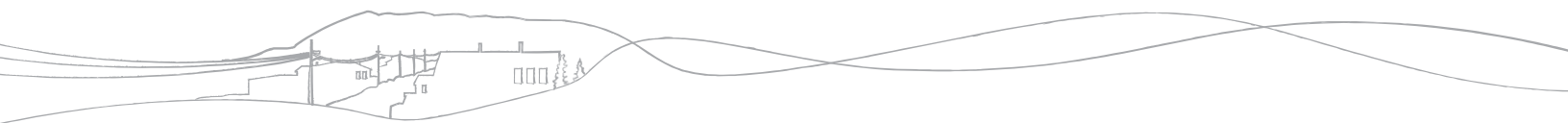




2024-2028 BUSINESS PLANS PLANS D'ACTIVITÉS

Le présent document contient la traduction française de l'introduction.

Government of Northwest Territories
Gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest



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English

French

Cree

Tłchq

Chipewyan

South Slavey

North Slavey

Gwich'in

Inuvialuktun

Inuktitut

Inuinnaqtun

Francophone Affairs Secretariat: 867-767-9343

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Introduction

The business planning process is an integral part of Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) budgeting cycle. Consistent with the Planning and Accountability Framework under the *Financial Administration Act* (FAA), the purpose of the business plan is to inform Members of the Legislative Assembly and residents of the planned objectives for each department and how resources are being aligned to achieve these objectives.

Business plans provide a connection between the Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly, the Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories and departments' core business functions.

We Are Stronger Together: The Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The 20th Legislative Assembly's priorities support a vision of a territory "where people are supported in how they want to live work and grow."

The top priorities of the Legislative Assembly are:

- the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing;
- a strong economic foundation;
- access to health care and addressing the effects of trauma;
- safe residents and communities; and
- good governance and collaboration with Indigenous governments, all communities, and the public.

The Mandate of the Government of the Northwest Territories

The GNWT affirms the Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly and to this end the GNWT has identified Mandate Commitments for each of the 20th Legislative Assembly's priorities. Each commitment identifies specific actions that each department and agency have created actions for and include measures and targets that will allow for monitoring and reporting their progress.

Présentation

Le processus de planification des activités fait partie intégrante du cycle budgétaire du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (GTNO). Conformément au cadre de planification et de reddition de compte prévu par la *Loi sur la gestion des finances publiques*, le plan d'activités a pour but d'informer les députés et les résidents des objectifs prévus pour chaque ministère et de la façon dont les ressources sont affectées à la réalisation de ces objectifs.

Les plans d'activités établissent un lien entre les priorités de la 20^e Assemblée législative, le mandat du GTNO et les principales fonctions des ministères.

Ensemble, nous sommes plus forts : les priorités de la 20^e Assemblée législative

Les priorités de la 20^e Assemblée législative visent à soutenir la vision d'un territoire « où l'on soutient les gens dans leur façon de vivre, de travailler et de se perfectionner ».

Voici les grandes priorités de la 20^e Assemblée législative :

- Des logements convenables, accessibles et abordables;
- De solides bases économiques;
- Un accès aux soins de santé et la prise en compte des effets des traumatismes;
- Des résidents et des collectivités en sécurité;
- Une bonne gouvernance et une collaboration avec les gouvernements autochtones, l'ensemble des collectivités et le public.

Mandat du gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

Le GTNO soutient les priorités de la 20^e Assemblée législative et, à cet effet, a pris, dans le cadre de son mandat, des engagements qui contribuent à leur réalisation. Chaque engagement détermine des actions spécifiques auxquelles œuvrent les différents ministères et organismes et inclut des mesures et des objectifs qui permettent de suivre leurs progrès et d'en rendre compte.

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Corporate Overview

The 2024-25 to 2027-28 Business Plan focuses on how each GNWT department and agency will fulfill the mandate commitments over a 4-year period with a greater focus on program evaluation that brings more attention to measuring progress and success relative to the expenditures incurred to deliver programs and services.

The Main Estimates (the mains) and the Business Planning process have been aligned to provide for better oversight and decision making and will be tabled together in the Legislative Assembly. By integrating the mains into the business planning process in this way, the GNWT can ensure that decision-making throughout the organization is guided by a clear understanding of the organization's overarching objectives, leading to better alignment and ultimately improved performance.

Restoring Balance: A Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly (Fiscal Strategy) will reduce expenditures and identify how financial resources can be better allocated to ensure public financial stability into the future. The fiscal sustainability exercise included an extensive review of all departmental expenditures this process involved analyzing budgetary allocations, expenditure patterns, revenue streams, and performance indicators relative to departmental mandate commitments. This process required a comprehensive understanding of both macroeconomic factors and department-specific dynamics to ensure that resources are allocated efficiently and effectively to meet the government's objectives while safeguarding its long-term financial health. Departments will be reporting on the specific measures they are undertaking in their business plans and will be reporting on progress annually.

This 4-year business plan has been designed to provide a 'strategic' focus to ensure that programs and services are meeting expectations and that budgeted expenditures for these programs and services are properly aligned with desired outcomes and the Mandate over the life of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

Departmental Business Plans

Each departmental business plan includes:

- **Departmental Overview** provides a high-level outline of what the department does, and a summary of its key activities (primary responsibilities of the department's divisions or units) and/or core business functions.
- **Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly** is a summary of the department's priorities and mandate commitments. This section includes performance measures – to enable departments to track and report progress on these key activities, risk and mitigation activities, departmental initiatives to support the GNWTs Fiscal Strategy and highlights departmental initiatives of particular interest outside of the work performed in support of the Department's Mandate.

- **Human Resources Initiatives** provides an opportunity for departments to highlight any human resource projects, success, initiatives or strategies they may have in place; also provides high level information on the department's Human Resource Plan.
- **Legislative Initiatives** summarizes the planned legislative initiatives or policy-related projects over the life of the 20th Assembly.

The Financial Management Board approves the Business Plans for each department and agency and refers these documents to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight. Each Minister then meets with Standing Committee to discuss in detail the planned activities, actions and resources required to implement the plan. Through Main Estimates, the Legislative Assembly ultimately approves the required human and financial resources for each department to implement the plan for the upcoming fiscal year.

Reporting Progress

Monitoring and reporting progress towards the objectives outlined in the 4-year business plan is an important component to the planning cycle. The 2024-25 to 2027-28 Business Plan has specific performance measures designed to track progress towards achieving departments' Mandate commitments. Reporting progress, and ultimately success in achieving these objectives, will be an important deliverable to the Members of the Legislative Assembly when reporting on the Mandate.

As required by the Planning and Accountability Framework, all departments will submit annual reports to Standing Committees on their progress toward the objectives outlined in the 4-year business plan and any changes to their efforts in achieving the objectives in the plan.

Annual reports will include, but not be limited to:

- updates on departments' legislative initiatives as highlighted in the 4-year Business Plan;
- progress reporting on the Mandate commitments identified in the 4-year Business Plan;
- any material changes that a department wishes to propose in the Main Estimates (for example, changes to a departments' organization chart or accounting structure);
- any new human resource initiatives that were not included in the 4-year Business Plan; and
- any new communication/consultation initiatives that might impact the completion of the objectives identified in the 4-year Business Plan.

