not be at all surprised if that is the case with people who are looking at treatment programs. I would also say, and the Member has heard me say this before, there are lots of options here. Southern-based treatment is just one of them. There are other ways to engage in sobriety without going to a treatment centre, within the NWT.

MR. LAFFERTY: The Minister talks about lots of options here in the Northwest Territories. I wish we had one of those options as a treatment centre here in the Northwest Territories for people to choose whether to go to a southern institution or here in the North so they can be close to their family and so they can avoid contacting COVID-19 in southern institutions. Just leading on to my next question for the Minister is: we Dene know our people better than any southern treatment centres. Let's dedicate the necessary resources, and together, let's build a place of healing for and by Northerners, a treatment

centre that understands the residential school abuse and substance abuse. Let us set a national standard for Aboriginal healing here in the Northwest Territories. Mr. Speaker, would the Minister at least commit to studying the feasibility of a northern-based whether it be a treatment centre or after-care program? Would she give that thought for the whole Northwest Territories as the demand is increasing on a daily basis?

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes. I don't think that there is any guarantee that a building will make someone well. It's a place where they may access services that are helpful, but the building itself has no magic related to it. I will give you as an example the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation that operates here in Yellowknife, out of McPherson tents with wood stoves in them. I know quite a number of people who are regular visitors there. They find counselling. They find companionship. There is a warm place to be. There is food and coffee. It has been proven very beneficial for those people. Now, that might not be helpful to someone who has to drive in from Behchoko, but it's an example of an out-of-the-building type of thinking about healing so that healing can take place with whatever it is the community wants it to be. I have talked at length about this, and I encourage the Member to consider the options that are available and how his Indigenous government can access them.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. I, for one, am all for on-the-land program. When I was the Justice Minister, we pushed for that. On-the-land program in the Sahtu region has been very successful at that time. The Minister alluded to the funding that's available to Aboriginal groups or the Northwest Territories. That \$1.8 million can only stretch so much. Five regions, that is approximately \$360,000 if all access it, \$360,000 for the Nunakput region. That is peanuts. That is very low funding compared to a major centre, so, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister consider, seriously consider, increasing the funding because it is badly needed across the Northwest Territories? I am not sure when was the last increase, but the \$1.8 million versus the over \$2 million we are sending people South, this is an area that obviously needs some enhancements. If I can get a commitment from the Minister? Masi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: The answer to the question is that the on-the-land healing fund was increased by \$700,000 for this fiscal year, and so the total now is \$1.8 million. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

**QUESTION 428-19(2):
MEDICAL TRAVEL**

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Health and Social Services. The department of Health and Social Services medical travel escort criteria policy is a ministerial policy. What does that mean? Does it mean that the Minister has the sole power to change it, and if they did, will they add elders to that criteria? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The medical travel escorts are determined by need, by the medical practitioner, not by the age of the person who is travelling, so I don't see that we need to change the policy right now, that an elder, by default, needs a medical escort. That's really up to the elder to decide. Thank you.

MS. SEMMLER: Just to add to that question, then: I know for a fact that I've seen letters from practitioners be denied because it's not on this criteria list from the ministerial policy, so will the Minister look at the policy and adding something in there that would consider elders on there?

HON. JULIE GREEN: The medical travel policies were revised last year, at the end of the 18th Assembly, and one of the new features is an appeal mechanism so that, if someone is denied an escort, then it is possible for that person to fill in an appeal form and file that with medical travel and have it considered. The only hitch to these, though, and I get lots of these crossing my desk, is that people need to plan ahead. Medical-travel people work a regular day. There is an on-call function, but I find they get a lot of last-minute requests. If the person who requires an escort is denied, there is an appeal mechanism, and good planning will get a quicker result.

MS. SEMMLER: I think I'm just going to put aside these other questions because, every time she answers, it just brings up another thing. The people are waiting for medical travel to get their travel and then, when they get their travel, they are denied. Will the Minister look at this policy and see? Because, as a medical travel person, if you get your travel the day before you're going to leave and then you have no escort, that's why it ends up on the MLA's desk, or an email to the Minister.

HON. JULIE GREEN: I need to do some work to understand where the gap is here. I know that the medical practitioner is the starting point for requesting an escort and that goes to medical travel and the staff there make a determination. It's not up to me to create exceptions. The policy has the

exceptions in it, and as I mentioned, there is an appeal mechanism for people who feel it has been applied incorrectly.

I want to add one more thing. There is confusion that I've seen between the need for a medical escort and the need for compassionate travel. I have seen medical escort requests where what the request is really for is for family reunification in the event that the family member in hospital is about to pass. I think there is some clarity that is needed, here, and I can certainly work on my end of that. I look forward to working with the Member on her end.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to working with the Minister on this because I have a lot more to add than these four questions. The other question I do have, since it's the final one, is the issue that I also brought up in my Member's statement, which is the hotels. Medical travel, we send people to the boarding homes here in Yellowknife and in Edmonton. Lately, more than I can count, they have been going into the hotel, in the hotel downtown, where there is no restaurant. They are getting delivered meals, and the meals are -- I'm sorry, but we get a lot better meals here than our medical travel patients. I'm going to say that because it's unfair. It's unfair to our medical travel people who are staying there. We need to look at what is happening there, and we need to either give them a hotel that has a restaurant with vouchers or give them per diems. Will the Minister commit to looking into what is going on there? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: I do make a commitment to look into what is going on with the meals. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Great Slave.

QUESTION 429-19(2):
DEFERRED MAINTENANCE ON AGING
INFRASTRUCTURE

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Infrastructure. In my statement, I was discussing maintenance costs and how the lack of performing maintenance could actually increase costs down the line. Could the Minister please tell me what the total value of deferred maintenance costs are currently on our aging existing infrastructure? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Great Slave. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Deferred Maintenance Program is an essential part of the government's strategy to effectively manage our infrastructure. The Deferred Maintenance Program has a budget of \$5 million a year. The deferred maintenance backlog, I think that's where the Member is coming from, on our aging assets is assessed at \$465,728,561; and, Members, you will hear more about it tonight in Committee of the Whole. It is estimated that there is about \$11 million that is crucial, which could include safety upgrades, code upgrades, systems that are beyond their useful life, and issues that cause a lot of functionality in our facilities. The annual facility conditions assessments help us to prioritize deferred maintenance spending and also to identify and undertake remedial work to ensure that our buildings continue to be safe for occupancy and to maximize the useful life of these assets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. NOKLEBY: That's a very staggering number to hear. I would encourage the Minister to have her department look into using systems where they can be maintained and operated by Northwest Territories businesses so that some of those costs come down, as we do bring people from the South. Earlier in the session, I did ask about funding that the department had committed to addressing needed repairs on the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway. The ITH is currently experiencing conditions that could lead to permafrost degradation and safety issues that will only increase exponentially with time. Can the Minister please reconfirm the commitment to perform significant rehabilitation work on the ITH this year?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: I am happy to hear that the Members are getting interested in some projects in the Beaufort-Delta. The department was able to resurface 26 kilometres of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway this summer, which utilized 15,000 square metres of aggregate. This was over and above the ongoing maintenance that we have completed by local contractors. The department has also hired a consultant to review the entirety of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway for any additional capital work that may be required. Infrastructure will also work to secure required funding as a result of that report. Additionally, we are working with the Department of ITI to secure funding for some highway pullouts.

MS. NOKLEBY: That is all well and good, to have a consultant engaged. However, we all know, and I know personally, how long consultants can take to return their reports. I do believe that there needs to be work done this year. I am hearing that what has been done has not been adequate. Given the time sensitivities around permafrost could I have the Minister commit to trying to find some more money for this year to repair more of the ITH?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Absolutely. I know there is federal funding out there, and Infrastructure, we get two-thirds of our funding from the federal government. If there are pots of money out there that we can pursue, then there is no reason why the department shouldn't be pursuing that to upgrade some of our roads.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister tell me: in the last three months, has the government or her department turned down any offers of federal funding for infrastructure, for example, around roads or a treatment centre such as Nunavut has? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: I'm not aware that the Department of Infrastructure has turned down any federal funding. I just mentioned that two-thirds of our funding does come from the federal government, and we should be actively pursuing any further federal funding to be able to increase projects in the territories. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Thebacha.

QUESTION 430-19(2):
CLIENT SERVICES

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, I want the Minister to succeed and do well with her portfolio. My hope is that the Minister will hear my critiques and work with the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation to improve its client services at the Fort Smith Housing Authority. We are still in a pandemic. Threats, last-chance letters, and eviction notices must stop. My constituents who are reliant on public housing must be treated fairly and with respect. Does the Minister agree? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister responsible for the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Client service is a priority of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. I appreciate the Member bringing this forward. It's an ongoing situation that I am dealing with at the local housing authority level. We have had the opportunity for employees to take part in client service training. I do see that there is a significant need for this, and my apologies to the Member that she is experiencing these bad client services within her riding. I will be working with my department and also will be working really strongly with LHO in Fort Smith. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. MARTSELOS: Will the Minister acknowledge that systemic racism does occur within the NWT Housing Corporation and that it must be addressed?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I'm very dismayed to hear about systemic racism happening within the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation with our front-line staff at the local housing authority. I'm going to be working very strongly with my department, and this is something that is absolutely not acceptable within the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation.

MS. MARTSELOS: Can the Minister tell us what the current Northwest Territories Housing Corporation protocol is in dealing with client complaints about management at local housing authorities?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: The Housing Corporation does have our front-line staff, the local housing authorities, and they are our front-line workers at the community level for complaints coming forward, for them to be addressing them at that level, and for the board to review those complaints. At this moment and at this time, I would direct my headquarters staff to be dealing directly with the local housing authorities. Now, it's come to the Minister's level, and it's going to be addressed significantly. This is something that I'm not going to pass by very likely. Client service is number one, it's a priority within my portfolio and what I'd like to display, strong client service and leadership.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Mr. Speaker, it's good to see the Minister say she will do X, Y, and Z, but it means nothing if there is no follow-up by the Minister to ensure these things get done right. Will the Minister commit to doing regular follow-ups with her department to ensure her instructions are being properly followed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: At this point, the concern for client service within the local housing authorities will be addressed. I will have a follow-up with the Member, as well, dealing specifically with her riding. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 431-19(2):
INCOME ASSISTANCE

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. I'm wondering: what areas of income assistance the Minister will focus

on as part of the income assistance review? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Identifying the areas that we're going to focus on is actually part of the review. I think that, as an MLA, I've dealt with income assistance issues over the years, as have all MLAs, I assume. I know there are some certain areas that I would like to deal with. We're also undertaking a client survey so we can go talk to the actual clients who receive income assistance and see what they think the issues are. We're talking to the front-line staff, and we're using feedback from the integrated case management report. There are a number of areas that are yet to be identified, but I think that, if I was pressed, I'm sure I could name off a handful. I'm sure we all could. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: The Minister lightly touched on it, and I touched on some of the common barriers that were brought up in the ICM report in my Member's statement. I'd like the Minister to hopefully confirm that, yes, all of the common barriers identified in the ICM report will be part of the review of the Income Assistance Program. Some of those, for example, are cumbersome program requirements, late payments, and lack of person-centered approach.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Confirmed.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you to the Minister for that. Given that 70 percent of ICM clients have housing-related challenges, one out of four is already homeless, and 80 percent showed up at ICM already unemployed, how could income security and housing front-line staff work together to provide a more coordinated wrap-around service at this time?

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: The Member is referencing the clientele of integrated case management, and there has been a limited number, I would say, over the past few years, of clients to that program. That's because those are clients who are facing a number of barriers. Those barriers interact with a number of different departments, and that's how they get access to that program. That program has shown us that sometimes these people, the clients in these programs, just need a little bit of assistance in certain areas. Sometimes, they need someone to go to the bank with them and help them talk to the teller and just give them at that confidence to say, "Okay. This is how this interaction should go." There are those types of things that need to happen.

