

**New Federal Infrastructure Agreement**

Mr. Speaker, over the past 15 years, the Government of the Northwest Territories has worked in partnership with the federal government to help meet the infrastructure needs of community governments. These efforts have helped community governments access federal funding, in accordance with our current mandate commitment in this area.

Mr. Speaker, federal investments in community government infrastructure have been significant. Since 2005, the federal government has provided over \$170 million in Gas Tax funding, supporting a total of 293 projects in our communities. As well, through the Capacity Building Component of the Gas Tax funding, we have also been able to assist with the development of community capital plans and implement the current Asset Management Strategy.

Since 2014, under the Small Communities Fund of the New Building Canada Plan, a total of \$38.7 million in infrastructure projects have been approved, supporting a total of 33 projects. This includes investments in recreation facilities, road upgrades and the construction of water treatment plants.

Since 2016, the Clean Water and Waste Water Fund of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan has seen a total investment of \$51 million towards 29 water treatment and sewage system projects in communities across the Northwest Territories.

Most recently, in March 2018, the Government of the Northwest Territories entered into an Integrated Bilateral Agreement with the Government of Canada for Phase II funding under the Investing in Canada Plan. Through this agreement, a total of \$119.2 million in federal funding over 10 years has been allocated to support community infrastructure projects.

The funding allocated to community and Indigenous governments under Phase II of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan will be provided through five programs. These programs include \$37.5 million to assist communities in developing solid waste facilities including fencing, cell development and waste reduction initiatives such as composting and recycling infrastructure; \$37.5 million to support community road upgrade and development projects within community boundaries; \$15 million to support energy efficiency upgrades to community buildings and facilities; \$8.2 million to the City of Yellowknife to develop public transit infrastructure; and finally, \$20.5 million to develop or improve existing facilities to increase accessibility and create spaces for cultural activities and displays.

Mr. Speaker, in early January 2019, Municipal and Community Affairs released an initial call for applications for Phase II funding to community governments for the solid waste, road upgrades, and energy efficiency programs and to Indigenous governments for the cultural spaces program. Applications for the initial call must be submitted by March 1, 2019. Municipal and Community Affairs will review and process the applications received, before submitting to Canada for final approval.

Municipal and Community Affairs will work with the NWT Association of Communities to ensure the application and selection processes are fair and consider the federal eligibility criteria along with territorial priorities.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Northwest Territories is helping to address the infrastructure needs of Northwest Territories communities. The Municipal Funding Policy Review completed by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs in 2014 helped quantify the infrastructure needs of each Northwest Territories community government. We have increased the annual funding support provided to community governments for community infrastructure by \$2 million, beginning in 2019-20. We administer federal infrastructure programs, and we support community governments in asset management and capital planning so they can make the best possible use of the funding available. I look forward to working with Northwest Territories community and Indigenous governments to continue the administration of these critical federal infrastructure agreements, as well as moving forward on important initiatives such as the Asset Management Strategy. By working together, we will be able to meet more of our communities' needs for the benefit of all our citizens.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.