Fiscal Context

The GNWT's over-arching fiscal goal is to protect programs and services, which includes the capital needed to deliver these programs, while ensuring sustainable debt levels. The Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Assembly focuses on restoring balance through adherence to the Fiscal Responsibility Policy.

The main objectives under the Fiscal Strategy are:

- increasing operating budget surpluses through a combination of new revenue generation and expenditure management by leveraging operating efficiencies;
- reducing the GNWT's short-term debt;
- realigning operating spending for health programs and services to make these programs sustainable;
- addressing the costs incurred by the GNWT for Northwest Territories Power Corporation and Marine Transport Services related to low water levels;
- allocating government spending appropriately to the priorities of the Northwest Territories' residents;
- ensuring the GNWT is achieving value for money in the delivery of its programs and services; and
- increasing fiscal capacity to ensure that the GNWT can continue to respond to expenditure shocks such as natural disasters and economic disruptions.

To achieve the overall Fiscal Strategy the following targets will be monitored and tracked:

- Short-term debt repayment by a minimum of \$150 million by March 31, 2028.
- Capital projects funded 100% from operating surpluses (the Fiscal Responsibility Policy requires a minimum of 50%).
- Annual supplementary reserves held to \$35 million;
 - Supplementary funding requests must be accompanied by evidence that the cost pressure has been mitigated by internal budget adjustments or temporary budget deferrals, and
 - No expansion to a department's existing programs and no new positions added without equal budget adjustments or temporary deferrals within the department's budget.
- Annual forced growth and new initiatives held to \$10 million.

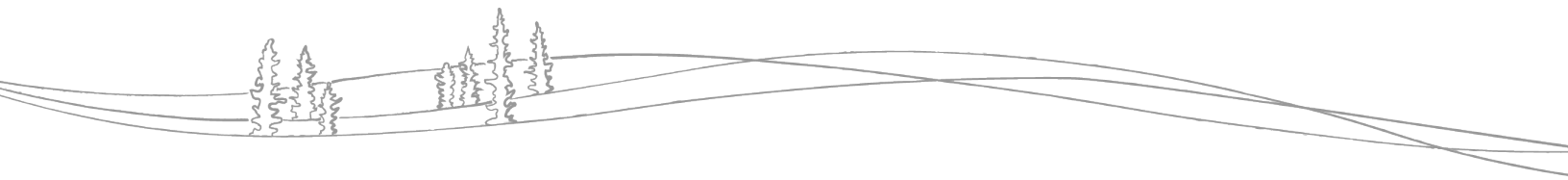
In conjunction with the Fiscal Strategy, the GNWT continued to support its Government Renewal Initiative (GRI). GRI intends to review its programs and services and allocate resources based on value and impact for residents. GRI was launched in October 2020 and is scheduled to wrap up in Spring of 2027. GRI will rely on value-driven budgeting principles to review GNWT programs and services department by department and allocate resources to areas that are most critical and valuable to residents. Value-based budgeting, also known as priority-based budgeting, is both the idea that underlies the building of the budget as well as the method. It is founded on the common sense idea that government financial resources should be allocated based on how effectively programs and services give value to residents.

Some of the key principles of this approach are to:

- Provide better transparency to territorial priorities, and how services and programs contribute to those priorities;
- Prioritize and allocate budgets at the program and service level;
- More directly question past spending patterns;
- Evaluate the true cost and benefit of programs and services as part of budget development, rather than only looking at incremental changes; and
- Build more accountability for results into funding decisions.

The continuation of a four-year business planning horizon will encourage a longer-term view of GNWT expenditures and better risk management. The annual reporting within the four year plans will help support strengthened mechanisms for program evaluation and make departments fully accountable for their performance to ensure that GNWT expenditures are effective and spending is done in an efficient manner – from the time the budget is approved to subsequent review and analysis. To inform this debate and in the interest of transparency, the GNWT has committed to conducting public discussions about the GNWT budget and to considering the findings when making future budgetary decisions.

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,
CULTURE AND EMPLOYMENT

2024-25 to 2027-28

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) provides residents of the Northwest Territories (NWT) with access to quality programs, services, and support to assist them in making informed and productive choices for themselves and their families regarding education, training, careers, employment and labour, child development, languages, culture and heritage. The Department is also responsible for assisting individuals to meet their basic financial needs.

ECE operates within a complex governance environment. Most of the Department's responsibilities fall into seven Key Activity areas (described below) shared among headquarters in Yellowknife, six regional Service Centres, and ten education bodies. ECE's strategic responsibility spans a broad range from early learning and child care to education, training and employment. Culture, heritage, and languages support and enrich this work. In each of the Department's Key Activities, ECE works with Indigenous Governments to ensure that programming reflects the unique cultures and values of the NWT, supports reconciliation, and honours the terms laid out in comprehensive land-claim and self-government agreements.

Activity	Business functions supported
Corporate Management	Guides the execution of directions from the Minister, Cabinet and Legislative Assembly, and provides strategic leadership, management and planning for the Department. This includes the development of broad policy, communications, and legislative initiatives; strategic financial planning and management, and corporate program support; oversight of approaches to evaluating programs, setting and monitoring performance targets; and corporate strategic planning.
Languages and Culture	Promotes and preserves NWT's unique cultures, languages and heritage for NWT residents and future generations. This includes the development, implementation, protection, and promotion of culture, heritage, and all 11 official languages in the NWT, as well as public libraries.
Early Learning	Provides direction, standards and supports for early learning and child care programs for children from birth to age 11. Through this key activity, the Department also provides support to the Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system, specifically in relation to the Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten programs.
Income Security	Supports a social safety network through the delivery of Income Security Programs. Income Security Programs, such as Income Assistance and the Senior Home Heating Subsidy, are a support and service network designed to assist NWT residents to bridge gaps between their ability to support themselves and their families, and to pursue their personal, educational and career goals.
Education	Guides the development and implementation of curriculum standards; development, implementation, and monitoring of Ministerial Directives for divisional education councils and authorities; teacher, principal and instructor certification; and the implementation of accountability mechanisms for education bodies. The new <i>Post-Secondary Education Act</i> creates a regulated recognition process whereby ECE ensures the effective governance and quality assurance of NWT post-secondary institutions and their programs.

Labour Development and Standards	Provides a variety of career, employment and labour market programs and services to ensure that NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and opportunities to participate fully as productive citizens in the Northern economy.
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Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found at Departments’ website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

ECE's programs, services and initiatives will support the 20th Legislative Assembly's Priorities in several ways. Improving access, quality, inclusion, and affordability of early learning and child care is a key focus for ECE and will support several of the 20th Legislative Assembly's Mandate Priorities. These include the priorities of fostering entrepreneurship, developing and increasing the northern workforce, providing health promotion and preventative care at all ages, and supporting community wellness.

Results from elementary and secondary school performance measures indicate improvements are needed throughout the Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) school system. Looking forward, ECE will focus on a renewed approach to school-based mental health and wellness programming to support the foundations of the Legislative Assembly's Mandate Priorities through a healthy, capable student population. As well, ECE will continue to implement a new JK-12 curriculum across all NWT schools.