In terms of the collaboration between departments, sometimes, we need some GNWT employees to look at these programs that the clients are accessing and look at it from the client's perspective and say, "Okay. How can we ensure that these programs are more streamlined, given what I'm seeing my clients struggling with?" What the Member is talking about, integrated case management, is specific to Yellowknife right now. Perhaps that model only works for Yellowknife, but the fact is that that type of integrated service delivery really needs to be rolled out across the territory. Maybe integrated case management isn't what's needed in communities but front-line staff working together, working across departments, under common policies that were developed by collaboration of departments is what's needed.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly what I'm talking about is a collaboration between departments so that we can provide better service to Northerners so that they're not having to go to different departments and really search out what programs what might be available to them because a lot of people have enough struggles. Struggling through GNWT departments should not be one of them. I guess another way of looking at this is: what is senior management doing today in order to change the corporate culture from a gatekeeping one within the GNWT to one where service to the public is a top priority? Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: The senior management of the GNWT really take their lead from the Executive Council of the GNWT, and I know that myself and my colleagues are all committed to ensuring that we have the best client service possible. We just heard the Minister of housing say the same thing. In that vein, the deputy ministers of the social envelope departments, Finance, ECE, housing, have all signed an MOU that states that they are going to work together to promote the principles of person-centred, community-driven delivery; that they are going to be responsible for this; and that they are going to have to answer for this. That is being coordinated by Justice as the lead on the integrated service delivery model.

When I say "integrated service delivery," I am looking at -- perhaps we could even change that name because that name even has a government focus on it. The government is integrating its services, but as far as the clients are concerned, they are getting services from the government. They don't know if they are integrated. They don't know which silo these services come from. The senior management is actively working to come up with ways to work together right from the point of

developing legislation, right down to the service delivery, and working together with a focus on the best way to serve the client. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

QUESTION 432-19(2):
MIDWIFERY PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. My questions are for the Minister of Health and Social Services. I have detailed a number of delays hobbling the effort to get the long-promised territorial midwifery program in place. A common thread appears to be, in all of these delays, difficulty in staff recruitment. Can the Minister tell us when a recruitment and retention strategy for midwifery will finally be completed? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That strategy will be complete in the spring of 2021. Thank you.

MR. O'REILLY: I want to thank the Minister for that. I look forward to seeing that document. The update that was supplied to me in August said, "Territorial leadership positions will undertake policy and guideline development and will develop data collection and reporting mechanisms consistent with the approved monitoring and evaluation framework." It's hard to believe that we've been running a program for more than five years without data reporting, collection, monitoring, or evaluation. Can the Minister tell us when the required policy and guideline development is going to be completed?

HON. JULIE GREEN: The policy and guideline development is an ongoing process. It doesn't impede the development of the territorial midwifery program, so they are developing together.

MR. O'REILLY: I am still kind of baffled at how we can have a program that is developing without data, but a further element that is being worked on, of course, is staffing. A territorial manager is now hired. They are going to work with regional authorities. Again, a basic building block that we need to have in place is things like credentialing, performance review, response to complaints. Can the Minister tell us when the work will be completed on setting procedures for proper qualifications for midwifery staff, their performance, and a complaint procedure?

HON. JULIE GREEN: It's my understanding that the new territorial midwifery manager is working on all of these things. There is a standard job description for all registered midwives that is part of the regulatory framework that has already been established, and further, the NTHSSA bylaws have a process for reviewing performance of professional staff. This is the same process that would be used for midwives, as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I want to thank the Minister for that. Of course, no aspect of government service delivery is free of the shadow of COVID, particularly health service delivery. We know midwifery consultation in the South Slave and Deh Cho is on hold, pending COVID. Can the Minister briefly summarize what impacts COVID has had on midwifery implementation and when we will finally have a full, territorial midwifery program? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. JULIE GREEN: An example of the impact of COVID on this program is that, when the territorial manager of midwifery arrived in the territory in March, right at the outset of the pandemic, rather than being asked to sit and write policy, she was redeployed to support clinical care to postpartum and newborn clients at Stanton Hospital and in the community. That, I don't think, is in place any longer. I think she is back to her regular job at this point, but that was an example of where things were at.

As the Member is aware, the midwifery expansion project did not receive funding in the 2021 budget year, and there is no request for funding in the next budget year. This is a question of competing priorities. The department has a number of initiatives through the mandate to complete, and this kind of new initiative money has been allocated to the child and youth counsellor positions and to Children and Family Services' needs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife North.

QUESTION 433-19(2):
SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier, I spoke about the importance of supporting our entrepreneurs, and one of the best ways we do that presently is through our SEED program through ITI. My question for the Minister of ITI is: can we top up the SEED program funding this year to make sure that no applications are denied? This could be central to our economic recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to note that the staff who will be administering the SEED program are both orderly and smart in the way that they will be administering that program, and we appreciate the work they do every day. Right now, the budget for SEED is \$3.8 million, and it has been that way for a great many years. Fortunately, as part of the COVID response, we were able to increase this budget up to \$4 million through internal reallocations, and as of right now, we are actually projecting that that will hit \$4.3 million in terms of the total applications being sought. Every effort is going to be made, indeed, to achieve funding all of those applications. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSON: I am glad that the Minister is working to find that top-up internally. We are hearing this year that there is \$4.3 million of demand for SEED applications. I can only imagine that this demand will continue next year. Really making sure that our entrepreneurs can find that capital in these tough times, I think, is central to our recovery. Is the Minister willing to increase the SEED funding in next year's operations budget?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Increasing the funding on a permanent basis is something that has to go through a business-planning process and an analysis to determine if, in fact, that is the best way to spend public dollars. Certainly, there is a suite of programs right now that support entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized businesses, including not only the SEED program but programs spread across ITI, as well as BIP. I will say that part of what I want to ensure we do is make sure that we are adequately funding those programs in a way that they become complementary and that they fill gaps one from the next, but that takes something more than just looking at the one program alone. However, I do say that we are doing that work, and indeed, there is a review happening this fall of the SEED program itself, to help ensure that there are no gaps along the way, and to ensure, as I say, that we are funding our small and medium-sized businesses.

MR. JOHNSON: During our pandemic response, a number of SEED COVID-19 guidelines were released, and I want to thank the department for that work. They said, "We are going to be flexible; we are going to be quick and adaptive." I think they were great guidelines. However, underlying this was still the SEED application policy, which has a market disruption clause saying, essentially, "We will not fund businesses if they will disrupt the market." In my experience, there has been no consistency in application of this, and I do not really

think it's the goal. By not disrupting the market, we are not increasing competition, and we are encouraging monopoly. Is the Minister willing to get rid of the market disruption clause from SEED applications?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: The market disruption clause certainly has been the subject of some discussion. What I will certainly commit to is saying that, in the course of the review that we are doing internally of the SEED program, a careful examination of the market disruption clause needs to happen. Certainly, what I have heard from some of the larger centres is that there is a greater desire to get rid of it. Yet, from the smaller centres, there is some desire to hang onto it. It may be that we need to find a "not one size fits all" solution to that clause.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Minister commit to reviewing this. In my experience, I am confused what this clause does because we fund plenty of tourism businesses through SEED, and to me, every time we fund one, they are disrupting the market in comparison to their competitors. I helped one of my constituent fishermen get SEED funding. Then another complained that they did not get a government subsidy, so I had to go help them. It seems that, every time we give government grants, we are disrupting the market. To me, that is the goal. Is the Minister willing to just accept that during COVID-19, when we are being more flexible and we are trying to get SEED dollars out the door, market disruption does not apply? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I did want to acknowledge that the Member had expressed the fact and outlined the fact that the program has been adapted to COVID-19 and that that adaptation happened quickly on the part of ITI. I would note that, for the purposes of COVID-19 right now, the SEED program has shifted rather substantially and that, for this year, they have waived the market disruption clause and indeed re-shifted the focus of a lot of the SEED funding so that small and medium-sized businesses can apply under a fairly different set of policies, given the fact that the markets themselves are quite disrupted. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Monfwi.

QUESTION 434-19(2):
SENIORS HOUSING

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. [Translation] Just recently, the weather has been changing, and

we are into the winter season. There is a lot of concern coming from my communities, especially the elders. It is regarding their furnace and if it shuts down or breaks down, or the sewage line. They have concerns regarding that. I want to ask the housing Minister a question. In Behchoko, Whati, Gameti, Wekweeti, if any of their furnaces or running water breaks down, what do they do? Who can they ask help for? Masi. [Translation ends].

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

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hear the Member's comments. Seniors' housing is a priority for the Housing Corporation. We have approximately 348 seniors who are occupying our units presently, but that does not include the private homeowners, as well, throughout the territory. We do have a number of programs that are available. Right now, we are under review of making those programs more accessible.

The Member had asked about his riding, as well, and looking at the furnaces and how are we able to work with that if there are freeze-ups to sewer lines. Right now, we are working with the Indigenous groups to look at a community initiative project and a community initiative funding plan, that the community would be able to provide that service on behalf of the Housing Corporation. Should this service not be available locally, we will be looking at hiring outside of the Member's riding in order to provide those services. However, the priority of the Housing Corporation is that I would like to work more closely with the Indigenous governments and have them provide those services. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LAFFERTY: [Translation] When we take a look at our elders in the communities, they have worked a long life, and we are trying to give them a comfortable home. We should make sure that they are taken care of. [Translation ends]. I am speaking on behalf of the elders of the communities, even throughout the Northwest Territories. The Minister alluded to where private homeowners are not eligible, and when we provide services such as for a furnace breaks down or plumbing, minus 40, minus 50, it's very critical that we assist those individuals. Policy or papering should not be in front of us. We should send people out there right away and deal with the paperwork after, but that does not seem to be the case. I would like to know when can we start including these elders who own their own homes? There are quite a few of them, and they are still begging, begging us to have a dedicated person in the community, that they can pick up a phone, speak Tlicho to, and then that person can be there. When?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: My apologies to the Member. The Housing Corporation does have seniors' programming that do deal with emergency repairs in emergencies such as this. For the Member's riding, the Housing Corporation does provide that service from Yellowknife. We do have people who travel into the community to deal with those emergency services, to make sure that adequate care is being kept for private homeowners. I already had said that we are looking at the application process. I know it's quite lengthy and that language barriers are an issue, as well, and we need to start looking at how we are going to be better communicate with the Indigenous groups, using their language within that respective riding.

MR. LAFFERTY: My colleague from Nunakput, his community, it's minus 26 today. That is coming to our region, too. It's a very real issue. Obviously, I would like to see this expedited. What I am stating here is coming directly from my elders calling me, speaking to me in my Tlicho language, just the other day. They do not want to go through this process again with minus 40, minus 50 the next couple of months. I highly encourage the Minister to expedite this process, and I am hoping that we can see before next month, at least. Would that be possible for the Minister's department to pursue that?

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: The programming already exists. I will follow up with the Member to identify the individuals so we could provide the programming and also provide the assistance in what level of programming the client may need to acquire.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Final supplementary. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Mr. Speaker. What I am referring to is a dedicated person in the community who some elders can call directly because those elders will know the specific individual. We do not have that right now. We have somebody possibly coming from Yellowknife, and who do they call? The local housing authority. Sometimes, there is a runaround, and at times, a family member would have to come and possibly service the furnace, uncertified. What if something happens? Are we waiting till something happens here, Mr. Speaker? It's very critical that this policy change that the Minister is referring to, if that can be expedited so we can have a dedicated person to deal with the furnace and plumbing breakdowns in the community for elders who own their homes, Mr. Speaker. Masi.