A significant portion of NWT residents do not have enough schooling to meet the forecasted NWT job demand in the immediate to near future. Skills 4 Success (S4S) is the NWT's overarching labour market strategy and aims to support NWT residents to gain the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success. The NWT Post-Secondary Education Strategic Framework 2019-2029 aims to help NWT residents obtain a post-secondary education from institutions that are student-centred, accessible, high quality, relevant and accountable. Together with the *Post-Secondary Education Act*, newly in force, the combination of these initiatives will support the 20th Legislative Assembly's Mandate Priorities to help residents gain skills and education in the trades, and to develop and increase the northern workforce.

Providing a social safety net for those residents who are not able to work or have limited access to the labour force is paramount in combating poverty and providing security. ECE contributes to this social safety network through the delivery of Income Security Programs designed to assist NWT residents with supporting themselves and their families and pursuing personal, educational and career goals. ECE will launch the Income Assistance for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities program in the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Language and culture underpin all ECE's work. The Indigenous Languages and Education Secretariat (ILES) and the Francophone Affairs Secretariat (FAS) are in place to administer the NWT *Official Languages Act* and invest in the health and sustainability of the 11 NWT official languages. ECE works to protect NWT heritage resources by keeping an archive of government documents and items of historical significance; restricting the excavation of archaeological sites and removal of artifacts; and assisting communities to officially reclaim traditional place names. ECE will also continue to uphold its responsibility for safeguarding the permanent records of the GNWT under the *Archives Act*.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> .	Participate on the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples GNWT working group and engage on the future Action Plan.	Level of participation in working group and Action Plan development.	Ongoing participation in the working group meetings and identification of departmental action items into ECE business.
	Implement the NWT Indigenous Languages Action Plan to support Indigenous Languages in line with Articles 13, 14, and 15.	Progress made on the Indigenous Languages Action Plan, including successful implementation of planned activities, initiatives, and support for Indigenous Languages.	Completion of ECE targets as outlined in the Indigenous Languages Action Plan.
	Engage with Indigenous governments, through the NWT Council of Leaders Secretariat, and education partners, on additional customizations and modernizations to the <i>Education Act</i> to reflect the unique circumstances of the NWT.	Level of participation in the NWTCOLS working group and establishment of the approach for legislative development in coordination with Indigenous governments.	Ongoing participation in the working group meetings and development of intergovernmental legislative development process for social legislation.
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Participate in the GNWT Interdepartmental working group on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People Calls to Justice and implement ECE actions.	Progress made on measures contained in the GNWT’s <i>Changing the Relationship: The GNWT Action Plan in Response to the Call for Justice on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People (Action Plan)</i> .	Completion of ECE measures as outlined in the <i>Action Plan</i> , reported through the GNWT’s <i>Changing the Relationship: Annual Report</i> .

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	Together with EIA, work to advance Integrated Service Delivery, specifically through the Income Assistance program and connections to the GNWT's homelessness strategy.	TBD as the Integrated Service Delivery working groups are established and launched.	

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	In collaboration with GNWT partners and third parties, promote housing solutions for NWT educators and post secondary education students.	TBD in collaboration with GNWT partners responsible for housing solutions, and with third parties such as the NWT Teachers Association and Aurora College.	
Collaborate across departments and with partners to support vulnerable residents, prevent and reduce homelessness, and encourage self-sufficiency.	Launch new Income Assistance Programs for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities, and continue the Income Assistance program with enhancements, including an integrated services approach.	TBD in collaboration with GNWT partners responsible for supporting vulnerable residents and preventing and reducing homelessness.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities.	Conduct a review of existing ECE land reserves.	Completion of ECE land reserves review and potential surpluses identified.	Land reserves review completed and potential surplus identified by end of 2025-26 fiscal year.

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	Support the development of the post-secondary education landscape in the NWT through the implementation of the Post-Secondary Education Act.	Post-secondary institutions are accredited under the PSE Act and are reporting annually as per the PSE Accountability Framework.	All post-secondary institutions operating in the NWT are accredited under the Post-Secondary Education Act by the end of the 20th Legislative Assembly.
	Continue to implement the 2021-2025 Skills 4 Success Action Plan.	Number of students at ending PSE programs in the NWT.	Maintain or increase the number of students at ending PSE programs in the NWT, from 569 in 2021-2022.
		Number of SFA students at ending programming related to NWT occupations in demand.	Maintain or increase the number of SFA students at ending PSE programs related to occupations in demand from 1,288 in 2021-2022.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Offer professional development opportunities for early childhood educators.	Number and percentage of early childhood educators who participate annually.	Increase the number of early childhood educators who participate in professional development opportunities from 109 in 2022-2023.
	Continue to provide Early Learning and Child Care Scholarships.	Number of students accessing the scholarships.	Maintain or increase the number of students accessing the scholarships annually.
	Implement an early childhood educator certification process.	Percentage of early childhood educators who are certified.	All early childhood educators are certified by 2024-25.
	Increase the percentage of early childhood educators working in licensed early learning and child care programs who have relevant post-secondary education.	Percentage of educators working in licensed early learning and child care programs who have relevant post-secondary education.	Increase from baseline established in 2024.
	Increase the number of NWT residents accessing Student Financial Assistance (SFA).	Uptake in SFA grant and loan programs.	Increase in the number of students accessing SFA by 10% over the length of the 20th Legislative Assembly from 1262 in 2023-2024.
	Increase the availability of licensed child care spaces in the NWT to support NWT caregivers to participate in the workforce if they choose to do so.	Number of net new child care spaces.	75 net new child care spaces annually, for a total of 300 net new spaces by 2025-2026.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Increase the number of employed Income Assistance (IA) clients.	Uptake in the number of employed IA clients and the use of earned income exemptions.	Increase in the number of employed IA clients by 10% over the length of the 20th Legislative Assembly from 934 in 2023-2024.
	Support pathways to employment for NWT youth through the Career and Education Advisor (CEA) Program and Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP).	<p>Number of one-to-one career exploration opportunities and number of work experience connections established for students and youth.</p> <p>Number of high school students participating in the SNAP program as SNAP students.</p> <p>Number of SNAP students that register as apprentices (including as SNAP apprentices), and who go on to become certified journeypersons.</p>	<p>Increase (until 2025-2026 and then maintain) the number of students and youth who access CEAs from 830 students and youth, and 2250 encounters, in the 2022-2023 school year.</p> <p>Establish baseline of number of work experiences for students and youth.</p> <p>Maintain or increase the number of high school SNAP Student participants annually from 36 in the 2023-2024 fiscal year.</p> <p>Maintain or increase the number of SNAP students that register as apprentices annually from five in the 2023-2024 fiscal year and establish a baseline for those who go on to become certified journeypersons.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Provide for SNAP programming in every region.	Number of regions with SNAP participants.	Increase and maintain SNAP student participation in every region of the NWT, from four (4) regions in 2023-2024.
	Promote the delivery of laddering programs that lead to further education, by working in partnership with post-secondary education (PSE) providers to provide those programs.	Number of laddering programs and number of students in laddering programs.	Increase from 35 laddering programs and 313 students in 2021-2022, delivered through PSE providers.
	Support recruitment and retention of Indigenous Language Instructors.	Availability of Indigenous Language Instructors in JK-12 schools.	Increase the number of schools offering Indigenous language classes from 41 (84%) in 2023-23 school year to 47 in the 2027-28 school year.
	Provide communication, funding, and other supports to increase the number of apprentices and certified journeypersons.	Number of new apprentices and qualified journeypersons.	10% increase in number of apprentices and qualified journeypersons from December 2022 levels at the conclusion of the two-year extension (28 new apprentices and 32 newly certified journeypersons).
	Work with ITI and other GNWT partners to advance plans to transition the diamond mine workforce.	To be determined through working group with partners.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Provide pathways to employment and education to NWT residents through Labour Market Programs.	Level of uptake by NWT residents.	<p>Maintain or increase uptake in programs supported by the Labour Market Programs, including Labour Market Transfer Agreements and Small Community Employment Support (SCES) from the following results in 2022-23:</p> <p>188 clients (Skills Development and Self-Employment)</p> <p>71 employers (WS)</p> <p>nine projects (Job Creation partnership, Community Training partnership, and Strategic Workforce Initiative)</p> <p>459 jobs created in communities through SCES funding.</p>
	Improve accessibility of the Northwest Territories Nominee program (NTNP) streams.	To be determined based on collaboration with ITI.	
	Continue to promote immigration in the NWT through Northwest Territories Nominee program.	Number of approved nominees to the NWT.	200% increase in calendar year 2024 in number of approved nominees from 139 in calendar year 2023 to a cap of 300 annually in subsequent years.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Participate in the Giant Mine Remediation Project (GMRP) as a co-proponent with the federal government to ensure regulatory requirements are met.	Targets for GMRP socioeconomic key performance indicators are being met or exceeded, revised, and improved based on lessons learned.	GMRP employment targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous employment 25-35%• Northern employment 36%• Female employment 15-30%.
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable.	Continue working with GNWT Departments and the mining sector to ensure that socio-economic agreements for mining projects include clear requirements for northern and NWT hiring and training.	Number of northern and NWT residents hired and trained by mining projects in the NWT.	Annual increases in the number of northern and NWT residents hired and trained by mining projects in the NWT.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on health promotion and preventive care, and disease prevention across all age groups.	Implement school-based mental health and wellness programs and services that support mental health promotion and preventative intervention services to JK-12 students.	Number of JK-12 students have access to school-based mental health and wellness program that emphasize mental health promotion and preventative intervention services to JK-12 students.	Establish a baseline of number of JK-12 students supported by school-based mental health and wellness programs in the 2024-2025 school year.
Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.	Ensure NWT residents wanting to pursue health-related post-secondary and graduate studies are aware of the recent enhancements to the Student Financial Assistance (SFA) program.	Number of students receiving SFA funding for health-related post-secondary and graduate studies.	An annual increase in the number of students approved for SFA funding for health-related programs from 97 in 2023-2024.
	Continue to promote the NWT Nominee Program (NTNP) as a tool to attract internationally trained health and social service professionals to the NWT.	Number of health and social service positions supported by NTNP.	Increase in the number of health and social service positions supported by NTNP, from one in 2023.