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: I hear the Member's comments. The local housing authority does act on behalf of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. They are our front line. When we do

have housing issues, I would like the clients to be contacting the local housing authority so we would have information on how we are going to conduct and what kind of programming we are going to be offering. Also, I just wanted to elaborate on the dedicated person to be located and to be identified at the community level. Trades and apprentices are something that we are struggling with right now in trying to find that certification at the local community level and, also, the programming that is offered to keep the certification current. It does not stop the Housing Corporation from providing the service. Right now, just to inform the Member that we are working with the dedicated person that should be available at the local community level. We do have maintenance workers, but I do understand there's a stronger need for the service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

QUESTION 435-19(2):
SUPPORT FOR ENTREPRENEURS AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SEED) POLICY

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of ITI because I know she really likes policy and procedure. Mr. Speaker, ITI's SEED Policy described market disruption as circumstances when, in the opinion of the regional superintendent, the granting of a contribution will likely adversely and significantly impact the revenue earned by another business within the region. This definition, plus the duty of the regional superintendent under Section 7.4(c), make it clear that the authority to determine market disruption falls to ITI's regional superintendents, and that this authority is discretionary. What I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, is: will the Minister instruct her senior management team in ITI not to apply the market disruption clause for the existing NWT businesses seeking SEED funding for the 2021 fiscal year so that NWT entrepreneurs can creatively evolve and expand their businesses in response to COVID-19? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Kam Lake. Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment.

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought I'd have an easy answer there, and then I heard "2021," and I'm not able to make that commitment on the floor right now. As I've said, for the moment, when the SEED Policy had been retooled to accommodate and to respond to COVID-19, the market disruption clause has been waived for the current fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member that we are going to be looking at that, given where we're at and if the pandemic continues to be ongoing and, in fact, continues to be fairly disruptive in the southern

regions. I will certainly commit to looking at that and see if we can extend the existing change. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. CLEVELAND: Can the Minister then confirm for me that no SEED applications have been denied this fiscal year due to market disruption?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: It's my understanding that that is the intention. I don't have the numbers in front of me. I will make sure and get that confirmation and share it with the Member.

MS. CLEVELAND: If the Minister does find an application within their files that has been denied because of market disruption, will the Minister have her senior management team, specifically, look at that application, re-evaluate it against their intentions for the SEED application for this fiscal year?

HON. CAROLINE WAWZONEK: I can definitely commit that, if there is such an application that was denied on the basis of market disruption after such time as that announcement was made, that we will be looking at it again and ensure that it does meet the intentions as they have been stated and retooled to meet to COVID-19.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Oral questions. Member for Kam Lake.

MS. CLEVELAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am satisfied with the Minister's response.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Oral questions. Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

QUESTION 436-19(2):
COVID-19 CASES IN INUVIK

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions again for the Minister of Health and Social Services as to what happened this week with the mix-up with the case in Inuvik. I know that the Chief Public Health Officer had a media. She updated, and I've read the newspaper. I still have constituents asking me, "How did this happen?" With the earlier announcement that the person that was the first positive in my community of Inuvik and that they had no contacts and now we say the next case that we have was a contact of the first case, what happened in this case? Can the Minister explain? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes. Minister of Health and Social Services.

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes, thank you. I just start by saying that the CPHO is an independent office within Health and Social Services, so I don't have any information that hasn't already been made public about what happened this week. There was

a communications breakdown that led to the announcement of a positive test when it wasn't positive. It was presumptive and has since been confirmed as positive. My understanding is that the first case news release talked about contacts for the travel case, and the second case news release was a household contact of that original travel case. Thank you.

MS. SEMMLER: Thank you to the Minister. The thing that came about, I had a lot of calls. I had some discussions with the Minister as well that day. It's just the way that the first announcement came out with the first case. It just didn't add up, so a lot of Members were very, very concerned that we weren't getting the truth out of the first case. That's what my question was: knowing that there was a household and a family isolated, why did it not come out that they were not alone, or they were with other family members?

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes. I appreciate that there's a lot of anxiety and fear about the prospect of COVID being diagnosed in our communities, and Inuvik is no different in this case. People who are tested for COVID are entitled to their privacy. Identifying information and additional information is very tightly controlled by the CPHO. There is no reason that she would feel obliged to enumerate who else lives in the house with the infected person unless that person was also infected. When that person did test as infected, it turned out that they did live in the same house. There's no obligation to provide a complete breakdown of the family's circumstances for each positive test.

MS. SEMMLER: I guess what I'm saying is: when we had the first case, it was a family that arrived back, and it said one member has tested positive. The rest are at home isolating. I think that was the concern after hearing what happened in Yellowknife. My next question is: is the department looking at their policies on travellers coming into the territory and isolating at home with other family members? That way, family members know exactly what they need to be doing at home, and what they should and shouldn't be doing. That way, the public also can feel a little bit of security that they're not out in the public?

HON. JULIE GREEN: Yes. I'm well aware that the Member is a nurse and very knowledgeable as a result about how infectious COVID is. People are given advice about isolating at home, about having separate bathrooms, separate bedrooms, about good cleaning practices, good hand hygiene, wearing masks, and so on. There is nobody there checking up on them to make sure that all of that is being done. This is something that happens in the privacy of a person's home. We do recognize that there has been some household spread in this particular case. I am really interested to see what

the CPHO comes up with in her revised orders to address this issue. Maybe it turns out that it's not possible to isolate at home. People will have to isolate in regional hubs because the infectiousness risk is so great that it doesn't make sense if people are all in the same house, especially if the house is limited in size and has a lot of people in it.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Colleagues, our time for oral questions has expired. Item 8, written questions. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

Written Questions

WRITTEN QUESTION 20-19(2): PROCUREMENT FROM INDIGENOUS-OWNED AND -OPERATED BUSINESSES

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker. This goes back to a previous Member's statement I had on procurement. My question is for the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment on the issue of procurement from Indigenous-owned and -operated businesses:

1. For the 2019-2020 fiscal year, what percentage of capital expenditures were spent with Indigenous-owned and -operated businesses;
2. What steps has the Government of the Northwest Territories taken to identify and remove barriers for Indigenous businesses to participate in the modern economy; and
3. What incentives or programs does the Government of the Northwest Territories have in place to provide for the purchase of goods and services from Indigenous-owned and -operated businesses?

Marsi cho, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. Written questions. Item 9, returns to written questions. Item 10, replies to Commissioner's address. Item 11, petitions. Item 12, reports of committees on the review of bills. Item 13, reports of standing and special committees. Item 14, tabling of documents. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Tabling of Documents

TABLED DOCUMENT 208-19(2): AURORA COLLEGE TRANSFORMATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

TABLED DOCUMENT 209-19(2): GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 2019-2020 ANNUAL REPORT ON OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following two documents: "Aurora College Transformation Implementation Plan, October 2020" and "Government of the Northwest Territories 2019-2020 Annual Report on Official Languages." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

TABLED DOCUMENT 210-19(2):
FOLLOW-UP LETTER FOR ORAL QUESTION
356-19(2): 911 ACTUAL OPERATION COSTS

HON. PAULIE CHINNA: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the following document: "Follow-up Letter for Oral Question 356-19(2), 911 Actual Operation Costs." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Tabling of documents. Member for Yellowknife North.

TABLED DOCUMENT 211-19(2):
TERMS OF REFERENCE - SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON RECONCILIATION AND
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the "Terms of Reference - Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Tabling of documents. Member for Nunakput.

TABLED DOCUMENT 212-19(2):
CBC NEWS ARTICLE DATED MARCH 2, 2020
TITLED "N.W.T. MLA SAYS POWER CORP
WRONG TO THROTTLE POWER IN WINTER
FOR PEOPLE WHO CAN'T PAY"

TABLED DOCUMENT 213-19(2):
CABIN RADIO ARTICLE DATED MARCH 18, 2020
TITLED "NWT POWER CORPORATION TO STOP
USING LIMITERS DURING PANDEMIC"

TABLED DOCUMENT 214-19(2):
NORTHWEST TERRITORIES POWER
CORPORATION NEWS RELEASE DATED
OCTOBER 21, 2020 TITLED "NTPC TO RESUME
COLLECTION ACTIVITIES

TABLED DOCUMENT 215-19(2):
CABIN RADIO ARTICLE DATED OCTOBER 22,
2020 TITLED "NWT POWER CORPORATION TO
RESUME COLLECTIONS AND USE OF
LIMITERS"

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to table the four press releases: "CBC News article dated March 2, 2020 titled 'N.W.T. MLA says power corp wrong to throttle power in winter for people who can't pay,'" "Cabin Radio article dated March 18, 2020 titled 'NWT Power Corporation to stop using limiters during pandemic,'" "Northwest Territories Power Corporation News Release dated October 21, 2020 titled 'NTPC To Resume Collection Activities,'" and "Cabin Radio article dated October 22, 2020 titled 'NWT Power Corporation to resume collections and use of limiters.'" Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Nunakput. Tabling of documents. Item 15, notices of motion. Member for Yellowknife North.

Notices of Motion

MOTION 21-19(2):
ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON RECONCILIATION AND INDIGENOUS
AFFAIRS

MR. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Monday, November 2, 2020, I will move the following motion: Now therefore I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Hay River North, that, pursuant to rule 92(1), the Legislative Assembly hereby establish a Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs. And further, that the following Members be named to the special committee: Mrs. Lesa Semmler, the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes; Mr. Steve Norn, the Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh; Mr. Rylund Johnson, the Member for Yellowknife North; the Honourable R.J. Simpson, Member for Hay River North; and the Honourable Caroline Wawzonek, the Member for Yellowknife South. And furthermore, that the Minister of Executive and Indigenous Affairs is an ex-officio non-voting Member of that committee. And furthermore, that the Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs be established by the terms of reference identified as Tabled Document 211-19(2). And furthermore, that the Special Committee on Reconciliation and Indigenous Affairs table its final report no later than the first day of the final sitting of the 19th Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Notices of motion. Item 16, motions. Item 17, notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills

BILL 17:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE CORRECTIONS ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Monday, November 2, 2020, I will move that Bill 17, An Act to Amend the Corrections Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

BILL 18:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGAL PROFESSION ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Monday, November 2, 2020, I will move that Bill 18, An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

BILL 19:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that, on Monday, November 2, 2020, I believe move that Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Student Financial Assistance Act, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. Notices of motion for first reading of bills. Item 18, first reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

First Reading of Bills

BILL 15:
MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT, 2020

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes, that Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. The motion is in order. To the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 15 has had its first reading. First reading of bills. Item 19, second reading of bills. Minister of Education, Culture and Employment.

Second Reading of Bills

BILL 12:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE APPRENTICESHIP, TRADES AND OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION ACT.

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Act, be read for the second time. This bill amends the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Act to expand the types of certificates that the Minister may issue under the act. The amendment does this by allowing the Minister to issue certificates prescribed by regulation. The bill also removes the requirement for certificate application forms to be prescribed, instead allowing applications to be in the form directed by the Minister. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 12 has been referred to the Standing Committee on Social Development. Thank you. Second reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

BILL 13:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE INTERPRETATION ACT

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Interpretation Act, be read for the second time. This bill amends the Interpretation Act to remove references to "mountain standard time" and "daylight savings time" and replace them with a reference to "standard time," which will be the applicable time all year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. To the principle of the bill. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Merci, Monsieur le President. I am concerned about the way this bill has been drafted, that it gives total discretion to my colleagues in Cabinet to decide to do away with daylight standard time. I think that this is not a decision that should be left with Cabinet alone, that it is something that should require some level of public engagement and certainly consultation with the rest of the House. This should not be a decision that rests

solely with Cabinet, so I am opposed to this bill in principle. Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Member for Frame Lake. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 13 has had its second reading and is deferred to the Standing Committee on Social Development. Second reading of bills. Minister of Justice.

**BILL 14:
AN ACT TO AMEND THE SECURITIES ACT**

HON. R.J. SIMPSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Inuvik Boot Lake, that Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Securities Act, be read for the second time. The bill amends the Securities Act to provide a framework for the designation and regulation of benchmarks and benchmark administrators. The amendments are consistent with amendments across Canada and are based on recommended amendments from the Canadian Securities Administrators. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, Minister. To the principle of the bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. SPEAKER: Question has been called. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Bill 14 has had its second reading and is deferred to the Standing Committee on Social Development. Thank you. Second reading of bills. Item 20, consideration in Committee of the Whole of bills and other matters: Committee Report 4-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2018-2019 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report; Committee Report 5-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2018-2019 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories; Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2): Report on Long-Term

Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery, Recommendations to the GNWT; Tabled Document 181-19(2), Capital Estimates 2021-2020; with the Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes in the chair.