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Implement the new Income Assistance for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities program and enhanced Income Assistance (IA) program with trauma-informed policies and procedures.	Number and type of relevant training opportunities provided to front line staff delivering all IA programs annually.	All front-line staff receive trauma-informed program orientation and training to deliver IA programs.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Continue to support education bodies in fulfilling the requirements of the Safe Schools Regulations, which include the requirement to develop emergency response plans and lockdown procedures and encourage education bodies to actively engage in community emergency plans, through regular review of Safe School Plans.	Number of Safe School Plans reviewed and accepted annually.	Three education body Safe School Plans are reviewed annually on a rotating schedule agreed to by ECE and education bodies.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Develop and implement updated ECE business continuity plans that reflect ECE's responsibilities under the NWT Emergency Plan and ensure delivery of critical ECE services in emergencies.	Fulfillment of ECE responsibilities identified in the NWT Emergency Plan.	All ECE responsibilities identified in the NWT Emergency Plan are fulfilled in emergencies.
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Implement actions to mitigate damage to heritage resources and archaeological artifacts as part of ECE commitments in the GNWT Climate Change Action Plan.	ECE commitments in GNWT Climate Change Action Plan.	Completion of ECE targets as outlined in the new GNWT Climate Change Action Plan.
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and environmental protection and monitoring.	Continue ECE participation in regulatory frameworks and emergency management plans to ensure that irreplaceable archaeological heritage is not destroyed.	Heritage resources are included in emergency planning.	Emergency and other mapping plans include mention of how to protect heritage resources.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The following key, high-level issues may have direct and substantial effects on ECE's ability to fulfil the GNWT's mandate commitments:

Labour market conditions

Labour market conditions are different between Yellowknife and most other NWT communities. In Yellowknife, labour shortages are common, whereas outside of Yellowknife, higher unemployment and skill mismatches are more prevalent. There is also a wide range of skills development, training and education needs in the NWT, requiring strategic approaches to the design and delivery of labour market and post-secondary programming, services and supports.

To mitigate these issues and risks, ECE designs and delivers a suite of labour market programs, services, and supports for individuals, employers, organizations, and communities. These are funded by bilateral federal-territorial agreements and guided by Skills 4 Success, the GNWT's overarching labour and skills development strategy. ECE programs, services, and supports include: financial supports to assist individuals in accessing post-secondary education and skills development training; wage subsidies to assist employers in hiring the workers they need to succeed; supports to access qualified foreign workers through the Northwest Territories Nominee Program (NTNP) when local workers are not available; financial supports to organizations for initiatives that provide work experience opportunities; and, funding to communities to create training and employment opportunities for their residents and support the development of Community Labour Market Development Plans.

Affordability, access, inclusion, and quality in early learning and child care

The early learning and child care (ELCC) sector faces challenges with sustainability and challenges in addressing early childhood developmental vulnerability.

To mitigate the issues and risks in early learning and child care, the ELCC Funding Programs Review (2021) identified that ECE should shift away from the at endance-based Early Childhood Program (ECP) operating subsidy. ECE is in the process of developing a certification process and a new funding approach for implementation in 2024-2025. Costs associated with these changes will be funded through territorial dollars as well as through the two federal ELCC agreements. Wage top ups, called the Retention Incentive, were introduced in October 2022, retroactive to April 1, 2022, to enhance wages for centre-based educators working directly with children. This was temporary transitional funding in advance of a new wage grid and funding approach.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

Upon the release of the strategy titled *Restoring Balance: A Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly* in February 2024, ECE moved quickly to assess the programs and services it provides with this stark reality in mind. ECE focused its attention on areas that would impact the least amount of NWT residents and businesses, especially the most vulnerable.

Some expected reductions will include transitioning many in-person training and conference sessions to virtual; reducing budgets in any area that has consistently underspent over the past three years; and discontinuing positions that are currently vacant or could be absorbed by existing staff and resources due to other reductions.

Over the next four years, ECE plans to review some of its programs for effectiveness and efficiencies such as Northern Distance Learning, Inclusive Schooling, the Territorial-Based Support Team, Literacy and Adult Basic Education programming, and a final review of the *Education Renewal and Innovation Framework*. The Department will also continue to work interdepartmentally to work towards streamlining programs and services.

The Department will continue to monitor and adjust this plan as fiscal realities unfold.

Departmental Highlights

Renewed NWT Education System Curriculum

ECE is transitioning to an adapted version of the British Columbia (BC) Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) curriculum and large-scale assessments for use in NWT schools over the term of the 20th Legislative Assembly. This decision is the result of extensive research, analysis, Indigenous Government consultation, and education partner engagement. BC's redesigned curriculum aims to personalize learning, making it more student-centered and flexible. Additionally, there is a focus on literacy and numeracy skills, as well as an emphasis on deep, active learning.

Indigenous Languages and Education Policy Implementation

NWT Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 - Indigenous Languages and Education Policy (ILE Policy) guides culture and language-based education. It ensures that schools actively implement the foundational curricula of *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit* as well as the Indigenous Languages and Education Handbook (ILE Handbook). The ILE Policy mandates that education bodies provide quality Indigenous language instruction and relevant culture-based school programs that welcome all students into learning environments that centre and promote the Indigenous worldviews, culture, and language.

Indigenous Language Service Standards for GNWT

The *Official Languages Act* requires that NWT residents have the right to access public services in official Indigenous languages. The first edition of the *Indigenous Languages Services Standards* is being developed to guide frontline service providers across government departments and institutions to better understand and meet these broad Indigenous language service delivery requirements. Through collaboration with Indigenous governments, language communities, and the public over the course of the 20th Legislative Assembly the GNWT is committed to improving service delivery in official Indigenous languages.

Inclusive Schooling Review

In 2016 the Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling was renewed with a focus on providing quality inclusive education to the diverse student population of the NWT. Its purpose was to ensure that schools in the NWT were implementing inclusive schooling as defined in the Directive and mandated by section 7(1) of the *Education Act* (1996).

An Inclusive Schooling Review will take place in the 20th Assembly to assess the extent to which NWT schools have met the Ministerial Directive's intended objectives and student needs. This project will provide recommendations for ensuring that schools are equipped to provide supports for all students, and ensuring that the legislation, policies and guidelines of the Ministerial Directive on Inclusive Schooling aligns with article 24 of the Convention of Human Rights for Persons with Disabilities.

Human Resource Initiatives

Foundational to the delivery of quality programs and services is a knowledgeable and professional workforce that is respectful of the cultural, political, and traditional history of the NWT. The challenge for the Department is to continue to attract and retain this calibre of workforce considering labour market challenges. The Department's Human Resources Implementation Plan (HRIP) ensures that ECE can maintain and build on the quality and capacity of its workforce through actions that attract, develop, and retain employees, in alignment with the GNWT's Human Resources Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (HRSP).

A comprehensive ECE onboarding program has been developed and implemented for all new employees, to promote a diverse and inclusive workplace, and support a strong and competent northern workforce. ECE's onboarding program emphasizes its commitment to diversity and inclusion, and a culture that promotes health safety, and wellness in the workplace.

As of February 2024, 95% of ECE employees have completed the Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellness training. Quarterly bulletins are also sent out to provide reminders, and promote health, safety, and wellness resources to all employees.

The Department continues to support training and development to ensure that employees are effective and efficient in the delivery of responsibilities and prepared for future opportunities. In 2022-23, ECE invested over \$134,000 in training for its employees; of which \$104,000 was invested in unionized employees. Transfer assignments also provide an opportunity for employees to gain experience in positions within and outside the Department, expand their knowledge base, and achieve career milestones. In 2022-23, ECE had a total of 67 transfer assignments.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Employment Standards Act</i>	<p>ECE is reviewing the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> and Regulations to bring the legislation in line with other Canadian jurisdictions’ minimum standards of work and to ensure protection for employees and flexibility for employers in the new post-pandemic realities of work and our unique northern labour market.</p> <p>Public and stakeholder engagement was completed in the spring of 2023 and a What We Heard Report was made public in March 2024. ECE has identified several prospective areas of the legislation for amendment.</p> <p>Prior to this review, the Act and Regulations had not been subject to a comprehensive review in more than a decade.</p>	2024-25 Q2	2026-27 Q1

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
2	<i>Heritage Resources Act</i>	<p>A new <i>Heritage Resources Act</i> is needed to replace the current legislative regime with a single statutory framework. The new heritage legislation would consolidate and expand on the existing <i>Historical Resources Act</i> and <i>Archaeological Sites Act</i> and regulations and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Critical enhancements to legislation for the protection and management of archaeological sites and artifacts.• New provisions to ensure the protection of burials and human skeletal remains found on the land (i.e., outside of designated community cemeteries).• The creation of legislation to regulate paleontological research and to protect paleontological sites and fossils. <p>The NWT is one of the only jurisdictions in Canada that lacks paleontological legislation. The creation of a Historic Places Program enables the Minister to designate and protect places of historic and cultural significance to the people of the NWT, including historic buildings, cultural landscapes, sacred sites, and other sites of significance.</p>	2025-26 Q1	2026-27 Q1

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
3	<i>Archives Act</i>	The <i>Archives Act</i> and Regulations will be amended to include specific archival standards regarding the preservation, storage, transfer and destruction of public records for government bodies to adhere to. The <i>Archives Act</i> requires the Territorial Archivist to adhere to archival standards so that records of ongoing value can be permanently preserved. Differing archival management practices across the GNWT jeopardize the long-term preservation and accessibility of critical records and present risks that records management practices are not meeting legal and national archival standards.	2025-26 Q1	2026-27 Q1
4	<i>Education Act</i>	ECE made amendments to the <i>Education Act</i> in the 19th Assembly and has committed, in the 20th Assembly and beyond, to further engagement with Indigenous governments and education partners on additional customizations and modernizations to the Act to reflect the unique circumstances of the NWT. A working group has been established through the NWT Council of Leaders Secretariat to establish the approach for legislative development in coordination with Indigenous governments. Longer-term discussions with Indigenous governments and education bodies will focus on the future of education system structure and governance.	2026-27 Q3	2027-28 Q3

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
5	<i>Polytechnic University Act</i>	As part of the transformation of Aurora College into a Polytechnic University, a legislative proposal will be drafted, upon the conclusion of an external quality assurance review, that will allow the Aurora College to transition from a College to a Polytechnic University.	2027-2028 Q1	TBD

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Regulations	<p>ECE is working with the Department of Justice to amend the ELCC Standards Regulations and ELCC Funding Regulations to support the introduction of a certification process for early childhood educators that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivize the professionalism of the sector, recognize Indigenous knowledge, and include all individuals employed by a centre-based program; • Result in a wage grid that sets a minimum wage that an individual employed by a centre-based program will be paid; and • Create a new funding mechanism for ELCC facilities. <p>New Regulations are anticipated to be ready for public review in June 2024 and come into force in July 2024.</p>	N/A
2	Academic Year and School At endance Regulations	<p>Amend the Academic Year and School At endance Regulations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the daily maximum hours of instruction for Grades 1 to 6 to be consistent with Grades 7 to 12; • Update language to reflect terminology changes made to the Education Act; and • Include a mechanism for changes to approved to school year calendars as needed if/when schools drop below the legislated minimum number of instructional hours. <p>The new regulations are anticipated to come into force in November 2024.</p>	N/A