**Consideration in Committee of the Whole
of Bills and Other Matters**

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I will call Committee of the Whole to order. What is the wish of committee? Mr. Norn.

MR. NORN: Marsi cho, Madam Chair. Committee wishes to deal with Tabled Document 181-19(2), Capital Estimates 2021-2022, Department of Infrastructure. Marsi cho, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, committee. We will take a short break and resume with the first item.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we have agreed to resume consideration of Tabled Document 181-19(2) Capital Estimates, 2021-2022, with the Department of Infrastructure. Does the Minister of Infrastructure wish to bring any witnesses?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Yes. Thank you Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses to the Chamber. Would the Minister please introduce her witnesses?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have with me Steve Loutitt, who is my acting deputy minister for Infrastructure, and I also have David Moore, who is the assistant deputy minister for asset management with the Department of Infrastructure.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister, and welcome. The committee has agreed to forgo general comments. Is committee agreed that we will proceed to the detail contained in the tabled document?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Committee, we will defer the departmental totals and refer to the

estimates by activity, beginning with asset management on page 41, with the information items on page 42 and 43. Are there comments or questions to the asset management? Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Thank you Madam Chair, I note that with the department that when they are shutting down a building or because a new one has been built this goes to a lot of the older buildings. When they're going in shutdown mode because other groups, maybe there are groups in the communities that are interested in those buildings, could be any building in any community. Why the department doesn't conduct an HBMA, a Hazardous Building Materials Assessment, so that they already have it on hand? That is valuable information for anybody that's going to take over an asset, so they know what they're dealing with. I can just start with that. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll get Assistant Deputy Minister David Moore to answer this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair, Minister. There is a process, definitely, for the disposal of assets. The disposal begins with what is basically a canvassing of GNWT departments, boards, and agencies of the NWT to determine if other requirements can be used for that building. That follows a process of what is called the Disposal of Improved Real Property Policy. As part of that process, Madam Chair, there is an assessment done of the facility, including the Member's question about assessment of qualifications and conditions of the facility. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: I'm not aware of the assessments being available. As I know in my community of Fort Providence, we were wondering about the old health centre unit and, even in K'atloodeeche, the former treatment centre building. I advised them to get the HBMA assessment and the ESA 1, 2, and 3 for the building. It wasn't readily available to anybody in the communities, and I'm just wondering, even in their inquiry, why that information is not released to them? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll get Mr. Moore to answer the question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair, Minister. Basically, through the disposal of real property policy, working through the various priorities of the policy, starting with Northwest Territories public corporations, moving on to community governments, non-profit organizations, and general public, bids are welcomed from those and in that priority sequence. As bids are received, the information is shared with those parties who submit bids through the policy. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Mahsi for that. I wanted to touch upon the many, many older buildings that Infrastructure has in stock. I know, as a former employee, back then, we were in cost-saving measures at that time. There were lots of suggestions that you shut down these buildings so that they don't consume power or use up fuel, as they're going to be disposed anyway. I'm wondering if the department is in that mode or looking at that possibility. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have a disposal of property policy and part of the policy is: once the building is declared surplus by the client department, the Department of Infrastructure disposes of the building in accordance with the Disposal of Improved Real Property Policy. There is a process, Madam Chair. In the interests of property from within the GNWT, Infrastructure offers surplus property for the sale to priority interest groups in the following order of preference: NWT public corporation and community governments, not-for-profit organizations, and the general public. However, there is work that needs to be done before any of these policies are started. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: Yeah. I note some government yards. Specifically, I could mention the highway yards. Many of them have old buildings that haven't been decommissioned, type of thing, but they are still hanging onto them, even though they have new garages built because they are not being disposed of. Many of them are not being used, but they are not being totally shut down. I'm just looking at cost-saving measures here, within the department, because we are looking at climate change initiatives, dealing with greenhouse gas emissions. What I notice in a lot of the yards in the

small communities is that we don't have a central heating system for the three or four buildings on the lots, so that is eating up a lot of diesel. Has the department ever considered installing maybe a biomass system to feed the clusters in the highways yards? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to defer this to Mr. Moore.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Actually, the Capital Assets Retrofit Fund Program is a tremendous opportunity for the GNWT to reduce our GHGs and, through that allocation of \$3.8 million a year, we do take that opportunity. It has been a very successful program, Madam Chair. Looking at all opportunities in the GNWT for our facilities, we use that program. This may be an opportunity for that; we'd have to investigate it individually. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Deh Cho.

MR. BONNETROUGE: I thank you for that, and I am going to be looking forward. I strongly encourage you, as we are always looking for savings, money for the department, and cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Because I know, in my community, there is none. I look around, and I see there are three or four separate buildings. They are all burning fuel. A good example is: your department looks after schools and everything, and when we did the wood-pellet burner system to the school in Fort Providence, we went from 3,000 litres of diesel a month to close to 500. There are significant savings there if you can do that project, the Fort Providence one, and then hit all the small communities. I don't think the small communities are even given any consideration for any of these initiatives.

Also, I just wanted to touch upon: I know you have a listing here, but I don't see Highway No. 3 from kilometre 0 to 32. That's the junction of Highways No. 1 and No. 3 to the Deh Cho Bridge. That whole highway, I've ridden it for I don't know how many years. It's a total washboard, that whole stretch. You're just about bouncing off the highway. I don't know what happened there, at the beginning. It's a washboard, and everybody who is driving on it notices it. You're bouncing all over. I'm wondering if there is going to be any consideration to upgrade that highway, to resurface it. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Deh Cho. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Highway No. 3 that the Member is referring to is the Yellowknife Highway. There is the section between Yellowknife and Behchoko that, again, has maintenance challenges for many reasons, due to thawing, disturbances with permafrost, and it again results in uneven surfaces. The department does continue to make investments on that highway that address the grade and surface rehab, with priority given to those areas where driver safety might be higher-risk. The Department of Infrastructure awarded \$6.13 million to a multi-year contractor to improve approximately 10 kilometres of the highway, and the project was just completed this summer. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. You've got a couple of projects in here to do with bridges, and they will have in brackets ICIP or the NTCF, which is the funding source. I'm assuming that those are the contributions of the 25 percent for those fundings. My question would be: did we actually get money for Frank Channel, and has that ICIP funding come through? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Frank Channel Bridge is close to its end of life of use, and as a result of that, we have transport vehicles that are having to slow down during that part of the bridge. The department is actively looking for new federal dollars, and just as recently as last week, we resubmitted to get this bridge started because it is at a risk right now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: The amount of money that would be part of this total, then, for Frank Channel is the portion, the 25 percent funds, that you expect to have to spend if you get the successful 75-percent application? Or is this money that you are already allocating now to be spent on, say, maintenance? I can't see it being that. Is this money that you are thinking that you are going to have to spend if you get the funding, or is this actual money you are spending now?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to ask David Moore to come up with more details. I know we've got a portion of the money. The federal government is really good at giving us 75-cent quarter-dollars, but that's not enough. We

recognize that we need to be actively looking. The Member spoke earlier about whether we are doing that. Yes, we are doing that. In terms of where we're at now, I know we've got this money set aside federally, but we do need to find the other 25-cent dollars for that project. Madam Chair, if Mr. Moore wants to add anything to that, I will pass it to him.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Minister is correct: \$22.5 million is in our bilateral agreement with Canada to invest in Highway No. 3. With highways, the work is prioritized. Our teams assess the highway and review it for areas that are the most critical and priority, and those are where the funds are allocated to. Those federal dollars, Madam Chair, are allocated until 2024 for Highway No. 3. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: [Microphone turned off] ...about the Frank Channel Bridge, so I am still confused. Is this money here, the 25-cent dollar, to get the 75 if you are accepted for that funding? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. My next question, I'm going to stay with bridges, is about the Great Bear River Bridge. I know that we've had the funding for that for a while, and it is sort of slated to go forward as is. However, I know there have been significant delays on that project, and I actually have a lot of inquiries from constituents and residents as to where it's at. Maybe the Minister could provide me with some understanding around the funding in this year, what it is being used for, and are we on track with where we were at, say, a couple of years ago? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Mackenzie Valley Highway funding includes the construction of the Great Bear River Bridge, which will be processed, again, through a competitive process, but that's not what the Member is asking. The Member is asking where we're at in terms of timelines. As I was going through some of my briefings, there is quite a lengthy process in order to get projects going. Right

now, we are still in the environmental assessment stage. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are time delays on this project. I know that. With those time delays, will that cause us to have to carry over funding that won't get spent as a result of delays to the project? There was a change to the project timelines at one point. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Department of Infrastructure plans to finalize the project description report and start to apply for some of the permits in the fall of 2020. It could be in place by possibly the summer of 2021. We will start to go through the tendering, the awarding, and the construction to take place the beginning of this summer, hopefully, of 2021. The Member will be excited to know that it might be opened by February 2024 to meet the timelines of the federal process. That's where we're at in terms of the timelines. We have to be mindful that things change and delays may take longer, but that's where we're aiming for right now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I hope that I get to be one of the people that goes and drives that bridge the first time. Definitely invested in it. My last question is around the Prohibition Creek Access Road. I know at some point that that had not actually gone out to tender yet. I'm just wondering if you could provide an update if that is going out for public tender soon or has gone out? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Prohibition Creek Access Road is a 13-kilometre segment of the all-season road along the Mackenzie Valley Highway. The department is undertaking some planning work towards that construction and from Canyon Creek to Prohibition Creek, and this project is independent, a standalone, regulatory process. We are still in the process of waiting for the regulatory process.

In June 2020, \$20 million in funding was announced for the construction of this access road, with the federal government providing \$15 million under Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program and then the GNWT picking up the difference in the

tab. The work is still under way. The Member from the Sahtu and I have had some discussions with some of the stakeholders in the community as they are anxiously waiting for this project to take place, as well. We are having those discussions. We are looking at getting things started as soon as we can and when we can. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Great Slave.

MS. NOKLEBY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate that, and I hope that there will be a way to maximize all of the benefits to Northerners and get as many of the businesses in that region working. I'm not sure if this is the right location for it, but I don't see the Tulita Health Centre in this list. Could you provide an update on whether or not it should be on this list, or if there's a reason it's not, or if I'm just in the wrong spot? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I'm thinking Tulita Health Centre would be under Health and Social Services. Yes. That's it? Thank you. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. Obviously, I will be talking about Frank Channel Bridge, as well. On the location, it says, "Various." There's only one location. That's in Frank Channel within Behchoko. I'm just curious why it's "various"? Maybe it's a simple answer?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will find it here in one second, and I will tell the Member why, hopefully. The replacement, I note it's crucial. Actually, I'm going to defer this, Madam Chair, over to Mr. Loutitt. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The reason it is listed as "various" is because it's part of a bigger package of various bridges throughout the Northwest Territories. The Member is correct. It is in the Frank Channel. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Loutitt. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. One would assume that once a proposal is submitted, approved by feds, then this area would be targeted as Frank Channel Bridge in Behchoko. I'm not sure if I'm correct on that, but if I can be corrected? Madam Chair, the next one I have is: the proposal has been submitted the previous year, as well. Unfortunately, it was denied by the feds because of

various competing proposals from across Canada. The proposal has been submitted according to the Minister's response. When do we expect a decision to be made? We should have a good idea because we've experienced that last year, as well. Masi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. From my understanding, the department submitted the original proposal. We've got the majority of the dollars, but we were denied in the last round for the 25-cent dollars. Just recently, in the last week or so, I've instructed staff to resend out the proposal. If we don't hear from them in the next week, we need to get in contact. That's where we're at right now with that. I wish I could say it's going to be next week or we're going to know an answer for sure in a month. I don't know. We're still in the engagement phase. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. I'm glad the Minister's on top of this. As you know, the bridge is over 50 years old. It has very much deteriorated, and lots of commercial trucks go through there. It's a safety hazard. Obviously, I'd like to see that replacement and soon enough. Once we're in that position, I just want to remind the department that we go through the procurement process and local business. NWT business should be the first consideration. We have a talented business arm with experience that can easily take this on. Madam Chair, that's just a comment on this particular area.