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
3	Education Staff Regulations	<p>Amend the Education Staff Regulations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance information sharing between the NWT Teacher Registrar and provincial and territorial certification bodies; Replace “Aboriginal” with “Indigenous” where it appears; Standardize an evaluation model used by education bodies under newly established Educator Standards; Establish professional learning requirements connected to the renewal of NWT teaching certificates; Establish the minimum requirement for an Interim Professional Teaching Certificate to be a Bachelor of Education degree; Remove the Junior Kindergarten (JK) category of certification; and Streamline the process for receiving complaints and considering the suspension or cancellation of NWT teaching certificates. <p>The new regulations are anticipated to come into force in March 2025.</p>	N/A
4	Student Records Regulations	<p>Amend the Academic Year and School Attendance Regulations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> substitute references to Alberta provincial assessments with more general language; update the information Superintendents are required to provide to the Minister; update the regulations to permit information sharing in accordance with the <i>Education Act</i>; and update the regulations to permit the sending of student records by other secure methods. <p>The new regulations are anticipated to come into force in September 2024.</p>	N/A

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Indigenous Languages Service Standards	Under the <i>Official Languages Act</i> , NWT residents have the right to access public services in official Indigenous languages. The first edition of the <i>Indigenous Languages Services Standards</i> is being developed to guide frontline service providers across government departments and institutions to better understand and meet these broad Indigenous language service delivery requirements. The 20 th Legislative Assembly is committed to achieving their priorities through reconciliation, good governance, and collaboration. Through collaboration with Indigenous governments, language communities, and the public the GNWT is committed to improving service delivery in official Indigenous languages.	N/A
2	Corporate Culture and Heritage Policy Review	ECE will update cabinet-approved policies to ensure they reflect modern practices and mandates. Policy updates will be brought to Cabinet for approval. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71.02 NWT Arts Council (last update 2017) • 71.05 Heritage Services (last update 1997) • 71.07 Collections Disposal (last update 1997) • 71.09 Geographical and Community Names (last update 1997) 	N/A

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

2024-25 to 2027-28

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The mandate of the Minister and Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) is to manage land, water, air, wildlife and forests, and lead and coordinate the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) in understanding and adapting to a changing climate. This includes promoting, planning, and supporting the wise and sustainable use of natural resources, and protecting, restoring, and stewarding the environment for the social and economic benefit of all Northwest Territories (NWT) residents, while maintaining ecosystem health.

ECC operates within a complex governance environment. Responsibility for ECC's six key activity areas is shared among headquarters in Yellowknife and regional offices in five administrative regions, including headquarters functions for forest management activities located in Hay River, and forest fire management and compliance and officer services located in Fort Smith.

Activity	Business functions supported
Corporate Management	Provides leadership, planning, financial oversight and overall management of the Department's divisions and regions.
Environmental Management, Monitoring and Climate Change	Responsible for stewardship, management and monitoring of the environment, particularly NWT air and water. Works to prevent or reduce the impact of human activities on the natural environment to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Leads a consistent, government-wide approach to mitigating and addressing the impacts of climate change.
Policy and Strategic Planning	Develops broad policy, communication strategies, public education initiatives, diversity and inclusion efforts, legislative initiatives, and corporate-level strategic planning. Coordinates the GNWT's input and decision-making relating to land use planning. Also responsible for conservation planning and sustainable livelihoods.
Regional Operations	Divided between Land and Water (L&W) and Wildlife and Forest Management (WFM) sections in each of the five regions.
Regulatory Authorizations and Securities	Provides advice, approvals and recommendations on permits, licenses and other dispositions that relate to land, water, pesticides, wildlife, and forests. Participates in and coordinates the GNWT's input into environmental assessments. Ensures the government is fully secured against environmental liability.
Wildlife and Forestry Management	Responsible for the stewardship and management of wildlife, wildlife habitat and NWT's forests, including wildfire management. Provides department-wide support on activities related to licensing, compliance and enforcement, officer and employee training, and the Department's occupational health and safety program.
Detailed descriptions of the Department's programs and services can be found on the Department's website.	

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department's key activity areas work closely with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, other governments, land and water boards, land use planning boards, and renewable resources boards to ensure programming reflects the values of NWT residents, communities and regions.

Programs are delivered in a way that ensures the implementation of the co-management system set out in NWT land, resource, and self-government agreements for land, water, wildlife and forests as well as co-management approaches laid out in land, water, protected areas, wildlife, species at risk, and forest legislation.

As the Department progresses with its work on the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly, reconciliation remains a central focus. We are committed to prioritizing the well-being and prosperity of all residents through good governance and collaboration with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, all communities and the public.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	Support the co-development of the UNDRIP Action Plan that is being led by the Department of Executive Indigenous Affairs. Support the implementation of the Action Plan.	# of initiatives and/or # of activities identified in the Action Plan that are in the planning, under-development, and implementing stage.	New measure. Work is underway.
Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage the federal government to advance issues of shared interest.	Participate in the: Intergovernmental Council Secretariat (IGCS); NWT Council of Leaders; F/P/T forums.	# of land and natural resources policy/legislative initiatives brought to the IGCS. # of ECC briefings provided to the NWT Council of Leaders. # and type of F/P/T working groups that advance shared interest with Indigenous governments.	Partner and engage with all levels of government to jointly advance shared interest.
Work with negotiation partners to advance, set le and implement land claim, self-government and other Indigenous rights agreements.	Work collaboratively to support EIA in advancing progress on Indigenous rights agreements, including aspects regarding management of land and natural resources.	# and % of negotiation processes where ECC supports EIA.	Certainty and consistency on land and natural resources topics in Aboriginal rights agreements.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Continue to work collaboratively with planning partners to advance land use planning in regions without plans and to complete the review of amendment applications for Regional Plans that are in place.	% of annual funding allocation provided to Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to support planning and pre-planning work.	Annual funding allocation fully expended to support identified priorities.
		% of amendment applications received from planning boards being in review.	GNWT has initiated review of all of amendment applications received.
	Collaborate with partners to implement the GNWT Healthy Land Healthy People (HLHP) conservation work plan to conduct conservation planning for land use certainty.	Implement HLHP with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations and other partners.	Progress with actions in HLHP.
		# of approved territorial protected area (TPA) management plans.	All TPAs have an approved management plan.
Explore options to support Economic Reconciliation through more flexible and streamlined funding arrangements with Indigenous governments.	Implement new funding formula for local organizations under the Community Harvester Assistance Program (CHAP).	# of communities receiving funding.	Maintain # of communities funded.
	Continue to provide funding for locally driven projects under the On the Land Collaborative (OTLC).	Total value of funding provided for OTLC projects.	Maintain funding provided to OTLC.
	Provide support to harvesters impacted by floods and fires.	# of applicants supported each year.	Ensure all applications for major disasters are reviewed in collaboration with a committee of Indigenous community representatives.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Continue to implement the GNWT's Changing the Relationship – Action Plan: Calls to Action for Justice on Culture and Language.	# of ECC Action Plan Calls to Action for Justice on Culture and Language commitments completed, renewed, and ongoing.	All ECC's action items are completed and/or renewed.
	Continues to implement the GNWT's Changing the Relationship – Action Plan: Calls to Action for Justice on Human Security.	# of ECC Action Plan Calls to Action for Justice on Human Security commitments completed, renewed, and ongoing.	