If I may, move onto the next subject area, and that is Tlicho All-Season Road. Madam Chair, we've been talking about this for a number of years now. Now, it's in the final phase to be completed in November of next year, 2021. Tlicho All-Season Road to Whati, that's what the title is TASR. Madam Chair, I just found out the last couple of weeks, the road being built is not connecting all the way to Whati community. A lot of elders in the past have always talked about connecting from Whati to Yellowknife, so they can have access to get out whenever they need to. That's my understanding, and I'd just like to know where it's at because it is expected that the road will be linked to the community of Whati. Is that the case, Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Monfwi. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Tlicho All-Season Road, and I was very happy to be able to take a drive on that 72 kilometre of 97,

but we did come to the end of the bridge. We're expecting the work to be completed next year. Great opportunity for the Monfwi people to have a road to the access road. The access road will bring them to the community. That was the original plan, Madam Chair, and that's what the department is working on. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. I do believe, when we toured the 72 kilometres, my official chief's leadership have also travelled the road, as well, have a tour of the road infrastructure. There's been questions asked by the Chief of Whati and of council members, too. I understand that there's been talks that Kiewit, the main contractor, they can link up the road towards the community of Whati as opposed to just access road. I believe that there's discussions taking place with the main contractor, and I'm just wondering where things are at because that was the last couple of weeks now, I believe, or the last few weeks ago. Has there been any productive discussion based on that? Masi, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to ask Mr. Loutitt to take the question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. ADM Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The road, as we're being built, will connect, as the Minister noted, to the Whati access road. We recently had engineers in there just to have a look at it to assess what we're looking at as far as widening, drainage, what the requirements would be for widening, drainage, and other factors. Once we look at that report, we will be coming to seek funding for that portion, as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Loutitt. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. My understanding from what the ADM has said: the money that was identified for Whati all-season road was from Highway No. 3 only to Whati access road. Is that the case with the federal government proposal? That will be my next line of question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: There is some feasibility or discussion has taken place now to deal with potential widening of the road to Whati. When are we expected to wrap things up so we can start planning on that? I understand Kiewit is very interested in doing that project, so just wondering when, because the ADM alluded to, as well, the current discussion happening. When are we expecting to get some results out of that? Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to direct this to Mr. Moore.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The team is actively working with Kiewit on the review of the inspection that deputy Loutitt just referred to. Going over the information, going over the width of the road, conditions, culvert replacements, et cetera, at which point they will understand the scope of the funding that will be required and then proceed with procurement options. That should happen over the next few months, Madam Chair. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Monfwi.

MR. LAFFERTY: Masi, Madam Chair. Once the information comes in, since it wasn't part of the federal proposal, I would assume that the funding will be identified within the department. Is that the case to offset the costs of connecting to Whati? Masi.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not sure what the plan was at the beginning of this Tlicho All-Season Road. I know there has been years and years of work in place to get this as far as it has gone to the access road. I'm going to let Mr. Moore take the question.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The department is actively working with the Department of Finance through procurement and through Kiewit to look at funding solutions and procurement options with the intention that once that is determined we would proceed with construction once spring comes. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Marci cho, Madam Chair. Looking through the asset management lists for all the projects we've got going on, lots of various locations, yet I don't see anything specifically for my riding, Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh. This is very disappointing for me. I'm really disappointed, the trend I'm seeing through all these investments. I'm going line by line and seeing all this work that's being done, and my constituents are being left out. I'm not okay with that. Saying that, like I said in various, I'm hoping that some of these projects are captured in my community. I'm just going to have a question for the Minister to start. These locations that are titled various, are Lutselk'e and Deninu Kue part of that? Marci cho.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The department has committed 20 kilometers of chip seal on Highway No. 6, which leads into the Member's constituent. I also do want to make note that the capital plan, especially for Infrastructure, it's over a 10-year period, and although the Member may not see things on this year's capital plan, it does not mean it wasn't in the previous year or perhaps maybe in another year. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Thank you. I do understand that a lot of these items were brought into play well before we were elected into office, but it's still good to know that there is still a good long term of work outlook for my constituents because we do have a lot of people that still need to go to work and depend on some of these contracts that are on here. I want to see more of that in the riding. Of course, not just for Deninu Kue and Lutselk'e but also Ndilo and Detah. Aside from that 20-kilometer chip seal outside of Deninu Kue, was there anything else in my riding? I'm referring to Ndilo and Detah, as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to request Mr. Moore to take the question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. In addition to the chip seal, we talked about the addition of work that will proceed over a number of years.

Lutselk'e power plant would be one of those that the department is currently working on. It's a federally funded initiative that's proceeding in 2021-2022. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Two days ago, I brought up an idea of possibly having a neutral service of the fire department. They have a fire hall in Detah. It got me thinking. I'm just wondering if there is anything in the long-term capital plan to upgrade the road between the Detah junction and Detah? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I recall correctly, and I could ask for some assistance, but last month, we took a drive and met with the YKDFN. I was told that there was a number of work that was done on that road, and it just finished this summer. I'm going to ask Mr. Moore to just confirm that because I was told that there was a number of work that was done on the road to Detah. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's correct. That work proceeded this summer and was completed or a chip-seal project. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just going to leave this now. I do probably have some other questions, and I'll think on it. If I have any more questions, I'll submit in writing. Marsi cho.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Are there any other questions, comments, under Asset Management on pages 42 and 43? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. My first question is: of this \$167 million here, I notice there is a lot of federal funding and a lot of 75-cent dollars, but of that total figure, how much of this is federal money? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to send the question to Mr. Loutitt.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. You are correct. Of the \$292 million, approximately \$260 million of it is tied up in federal agreements. I would have to come back to you with the answer of exactly how much of that is allocated from the federal government and how much from the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, deputy minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. I would appreciate, on this area, getting a sense of that. When we pass \$167 million, it's usually not us actually passing that because there is a bunch of federal dollars attached, so I would just like to have that figure. In question period today, I heard that, essentially, our deferred maintenance was at \$465 million on all of our assets, and we're spending about \$5 million a year. By my calculation, it will take us 93 years to catch up on all of our deferred maintenance. Can somebody just help me understand that figure? I would like a little bit more explanation. Essentially, is it us taking all of the infrastructure we have, doing a needs assessment, and seeing what needs to be repaired and replaced, and that comes to \$465 million? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The breakdown for the cost of \$465,728,561, it is a backlog. We recognize that, but we don't have that kind of money just laying around, especially if we have priorities here within our mandate. We are already working with such a low amount of millions of dollars to complete our mandate in the next three more years. I talked earlier about how the priority one critical breakdown is \$11 million. Each year, we are allocated \$5 million for deferred maintenance. Some of the potentially critical is about \$18 million, just over \$18 million, and some of the necessary but not critical is about \$436 million. We have broken it down into three categories of what is our priority, what is our potential priority, and our necessary but not needed right now. That is the breakdown that I have, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps I could just understand: could I get a sense of what is in deferred maintenance? I understand it's all of our assets. Does it include roads or bridges? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The deferred maintenance funding is used to address some of the deferred maintenance issues, primarily consisting of some of the structural failures, building code issues related to life safety. There are roof and exterior envelope failures. There are additional issues related to building and fire codes; building mechanical, electrical, and structural components; and accessibility. Those are some of the areas that the deferred maintenance is used for. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. In that list, I didn't hear roads and bridges. My understanding is that this is a giant figure, but if we also included all the maintenance and the O and M on our roads and bridges over the next decade and our needs assessments, our total infrastructure gap would be well beyond this. It is what it is. I think we're all aware of our infrastructure needs, and that we are one of the lowest and most behind in Canada. My specific question, though, is: deferred maintenance is on assets, and when we're doing O and M budgets, the Department of Finance has a formula for amortization such that every asset automatically has an amount of money, the values decrease, that we must put toward capital. Can I just have an understanding of the relationship between amortization and deferred maintenance? Because, to me, they should just line up. Is there something wrong in how we're doing that, or is there just something I don't understand? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That's a very technical question that I just can't find the right page for, so I'm going to go and look out to the expertise of David Moore. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to go back, it is only buildings. It is primarily looking at about 430 major assets in the GNWT. We inspect them on a five-year cycle, and we look at those assets for a number of things. As the Minister referred to, basically assessing how critical those issues are, structural failures, building code issues, whether there are accessibility concerns, et cetera. Now, to get to the Member's question, a number of the requirements are aligned with the degree to which the breakdown of the deferred maintenance requirement is there. As the Minister mentioned, \$11 million of that backlog is actually currently

critical, so that would essentially mean life safety hazards, functionality issues, code violations, things that are urgently required. That's where that \$5 million is allocated. Is it aligned to outside the program? Not that I'm aware of, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is just getting to my lack of not really understanding the Fiscal Responsibility Policy and the way things are going. I struggle that we amortize certain assets, and we make sure that we are kind of calculating what the needs assessment is. I get that. It's giant, and it's going to get out of whack. I am wondering if there is a way that the Department of Infrastructure can work with the Department of Finance such that we have a policy where we don't have \$11 million in this first priority that comes before us and we're not funding it. To me, it just seems like we're building infrastructure and not building in a financial responsibility policy that requires that we maintain it. I know I'm not going to get that "yes," but is that a conversation that can happen such that we don't continually get budgets that have things that don't meet code, that are just going to cost us more money in the long run? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll say yes, but I just want to point out that the amortization is an accounting treatment of capital assets to expense the costs of the assets' useful life. We talked about some of the capital assets, like the bridges, and they are coming to the end of their useful life. That's a priority. We need that road for big trucks to travel back and forth in the territory safely. We do recognize that this is a priority, and it is working with the Department of Finance to be able to set aside money so that Infrastructure can go and upkeep buildings that are safe for the people, make sure our roads are safe, and the list continues. Yes. I was getting to that. Yes, we will work with the Department of Finance. People like "yesses," out there.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to switch gears a little here. The ice road to the diamond mines, does the Department of Infrastructure have any role in that? Do we pay for that? Can I just have an understanding of how that works? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. No, we don't.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Well, that's that, I guess. My next question is rather specific: this is the section of the GNWT that does all of our leasing. It controls our building infrastructure. It also is the section of the budget that retrofits our programs. I think we own three large towers in downtown Yellowknife. We rent the other three. We are by far the biggest landlord in Yellowknife. We give all of this money to Northview. We don't dip it. I have a lot of problems with that area, but I only have about 10 seconds left. Can the Department of Infrastructure look into a district heating system for all of the giant towers which we either own or rent in downtown Yellowknife? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We have 23 energy strategies, and there are priorities in there. One of the priorities is to increase the use of biomass. I think the Member has bugged me about this question before. I know the answer, and that's why I'm able to say it. We have a target of 40 percent. Right now, we are at about 25 percent. I agree that we're getting there, but we're not quite there. It takes time and money. That is something the department is working on. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I have some questions about the Tlicho All-Season Road. I was in the last Assembly, and I am sorry to say that this is the first time that I've ever heard that the highway doesn't actually go to the community. It comes as more than a bit of a surprise. I am furiously trying to look at the environmental review board website, and I do see a map here showing the Tlicho All-Season Road going up to a point that is outside the community boundary. Is there actually a road, then, that is going to go from the end? Is there a road already in place from the end of the Tlicho All-Season Road into Whati? Is there a road already there? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. This Tlicho All-Season Road is a two-lane, 97-kilometre road that's meant to get to the access road. Once you get to the access road, that brings you into the community. Yes, it all connects. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Of course, I have never had a chance to go out there myself. What kind of condition is that access road in? Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. If I remember correctly, it was the Rae Access Road, and we have blocked that road off for construction. Nobody could go in there unless you are an essential worker or part of the group that is going in. It is from the Rae Access Road, leading into the community of Whati.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I think the question was the condition of the road.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Okay.

MR. O'REILLY: To Whati.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: To Whati? Okay. I did say Behchoko. Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to ask Mr. Loutitt to answer that because I thought it was: the road is there, and then we are at the access road. I have not been to the access road part, so Mr. Loutitt can speak on what the condition is. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have had the luxury of going to the beautiful community of Whati on several occasions. The road is, as the Member alluded, narrow and does need some upgrading. We understand that, and as we noted earlier, we do have that in our plans, to facilitate those repairs. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. It was a lot of back and forth to find out that we are building a road, a highway, that does not even go to a community; it goes to a narrow, windy road that needs to be upgraded to actually get into the community. How did we design it? Sorry. I am just a bit astounded that we could actually develop a project like this without actually developing the last, it looks like maybe, 15, 20 kilometres into the community. How do we go forward with a project like this without building the last bit into the community? Thanks, Madam Chair. Sorry. I am a bit surprised at this, having sat through the last Assembly and only finding out now that we are not

even building a road to a community. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. When I became Minister of Infrastructure, I was quite surprised, too. It is something that the department will work with, with getting the last part of it completed. Right now, you have the road, and then it brings you access to the community. It's no different than some of the other projects that we are doing across the Mackenzie Valley Highway, such as the Prohibition Creek road and some other projects, as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I guess this is a little secret that I will let the Minister in on then. If we are going to build a road to a community and tout it as a project to a community, we should actually finish the project and make sure an access road is included in the highway. I am finding this really hard to believe, but I do not know how many more millions of dollars this is. It's \$451 million, including the maintenance cost to build this highway, and it does not even go to a community? Yes. I think I will just leave it at that. I am more than a little shocked.

My next question is about the Frank Channel Bridge. The last time GNWT went to the federal government to ask for money for the Frank Channel Bridge, it's my understanding and I was told that it was competing with the Slave Geological Province road, and for whatever reason, Cabinet of the day said that the Slave Geological Province road was a priority over the Frank Channel Bridge, which I continue to be amazed at, again putting a road to, sorry, nowhere over public safety. What kind of assurance can the Minister give me that the Frank Channel Bridge is actually a priority in terms of funding submissions to the federal government at this point? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member is correct, and I have mentioned it earlier on a couple of other questions. The bridge is set to expire in 2023. The final design construction is anticipated to take up to three years. The Member is right. I am told that the proposal did not get approved, but there is other federal funding that is out there that we have resubmitted the proposal. Hopefully, we will know. Again, I do not know the timeline, but this is something that is a priority. As well, if you look at our mandate, there are other

priorities, as well. This is one of the many. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Just so I am clear, is there actual money in this set of capital estimates for the Frank Channel Bridge right now? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to ask Mr. Moore to answer this. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Frank Channel is indeed a priority. We are seeking federal funding on a couple of fronts right now, including working with Transport Canada, and that would be for 75-25 funding. The 25 percent is indeed part of our capital plan that we are talking about right now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. There is GNWT money being put into the capital budget for this project, and we are hoping that the federal government is going to match it with 75-cent dollars? Is that what I have just heard? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I do not believe that is the case, but I am going to let Mr. Moore just clarify. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's part of our submission that we request the 75 percent up front and in planning the 25 percent, should the 75 percent be successful, so we have it in our allocated capital plan. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Yes. Thanks, Madam Chair. I guess we are putting up the 75-cent dollars, hoping that somebody else is going to come along and match it with 25-cent dollars? Is that what this is about? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I am going to get Mr. Loutitt to answer this.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The funding formula would be 25 percent for the Government of the Northwest Territories and 75 percent for Canada. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I just want to again make my views known to the Minister and to all my colleagues on the other side that, as far as I am concerned, the Frank Channel Bridge, which is a public safety issue, needs to be a priority over the Slave Geological Province road. Thanks, Madam Chair. That is all I have.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. I will take that as a comment. Committee, we are going to break for a few minutes.

---SHORT RECESS

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): I will call Committee of the Whole back to order. I have Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was hoping to get up a little earlier because the Minister was saying "yes" there quite a few times. It might be a little late, now. Anyway, I'd just like to talk a bit about the bridges that are kind of set to go here. In the North here, we always talk about resource development, and one of the things when we talk about resource development is that we have to think about the roads. We have to think about what weights those roads can take. We have to think about the bridges themselves, whether we have a high-load corridor here. In some areas, we don't have that. I would just like to ask the Minister: when it comes to the bridges that we have set to be built, are they going to be open-span to ensure that we have a high-load corridor coming in to the NWT and down the valley and up toward the diamond mines? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me use one example. The Frank Channel Bridge has an overhead truss structure, which restricts the transportation of oversized-dimension equipment that is able to get to the territories. Any

new bridges that are built in the territories should be open-span. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I know the Hay River Bridge is open-span, but the Buffalo River Bridge does have a canopy over it, and the government did put money into it a few years ago. Can you tell me if there is any indication that that bridge will be looked at in the near future to ensure that it becomes open-span, as well? Because we do have development in the Pine Point area, and I think that it would be prudent to have an open-span system there and going in toward Fort Smith, as well. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to get Mr. Moore to answer that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The Member raises a very good point, and work was recently done at Buffalo. We certainly look at each bridge individually, of course, with respect to its own design and requirements and available budget. In that particular case, it wasn't possible to look at expanding the truss system, but as the Minister mentioned, in other cases, such as Frank Channel, we certainly are looking at that as one of the priorities for a future design. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just looking at the highway reconstruction here, I see we have Highway No. 1. Can the Minister tell me if there is any work slated for between kilometres 0 and 82? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't know what specific area this is, at the moment, so I'm going to defer to Mr. Moore. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Not currently, at this time, but we are looking at that, that stretch of Highway No. 1, looking at issues that may occur, widening requirements, geometry.

Certainly, inspecting the quality and integrity of the road, that is certainly ongoing. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am pleased to hear that because, from zero to Enterprise, the road is narrow, once you get past Enterprise, there are shoulders there all the way into Yellowknife. I think it's important. It is a main highway coming into the territories, and I think it's important that we do widen that road and possibly even straighten it at certain points. The next, the one highway I see here missing is Highway No. 2, which is from Enterprise to Hay River, and that highway gets a lot of use with large transport vehicles during the winter, due to fuel haul. That road is windy. Has there been any discussion or planning to straighten that road and also widen it? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to get Mr. Moore to answer that.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. We try to look at all of the highways throughout the territory, including Highway No. 2, looking at areas that we can prioritize our federal funding to. A large part of our investment is certainly federally funded, but Highway No. 2 is not included in that plan at this current time. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to talk about Highway No. 3 from kilometre 4 to probably before the bridge. It's a washboard there, and whenever I drive it there, you've got to slow down. I am just wondering if the Minister can tell me what plans there are to work on that road, to ensure that we get that washboard out of there and try to make it so traffic can actually go the speed limit on it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The department has invested just over \$6 million for work to improve Highway No. 3. I am going to defer this to Mr. Moore to speak more specifically about the ruts on the road. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Highway No. 3 is certainly a challenge, as the Member notes. There are a number of permafrost challenges on that road that the department is continuously working on. It has also been the subject of some of our research and development. It's probably not well known that the department does research into permafrost resilience on our highways to determine how best to move forward with them, and we have a number of test strips on Highway No. 3 helping us in that regard. However, as the Minister mentioned, there has been significant investment in Highway No. 3; \$22.5 million, in fact, will be invested between 2019 and 2024 under the new Building Canada plan. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to move on to Highway No. 7. We talk about tourism, and I think that Highway No. 7 is -- I have not driven it for a while, but I do talk to people who are on it. Sometimes, it's not too bad, and other times, she is pretty rough. I am just wondering what is the long-term plan to get that road up to a certain type of facility that can take the bigger trucks and not be beaten up like it has been? I know that there are some pretty bad washboards. There has been some. When you are driving along there, you are doing 80 kilometres an hour, and all of a sudden, you have got to slow down to about 20. I am just wondering what is being done to deal with that highway. I think, if that highway is in fairly good shape, it would encourage tourism, as well. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Between 2019-2020 and 2023-2024, the Department of Infrastructure will invest \$15 million to improvements to Highway No. 7, with federal funding under what's called the new Building Canada plan. This is some of the work. The rehab work is focused on kilometres 20 to 38 and areas where there is severe distress and that require immediate attention, mostly to maintain public safety and operation of the highway. This work includes things like culvert replacement, roadway widening, horizontal/vertical curve move. The department is looking at obtaining some of these permits to get started. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Hay River South.

MR. ROCKY SIMPSON: No further questions. Tshank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): All right. Are there any further questions on the asset management, pages 41 to 43? Seeing none, I will call the activity. Infrastructure, asset management, infrastructure investments, \$167,809,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): We will now turn to corporate management on page 44, with information items on page 45. Questions, comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to ask a number of questions about the Slave Geological Province Corridor there. I believe we got \$40 million from the federal government to advance this, and I see there it's for environmental assessment for Lockhart Lake, the first section of LASR as some people are now calling it, I heard the other day. Can I just get clarification? Do we expect it to cost \$40 million to put just the LASR part through environmental assessment? Can I get a breakdown on how that money is going to be spent? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. On August 14, 2019, Transport Canada announced it would provide \$30 million under what's called the National Trade Corridors Fund for environmental study and the regulatory process for the planning studies to advance the Slave Geological Province Corridor. The GNWT has committed \$10 million to the project, which brings us to a total of \$40 million. The project will support the future economy of the Northwest Territories by not only facilitating mineral exploration development in a region with significant resource potential, provide improved access to minerals and metals critical to the green economy of the future, and assisting with reclaiming mines in the region upon closure. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I just confirm that? I understand we are going to do the project description report; we are going to do a developers assessment report; and then we are going into environmental assessment. Are we entering environmental assessment just from Highway No. 4 to Lockhart Lake, or are we entering environmental assessment for the entire road, two of the three phases? Can I just get a sense of what we are bringing to the land and water board? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There are four project phases, and maybe I will eventually get to the Member's answer. The first phase, which is costing of \$40 million, this is the environmental and planning engineering studies. That is the first phase of this project. The second is the construction of the 179-kilometre all-weather road from Lockhart Lake to Lac De Gras, which is estimated about \$350 million. The fourth plan is the construction of the 82 all-weather road. This is a big project, you know, something that the government is pursuing, but first we need to do the environmental studies. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I understand, yes, there are the multiple phases. First, we are going to Lockhart. Then, we are going to go to Lac De Gras. Then, we're going to maybe go to Nunavut. Then, maybe Nunavut's going to go to the ocean, and then, maybe they're going to build a port. I understand there are multiple steps. My question is: the \$40 million we got, are we going to environmental assessment on just to Lockhart Lake, just that first step of construction, or what are we bringing to environmental assessment? We had this problem with the Mackenzie Valley Highway, but we proposed the entire road into environmental assessment. It got caught up in years, then we dialed it back and said, "No, no. We're just doing these in portions." I'm just looking for what exactly we're bringing to environmental assessment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll get Mr. Loutitt to answer this.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The first phase is the section from Highway No. 4 to Lockhart that we are right now bringing our regular applications forward, doing our planning, looking at attrition knowledge, and working with our partners. There will be a decision point at that point on whether the project goes to EA at that point. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Loutitt. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm happy to do we are doing this in phases. I recognize it's not our decision whether it goes to

EA. I don't think it's much secret that it probably will go to the environmental assessment. I want to get the sense: say we get regular approvals; we get those in 2024, let's say past the life of this Assembly; say we're approved, and we have funding for just phase 1 of Lockhart Lake. Will we build the road to Lockhart Lake, start construction, or are we going to wait to get regulatory approval and funding secured for the other phases? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll get Mr. Loutitt to answer that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The plan is to plan and work on the construction in phases, so that would be our intention. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Loutitt. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Part of my concern with this entire project is that, I think in 2001, there was a business case. There has been years of talking about this, and it made probably complete sense when the diamond mines were in full operation. It would have saved them millions of dollars in not building the ice road every year. I am concerned that even if we built phase 1, which doesn't get us to the diamond mines, by the time we actually get phase 2 built, we're into 2027 would be my guess at the earliest. Most of those mines are ending the life of their operation.