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	Development of common or integrated programming for the sharing of information across departments to reduce administrative burdens and benefit public clients.	# of identified common or integrated program opportunities fulfilled in accordance with ATIPP Act requirements.	All identified programs developed as per established timelines.
Implement approaches to design programs and services in ways that promote and support the self-reliance and resiliency of residents.	Continue to deliver trapper training workshops to support participation in the traditional economy.	# of courses and individuals participating in trapper training programs.	Maintain # of courses and participants over time.
	Continue to deliver hunter education program to give new hunters the knowledge to hunt safely and responsibly.	# of courses and individuals completing the online hunter education program.	Maintain # of courses and participants over time.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	Complete the optimization phase of the Lands and ENR merger to increase efficiency, performance, and effectiveness regarding priority areas:	# of cross appointed enforcement officers under land and water legislation.	The former Departments of Lands and ENR have successfully merged, and programs and services are improved and streamlined.
	Land and Water Inspections;	Update the Contaminated Sites workplan including leads.	
	Land and Water Inspections; Contaminated Sites Management; Security Management; Conservation and Land Use Planning.	Combine land- and water-based security administration and management. Strengthen linkages between land use planning and conservation initiatives.	
	Continued program review and optimization efforts as part of the second phase of optimization.	# of actions identified and implemented and via ongoing work.	Identify gaps and opportunities and ensure the new department delivers mandate as per Establishment Policy.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the Government of Northwest Territories through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of residents and communities.	Continue to pursue the Fiscal Strategy to seek opportunities for cost savings and revenue generation.	Cost savings recirculated into other budget items. Revenue generated by Fiscal Strategy. # of new or improved programs or services created with resource efficiencies from Fiscal Strategy.	Departmental decisions are fiscally responsible and sustainable.
	Conduct program reviews and evaluations, and carryout ECC's commitments under the Government Renewal Initiative (GRI) and the GNWT Program Evaluation Policy.	# of program reviews, evaluations, and performance management plans completed. # of GRI program designs and assessments completed. A program evaluation schedule is developed and maintained.	Obligations under the GRI and Program Evaluation Policy are met. An established program evaluation schedule is developed and implemented to continually inform evidenced-based decisions.
	Empower the public service by ensuring they are provided the flexibility to deliver programs and implement policies in ways that best serve residents.	Continue to promote innovation and flexibility in delivering Sustainable Livelihoods funding for local programming to best meet the needs of residents.	# of communities, organizations, or individuals receiving funding under the Take A Kid Trapping, Take a Family on the Land, CHAP, and the On The Land Collaborative programs.
			Maintain or increase the # of communities, organizations, or individuals supported.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Participate fully in the integrated resource management regime in the NWT for land and natural resources.	<p># of processes where information and advice was shared with integrated resource management partners for land and water, and with co-management partners for wildlife, forests and protected areas.</p> <p># of meetings with local community and Indigenous leaders to review wildfire management and Community Wildfire Protection Plans.</p> <p># of files posted to online public portals (Mackenzie Data Stream, NWT Discovery Portal, Climate Change Library, Protected Areas Registry).</p>	Meaningful participation by ECC experts in co-management processes to support sound decision making.
	Provide access to data and information collected by ECC via website, social media, data portals, reports, etc.	<p># of databases, portals, and reports available to the public.</p> <p># of public service announcements issued by ECC.</p>	Sharing information with residents about their environment and important events that could affect their lives.
	Incorporate public feedback on ECC programs and policies.	# of public engagements.	Feedback from public engagement is incorporated into ECC's programs and policies.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Continue meetings and information sharing activities with Indigenous Steering Committees involving our Indigenous partners throughout the year.	# and type of Indigenous Steering Committee meetings.	ECC meets and shares information with Indigenous partners on the Water Strategy, NWT CIMP, NWT Environmental Audit, NWT Climate Change Council and the Youth Climate Change Council.
	Finalize the Thaidene Nënë and Tuyeta Management Plans with co-management partners.	Complete Thaidene Nene and Tuyeta management plans.	Direct involvement of Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations in co-management processes for protected areas. Both management plans completed by end of 2028.
	Continue to work collaboratively with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to develop an approach to traditional use cabins on public land.	Progress made on a new approach to traditional use cabins on public lands.	A new approach has been developed for traditional use cabins on public lands.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities.	Continue to deliver a clear and transparent process for land/land tenure for housing projects to support requests that will address housing related land tenure issues.	# of land tenure applications processed for residential purposes from community governments, Indigenous governments, Housing NWT, and private sector.	All land tenure requests for housing have been processed (e.g., issued, denied, or are in consultation & engagement processes).