There is kind of this never-ending moving target with this road of: we do a business plan and it says, "Yes. It's fine," and then, we have to wait 20 years. It seems we are least waiting another five years to even start construction. Can I get the Minister to speak to how those business plans and that assessment of the return on this keeps getting evaluated as the mines actually wind down? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That portion still provides advantages to industry in the area and also will enhance exploration and also extends the ice road further north. The long-term vision of this project was to include an infrastructure corridor that supports road, communications, hydro transmission line infrastructure. It connects to an all-weather road, perhaps in Nunavut, that will link onto the deep-water Arctic part. There are

opportunities within this project other than just looking at different phases. I respect it's going to take time. A lot of infrastructure projects do take time. It is something that is part of the mandate. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. There have been a number of different assessments of this road and benefit-cost analysis. One of the problems is many of the ones I have seen, they do the analysis based on there being hydro, based on the road going to Nunavut, based on the port existing. I have yet to see a business case for just Lockhart Lake road, which is what we are proposing to build. We're proposing to build a road that doesn't get to the diamond mines, that doesn't have hydro. Is the Minister willing to go and do the business case for just that? Funding for this is ultimately up to political will. We may be sitting here in 2028, and we just built a road to Lockhart Lake and then decided to not build any further. Then, it will truly be a road to nowhere. It won't even be a road to the diamond mines. I just want to make sure that there is a business case for phase 1. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is something the Department of Infrastructure can look into, but we also can work with other departments within the GNWT, including ITI. There are opportunities there within that department to be able to work together to see how we can expand this project further. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I just have the Minister confirm, in what we're sending to environmental assessment and the road to Lockhart Lake will hydro lines or power lines be included at that at all? Is that part of this plan? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There is potential within the Slave Geological Province Corridor. Some of the areas I've talked about, and the opportunities can include reaching out to other areas where we have other sources of hydro, perhaps. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just going to ask that question one more time a different way. I recognize we're sending this project for approval. It may go to environmental assessment, in all likelihood. We need to have a lot of detail. Is part of the plan to include extending power lines? Obviously, this would require running them up the Ingraham Trail and then down the road, which would be another huge project. I want to clarify whether the project as defined to Lockhart Lake includes transmission lines. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to get Mr. Loutitt to expand further on some of the potential opportunities within this project. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Obviously, this road is very important to the economic well-being of the Northwest Territories. It's going to an area that is rich in minerals. It promotes future economic activity and exploration and will create additional revenue streams, as well as employment for people in the area while it is under construction. While Taltson is being advanced separately, our long-term vision is to go to the SGPC. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister Loutitt. Are there any other comments, questions under the corporate management section? Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I'd like to pick up where my colleague from Yellowknife North left off. The Mackenzie Valley Highway has been in environmental assessment now for over seven years. Seven years. It was submitted to environmental assessment by GNWT Department of Transportation back in February of 2013. What I'm worried is that the same thing is about to happen with the Slave Geological Province Road. I've heard a lot of fuzziness around what this project really is; whether it includes hydro; is it really part of a bigger project that's going to spill over into Nunavut? It's extremely fuzzy. I understand that some of this funding is perhaps to better define the project, at least I hope so for \$40 million. I'd like to know: is it the intention to submit a project to environmental assessment during the life of this Assembly? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. The best time would have been to build this would have been at least 30 years ago, but the second time is just to get it started now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Given that the GNWT itself triggered an environmental assessment for the Mackenzie Valley Highway, is this government going to submit or trigger an environment assessment itself for the Slave Geological Province road or Lockhart Lake road, whatever's it's going to be called? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes. We will be submitting regulatory applications for the projects. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I'm not sure that the Minister actually understood my question. Of course, regulatory applications are the first step to an environmental assessment, but any party, including GNWT -- I shouldn't say, "any party" -- a limited number of parties can actually trigger or, once the applications are filed, ask that an environmental assessment be conducted. One of those parties is this government. Is this party going to trigger an environmental assessment for this project? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I will get Mr. Moore to explain further. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Moore?

MR. MOORE: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is a long, complex process. Obviously, there're a lot of investigative studies that are part of the \$40 million, and part of that is understanding of the attributes of environmental risk and consequences of proceeding on certain routes. That will feed into the decision-making process, whether we proceed with an EA or not and what stage. I think it's a bit premature at this point to proceed. It's not our decision, basically, to move forward with an EA or not. The board processes will determine, essentially, if we need to proceed with an EA or not.

At this point, Madam Chair, it's premature to say. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Mr. Moore. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. I'm going to stop this line of questioning on this item because I don't think my witnesses here really actually understand what's in the MVR, that our government actually does have the authority to trigger an environmental assessment, which is exactly what they did for the Mackenzie Valley Highway. I might suggest that they do some homework on this issue.

I want to go back to what the Minister said about this project: it would have been good maybe 30 years ago. What I'm worried about is: I would like to see a cost benefit study or a business case developed for the road from the end of the Ingraham Trail to Lockhart Lake if, indeed, that's what the project is. Maybe even the more important question to ask is: by putting this money into this road, it means that we're not doing other things. What are the opportunity costs associated with doing this road? If it costs \$450 million, that's 20 years of universal childcare that we could have in the Northwest Territories. Four hundred and fifty million dollars would probably get most of our housing out of core need. Choices have to be made, and I've made my choice that I don't think this is a great investment, quite frankly, especially at a time where caribou are at a critical stage, the Bathurst caribou herd. In the kind of economic analysis that the department intends to undertake, is that kind of work going to be done to look at what the opportunity cost are of spending \$450 million on a road that ends at Lockhart Lake? Is that kind of economic analysis going to be done? Thanks Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Absolutely, we can look into it. I do want to make note that we have funding for the road. There's lots of work for businesses who are accessing it. Also, just a note, some of the funding we received is specifically for roads and highways and project-specific. We can't be telling the federal government to go and say, "No. We don't want to spend your money on an area where it's slotted, rather than to use it in another area." We are getting \$75 into communities we wouldn't be able to get in any of our communities anyway. Thank you, Madam.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. Yes. I really want to encourage the Minister, maybe working

with her colleague the Minister of Finance to do that kind of macro-economic analysis of what we could actually get for \$450 million, the cost to build this road. We don't have the \$450 million to build it, and I think that's probably on the low side. Would we create more jobs? Would we create greater well-being for the Northwest Territories if we invested in that money into childcare or housing rather than building a road? That's a fundamental question here that I hope that my colleagues on the other side are actually listening to.

We only have \$538 million left in the borrowing limit for this government. How are we going to be able to afford to do Mackenzie Valley Highway work, Slave Geological Province road, and Taltson all at the same time when we have that limited amount of borrowing limit left? We can't do it all. Hard decisions have to be made, and no one seems to want to make that decision, those hard decisions about what our real priorities are: whether we're going to put our people first in terms of childcare, housing, you name it; or are we going to build roads? I'm sorry. That's the stark choice that faces this government.

I've said before: if I had to build one infrastructure project, it's not even in the budget, is completing a network of broadband connecting all of our communities to high speed Internet. It's not even in this budget. It's not even a big infrastructure project nowhere. That's the project that we can and should be taking to Ottawa, not the Slave Geological Province road.

Those are comments, Madam Chair, but I really urge my colleagues on the other side of the House to do the hard, economic analysis that needs to be done to look at what we can get with the dollars that we have. Investing in a road like this is not going to generate the kind of long-term benefits that I've heard people here talk in very fuzzy terms about. Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Frame Lake, and I will take those as comments as there are no questions. Are there any further comments, questions, to the corporate management, 44 and 45? Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: I listened to some of the comments around the table. Economic recovery is extremely important. Economic recovery means new dreams, new developments, new things. When I hear comments that are, "These monies and allocations were given for certain projects. They can't be changed to universal childcare. They cannot be changed to something else" -- when we sit around this table and we're talking about infrastructure and we're not even discussing that in that right department, it amazes me on some of the

things that are brought here at this level in that sense.

I, too, agree with universal childcare. I, too, agree with all these things. Can't have everything if you don't have infrastructure that is going to carry this territory forward. We have mines closing. We have lost a lot of jobs with this mine. We looked at it this morning. That's a lot of jobs we're talking about. How are you going to rebuild the territory if you don't have dreams and you don't have an amazing infrastructure ability to really want to do something entirely with what we got and ensuring that the federal government helps us with Indigenous procurement so that we can move forward and ownership with the Indigenous peoples because those are the things that could actually be done if you actually want to do it.

From what I see in the discussions in the past, we can do that. You can do anything you want if you put your mind to it. I firmly believe in that. I'm very much a business person; I always have been, all my life. I never depended on government, most of the time. I am very pro-business. I always will be. Other people have other agendas, and that's fine. We can't all think the same, but I know for sure that the three main projects that are designated in our mandate agenda is what we agreed on. The majority is always what we agree on.

There are a couple of things that I noticed in the last day or so that puzzle me about Infrastructure, and it is mainly to deal with the Taltson. I am very much about the Taltson expansion, and now I see that the Minister has appointed the same old board again, all deputy ministers, no arm's length, and that really concerns me. You have very capable people, the president and everyone else at NCPC, who could maybe think of different ideas instead of thinking in tunnel vision, like most governments do, and do something entirely different and think out of the box. Yet, we appoint all these deputy ministers back to a board, instead of having an arm's length board of governors in the governance aspect of the NCPC, and that would also include the Taltson expansion. I want to ask the Minister: how did she decide on this, again? Minister Archie, would you answer my question, please?

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Just to be clear, I think that is under the next section, the Taltson. On the corporate management, we've only got the three line items. If you want, I can give you the question when we get to the next section, if that's okay, on the Taltson.

MS. MARTSELOS: [Microphone turned off]

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): If you have questions on the items that are in this section...

MS. MARTSELOS: [Microphone turned off]

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Member for Thebacha.

MS. MARTSELOS: Sorry, Madam Chair. I am getting too tired. I said I wanted to make sure, Madam Chair, that I just put a statement in on the corporate management side, too, because I am very strong on making sure that we, as a government, do not think of only all these other things. We have to have a balance, I know that, with climate change, environment, and stuff, but we also have to move forward. I am not going to ask any questions. I don't know how the Minister feels about that. I just want to see how she feels about that, because I sit here and I listen. As a businessperson and being 50 years in business, it puzzles me, sometimes, how this government thinks, so maybe Minister Archie could just give me an insight on her insight. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Thebacha. Minister of Infrastructure, do you have any comments?

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for that. I thank the Member for her questions around some of the infrastructure projects because you look at this and these projects were part of our mandate. It's part of our Assembly, and for us to look at proceeding with some of the projects, if and where we can, I think, is important. I did speak earlier about some of the federal funding that we receive, and we need to continue to pursue more and more funding as we start to link up some of our roads to get communities connected, to make best use of some of our mineral resources and just our resources in general that are out there. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Did you have anything further, Member for Thebacha?

MS. MARTSELOS: No, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Tu Nedhe-Wiilideh.

MR. NORN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm looking at three maps, right now, and I just want to be honest with each and every one of you in here: I am very conflicted about all of this, the SGP, in particular. Last night, we had a hearing in SCEDE on the wolves and caribou and some of the calving grounds. We talked about that yesterday, in particular. Then, I'm looking at another map here, with the SGP, where it goes, what the ultimate end routes are going to be and where it starts out. That's something else I'm looking at. I went on Wikipedia, and I thought, "I want to see exactly where my riding sits." This sits right in my riding, so

I think it's appropriate that I actually say something about this.

It is about balance. I know that the YKDFN and the GNWT worked out a deal to do the environmental assessment, and for me, that part is good, the environmental assessment, to go down that route. To me, that means that there is food being put on plates for my constituents. That is so important. You don't get anywhere by being totally on one side of the fence or being totally on the other side of the fence. You have to try to find that fine line and do what is best for your people. That's where I sit, right now. I look at this, and I want to think about: where are we going to be sitting 50 years from now, down the road? What are our caribou herds going to be looking like? What is our development going to be looking like? I always try to find solutions through this. I looked at one map here, and I am happy that, looking through some of the plans for this, there are a bunch of routes, at least, to find ways to not disturb wildlife as best they can.

I liked when I kind of went through some of the other developments we have, because there are not only diamond mines. There is other development, and it's important. This is what kept our economy afloat for a very long time, and we still have to be mindful of that. When I drove over to Deninu Kue, I drove by Pine Point, and there used to be a railroad there. They took it down because the zinc mine closed down at Pine Point many years ago, but now, they are reopening it. They are talking about revisiting that and going and finding a mutual, beneficial deal, there, with the Deninu Kue and with other parties; of course, with the Metis. That is what I want to see. Too many times, we've had so many developments, no matter what the development was, no matter what the infrastructure was. We talked about Taltson. They came in, and we had no benefits for the longest time. For me, from my point of view, I am sick of seeing that. From here on forward, I will only support these big projects if we see our people benefit, up in the North; our Indigenous companies benefit. Because, if we don't, then what? What are we going to have left for our future generations?

I know that, in the future, I will probably, myself here sitting in this House, have some tough decisions to make, but right now, the way I feel about it, there is a balanced approach to it. You still have to find ways to keep your people working and to balance that fine line of respecting the environment and respecting how your ancestors used to hunt. My great-grandparents, they used to hunt in a lot of these hunting grounds. Again, I'm looking at the map. It's a vast map that my constituents from Ndilo, Detah, Lutselk'e, and Fort Resolution used to hunt, and they still do. You can't forget that.

I don't have too many questions on that right now, but like I said, it's about balance through all of this. That is where my mind sits on that. I don't want to sound too cheesy, but I do love the North. I love the people. I love the sea. I am so passionate about this, and that is why I am sitting here. However, as leaders, we are going to have to make those tough choices to keep our economy afloat and to try to, at the same time, keep our caribou herds alive. We have to respect our environment and try to find that way through. I am hoping we have a lot of very good experts to help us navigate this. We have not only just one department. We have ENR that we have to partner up with. We have a lot of partnerships with Indigenous governments up North, around us, and we have to always be mindful of that and find collaborative approaches for how we want to navigate this. That is where I stand on this.

This almost sounded like a Commissioner's address speech, but no, I am really passionate about this. Like I said, there are going to be some tough choices, but this is all about balance. That is something I want to say. I really have a lot still. We are one year in, but we still have a few years left. That means there is going to be a lot of consultation with my leaders in my riding and a lot of my constituents, and I really need to get a good, solid pulse of where they want to go. We still have to think about the Akaicho that would likely be signed. We have to think about those things and the Metis, as well. We can't forget about the Metis and those implications. I just want to leave it at that. I will leave that as a comment. I don't have questions. As I said before, if anything pops up in my head, I usually just shoot an email to the Ministers or the Premier, and that is how I will go about that. Okay. Marsi cho, and thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Tu Nedhe-Willideh. Are there any further comments or questions to the corporate management under Infrastructure on pages 44 and 45? Seeing none, I will call the activity. Infrastructure, corporate management, infrastructure investments, \$30,533,000. Does committee agree?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): We will now turn to programs and services on page 46, with information items from page 47 through to 49. Members, any questions comments? Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. If we look at our asset infrastructure, we get that \$465 million deficit. Then, if we looked at our roads, I am sure it's another billion. If we look at our airports, it's probably more. Then, I think, if we looked at the

Northwest Territories Power Corporation, it would probably be the most terrifying of all of them. I see in here we have a number of hydro projects. We have a number of new kind of Taltson pre-expansion, Bluefish Hydro Upgrade. I am just looking for someone to explain to me the relationship between us spending infrastructure dollars for the Power Corporation and their budget. If we spend this money, does part of it come out of their budget? Do they have an obligation to pay a part of this infrastructure through rate increases? Can someone explain the relationship between NTPC putting together their capital needs and then it ultimately getting into Infrastructure's programs and services capital needs? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to defer this over to Mr. Loutitt.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. It's getting late in the day. Basically, we provide money to NTPC for projects that they undertake, like facility upgrades, and we'll management projects on their behalf. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair. I recognize there is this tension with every jurisdiction and their power corporation and the power corporation supposedly having to run rates that keep their power consistent and allow them to maintain their infrastructure. Then, consistently power corporations do not want to raise rates, so they just do not maintain their infrastructure. Then, the government has to bail them out. Hence, we are subsidizing the Power Corporation, which we have done multiple times and are continuing to do here. My question, though, is: when we build all of these new upgrades and maintenance for the Power Corporation, are they required to go recoup any of that infrastructure cost through a rate increase? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to get Mr. Loutitt to answer that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. The projects that we are funding for NTPC, just for

clarification, is ISET money, where it's federal funding where the NTPC pays 25 percent, the feds pay 25 percent, which is charged to the rate payer, only the 25 percent share that is done in this manner. It's actually not GNWT money we are working with. NTPC provides the funding. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Okay. Thank you, Madam Chair. That is the answer I was looking for, where the 25-percent dollars come from. They ultimately come from NTPC, and in theory, NTPC has to get all of its money through rates. Do we have any information of -- there is quite a lot of infrastructure in here. NTPC is clearly spending money. They need to be spending that money. Do they have plans to go to the public utility board for a rate increase? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, that is the process. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to switch gears here to the Taltson expansion pre-construction. Right now, in the South Slave, they have a surplus of power. They actually have the cheapest power in the NWT, and Taltson expansion is a plan to make more power to an area with a surplus. Can I just get a sense of: this Taltson expansion pre-construction money here, I assume it's federal dollars. When is the quickest timeline we would see that, after expansion, it actually connects to somewhere we could sell that power, whether that is down south or whether that is in the North Slave or to a mine? What is the projected timeline to actually sell any of that surplus in the South Slave? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member for Yellowknife North. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am going to get Mr. Loutitt to answer that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Mr. Loutitt.

MR. LOUITT: At this point, I am not certain we have an actual timeline. We are still in the early stages. We are still working, obviously, with our Indigenous partners in moving this project forward. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am not sure how much I can get into Power Corporation questions here, but this is ultimately where the Power Corporation's infrastructure finds its way into the budget. In the South Slave right now, we produce that surplus of power. We essentially just spill power over the dam every year because we have no one to sell it to. Alberta is never going to buy it; neither is Saskatchewan. Our power is too expensive. Arguably, some of the mines probably will not even buy it, assuming diesel remains competitive. Some of the people who are buying it are commercial heaters right now. We have allowed them to install infrastructure to heat their buildings with electricity and pinned it to a price point that is competitive with diesel. Are there any plans to expand that? Can we make it available to residents in the South Slave so that they can heat their homes with electricity and actually save money? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. That is the plan with the whole energy strategy. I hate to keep going back to it, but there are some good projects and measurable results within the strategy that really puts to task some of our goals there. I do want to mention that the Taltson expansion is a long ways away. It's not going to happen overnight, and we need to secure some funding. We need to look at some business arrangement, go through the regulatory applications, the construction, tying in. We do have several programs to support this. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I see the line item "Renewable Solutions for Off-Grid Diesel - ICIP" money. I am glad to see this. I am really excited for some of the potential for off-grid diesel and renewable solutions there. Can I just get the Minister to expand on what that item is, how much it is, and what it's trying to accomplish? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister of Infrastructure.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Can I ask what project he was referring to again? Sorry.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. Understandably, we throw everything in this section from loaders to our technological service centre to power lines, but I'm looking at page 49, the third line down. We have renewable solutions for off-grid diesel. It's federal money, it's estimated to be completed in 2026-2027, so a long way off. How much money is that, and is it renewable diesel? Is that what this money is for? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is a line item. There is no project identified yet, but we are working with communities to be able to discuss some of the options with that. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to try one more time. Is this possibly money for renewable diesel, or is it just for getting communities that are on off-grid diesel to some other renewable source, and how much money is it? Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Madam Chair, it's used for renewables so the electricity or heat. I should probably answer that with the first question. I'm going to ask Mr. Loutitt to see if he wants to expand on this a little bit further. Unless we find the exact dollar amount. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Miinistere. Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. This is an item that we would like to get back to you on. It is to do with solar and biomass, but we'd also like to extend an invitation to a presentation on our energy strategy to committee at their convenience. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, deputy minister. Member for Yellowknife North.

MR. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. One question which I've always had about Taltson and no one has really been able to explain it to me is: we want to expand our power, but we have some of the most expensive power in Canada. Part of that goal is to then connect maybe to Alberta, maybe to Saskatchewan, and sell that power, but their power is far cheaper than ours. Why has the plan never been to just simply connect to one of those southern jurisdictions and instead of expanding our

very expensive and aged infrastructure just get into a power purchasing agreement and buy much cheaper power? There is something I'm missing, why that doesn't make sense. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Member. Minister.

HON. DIANE ARCHIE: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to divert this to Mr. Loutitt. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Deputy Minister Loutitt.

MR. LOUTITT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Our long-term vision is to create more reliable power and be able to supply it to different areas within the Northwest Territories. The long-term vision is to connect to southern Canada. As we have these opportunities for hydro expansions, we feel that that can be part of our long-term vision. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you, Deputy Minister Loutitt. Noting the clock, committee members, I will now rise and report progress.

MR. SPEAKER: May I have the report of the Committee of the Whole, please? Member for Inuvik Twin Lakes.

Report of the Committee of the Whole

MS. SEMMLER: Mr. Speaker, committee has been considering Tabled Document 181-19(2), Capital Estimates 2020-2021, and would like to report progress. I move that report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Do we have a seconder? Member for Deh Cho. All those in favour? All those opposed? Any abstentions? The motion is carried.

---Carried

Item 22, third read of bills. Mr. Clerk, orders of the day.

Orders of the Day

CLERK OF THE HOUSE (Mr. Mercer): Orders of the day for Friday, October 30, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions

- Question 358-19(2), Long-Term Care Facility
 - 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
 - 6. Acknowledgements
 - 7. Oral Questions
 - 8. Written Questions
 - 9. Returns to Written Questions
 - 10. Replies to Commissioner's Address
 - 11. Petitions
 - 12. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
 - 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
 - 14. Tabling of Documents
 - 15. Notices of Motion
 - 16. Motions
 - 17. Notices of Motion for First Reading of Bills
 - 18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 15, Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2020
 - 19. Second Reading of Bills
 - Bill 12, An Act to Amend the Apprenticeship, Trades and Occupational Certification Act
 - Bill 13, An Act to Amend the Interpretation Act
 - Bill 14, An Act to Amend the Securities Act
 - 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Committee Report 4-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2018-2019 Northwest Territories Human Rights Commission Annual Report
 - Committee Report 5-19(2), Standing Committee on Government Operations Report on the Review of the 2018-2019 Annual Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the Northwest Territories
 - Minister's Statement 77-19(2), National Housing Co-Investment Fund
 - Tabled Document 165-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 1-19(2): Report on
 - Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
 - Tabled Document 166-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 2-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
 - Tabled Document 167-19(2), Government of the Northwest Territories Response to Committee Report 3-19(2): Report on Long-Term Post-Pandemic Recovery - Recommendations to the GNWT
 - Tabled Document 181-19(2), Capital Estimates 2021-2022
 - 21. Report of Committee of the Whole
 - 22. Third Reading of Bills
 - 23. Orders of the Day
- MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. This House stands adjourned until Friday, October 30, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.
- ADJOURNMENT
- The House adjourned at 6:05 p.m.