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	Promote the creation of new conservation-related local employment opportunities in collaboration with Indigenous governments associated with both established and candidate protected areas.	# of community members employed in the conservation economy from communities near protected and conserved areas.	Full employment staffed as per the establishment agreements in protected and conservation areas.
	Increase community capacity, and train and hire residents as part of ECC programs.	# of residents hired as wildfire management personnel by community/region.	Fill all wildfire positions.
		# of residents hired by Community Based Monitoring monitors by community/region.	Increase community capacity for monitoring programs.
		# of projects that support community capacity building by residents hired to support CIMP.	Provide jobs to support the local economy.
		# of residents hired in the forest industry by community/region.	
		# of jobs created through recycling depots and processing centres.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable.	Promote sustainable development of resources via efficient and timely regulatory review and environmental assessment (EA) processes and decision making.	<p># and % of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Type A water licence reviews participated in,• Type A water licences approved within legislated timelines. <p>Environmental liabilities are estimated and provided as part of regulatory reviews.</p> <p>EA decisions completed within legislated timelines.</p> <p>EAs and regulatory processes that were coordinated by ECC.</p> <p>Regulatory and EA process improvement initiatives participated in.</p> <p># and % renewable resources board recommendations considered or implemented for wildlife and forestry.</p>	<p>ECC divisions participate in all EA and regulatory processes and initiatives relevant to ECC's mandate including providing advice and/or security estimates to Land and Water Boards as part of regulatory application and review processes.</p> <p>All recommendations are addressed.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Complete and implement Wildlife Management and Monitoring Plans (WMMPs) and caribou range plans, to support responsible development.	# and % of WMMPs reviewed and approved.	Review and make decisions on all WMMPs.
		# and % of boreal caribou range plans completed or in progress.	Southern NWT, Gwich'in, Inuvialuit, Sahtu and Wek'èezhìi range plans are completed.
		# and % of EAs and regulatory processes where wildlife input and advice are provided.	Input or advice given on EA and regulator processes with wildlife-related issues.
			Guidelines for mobile caribou conservation measures, and offsetting and compensatory mechanisms for caribou are finalized.
		# of wildlife harvest monitoring or reporting programs implemented by co-management partners.	Results of at least two co-management led harvest reporting programs are shared with ECC.
	Implement the Interim Resources Management Assistance (IRMA) Program.	# of applications and \$ provided to Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations, and % of available IRMA funding that has been allocated.	Maximum allocation of IRMA funding to support Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations participation in land and resource activities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support projects looking into cumulative impacts of development on water, caribou and fish under NWT CIMP.	# of projects funded by NWT CIMP. # of projects that can contribute to a resource management decision and/or address a community concern.	CIMP funded projects contribute to resource management decisions or address community concerns.
	Facilitate the NWT Environmental Audit (in 2025) to assess the quality of the environment and the effectiveness of environmental management in the Mackenzie Valley.	The 2025 NWT Environmental Audit is completed. # of 2025 Audit recommendations are actioned as appropriate.	2025 Audit recommendations are addressed.
	Continue to collect water quality monitoring data as baseline information for decision-making.	# of water quality samples obtained.	All GNWT water quality monitoring network stations sampled.
	Continue to collect air quality data as baseline information for decision-making.	# of air quality samples obtained.	Real time air quality samples obtained at all five sampling stations.
Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks.	Complete baseline surveys and monitoring to support the EA of the Lockhart All-Season Road Project (with support from the Department of Infrastructure).	# of surveys, monitoring programs and or reports completed for wildlife and wildlife habitat.	Complete baseline surveys and monitoring, and reporting.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Support forest industry development through commercial forestry activities and personal harvesting for home heating.	# of contracts and/or contribution agreements established to support forest industry development.	Maintain or increase the # of contracts and/or contribution agreements.
	Support a sustainable outfitting industry, the traditional economy and the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur (GMVF) program.	# of outfitting licences issued. # of furs sold and contribution \$ provided to trappers.	Outfitter licences issued without delay. Support to the GMVF is maintained or increased.
	Facilitate collaboration both within the GNWT and partnerships with other organizations, such as universities.	# of collaborations used to address identified GNWT research priorities and knowledge gaps.	Updated NWT Knowledge Agenda is publicly released.
	Monitor ungulate species critical to country food security (barren-ground caribou, moose, wood bison and muskox).	# of surveys completed by region and species or herd. # of collars deployed on barren-ground caribou and boreal caribou.	Calving ground surveys and composition surveys for each barren-ground caribou herd conducted a minimum of once every three years. Maintain 70 collars on Bathurst and Bluenose-East caribou. Collar other herds and boreal caribou as per monitoring plans.
Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.	Support communities through individual parcel transfers and bulk land transfer processes to access public land for community expansion and economic potential.	# of individual parcels requested and transferred. # of bulk land transfers requested and in progress or completed.	Initiate all processes for land transfers to communities for residential and economic opportunities.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on health promotion and preventative care, and disease prevention across all age groups.	Work with the Department of Health and Social Services (HSS) to support early detection of infections and diseases in community wastewater.	# of wastewater sampling reports.	Monthly online reporting of wastewater samples for COVID19, Influenza A, Influence B and RSV.
	Conduct testing of community drinking water at Taiga Environmental Laboratory and continue air monitoring and long-term water quality and quantity monitoring across the NWT.	# of community drinking water samples analyzed.	Support HSS requirement for safe drinking water in communities and to support HSS advisories.
		# of purple air sensors across the NWT with real-time data available.	Long-term water-related data continues to inform understanding of climate change impacts.
		# water quality and hydrometric sites monitored.	12 Water Monitoring Bulletins published annually.
		# Water Monitoring Bulletins published.	
	Reduce the impact of wildlife human interactions and diseases in wildlife that affect the health of residents and domestic animals (e.g., anthrax, rabies, brucellosis, tuberculosis, parasites, food-borne pathogens).	# and type of wildlife public educational programs and initiatives.	Programs delivered as needed.
		# of wildlife health monitoring programs, investigations, and outbreak responses.	Investigations conducted as required.

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Continue to implement departmental training, directives and action plans to support cultural sensitivity and inclusivity to better serve the public in the delivery of departmental programs.	<p># and type of departmental training sessions delivered each fiscal year.</p> <p># of hiring committees with Indigenous representation.</p> <p># of job descriptions updated each fiscal year for a consistent approach to removing systemic barriers and including cultural competencies.</p>	Department that is representative of the population it serves while delivering culturally sensitive and inclusive programs.
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Support and provide sustainable livelihoods activities, partnerships and programming to help access to country foods and for residents to be on the land.	<p>\$ amount into Community Harvesters Assistance Program (CHAP).</p> <p># of projects supported by the On the Land Collaborative.</p> <p># and \$ for sustainable livelihood activities and programming.</p> <p># of hunter education certificate completions.</p> <p># of secondary schools provided hunter education curriculum.</p> <p># of residents accessing trapper training programs per year.</p>	<p>Maintain or increase the # and \$ amount.</p> <p>Maintain or increase the # and \$ amount of programs prescribed.</p> <p>Maintain or increase funding by activity/program.</p> <p>Maintain #/year.</p> <p>All eleven NWT High Schools.</p> <p>200 participants/year.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support development and implementation of Indigenous-led guardian programs.	# of participating communities or programs to support conservation.	Maintain or increase the # of participating communities or programs.
	Continue to include health and wellness as a research priority within the Knowledge Agenda.	# of health-related research items.	Advance health and wellness research for all NWT residents.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Implement the recommendations from the independent external After-Action Review of the 2023 wildfire season.	# of After-Action Review recommendations addressed.	All recommendations are addressed.
	Support communities through advice on updating community wildfire protection plans for all 29 forested communities in the NWT.	# and % of community wildfire plans reviewed/updated.	Community wildfire plans are updated.
	Support FireSmart activities to ensure residents know how to prevent and mitigate wildfire effects.	# and type of FireSmart activities by region/community.	Residents have the tools and knowledge to protect their homes and communities.
	Coordinate and provide wildfire emergency response activities.	# of fires reported. # of fires assessed. # and % of fires assessed that require actioning. # and % of fires actioned.	People, communities, and values at risk are protected from wildfires.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Utilize NWT resources (people, businesses) for the wildfire response and management.	# of aircraft contracts administered.	Maintain or increase # of aircraft contracts administered to support wildfire management needs across the NWT.
		# of Indigenous company contract fire crews.	Fully utilize services of Indigenous company contract fire crews.
		# of extra fire fighters hired.	Fulfill the demand for extra fire fighters to support local firefighting demands.
	Continue to provide relevant ECC staff with appropriate training to respond to emergency management events.	# of officer training and in-service events for spills, floods, fires, wildlife-human encounters, anthrax, etc.	All regulatory/regional departmental staff are equipped to manage emergency responses.
		# of firefighters and type of training by region.	
		# of officer mentor/mentee pairings.	
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Engage with the NWT Climate Change Council to provide a forum for information sharing and collaboration to understand, inform and advance climate change action.	# of council recommendations addressed and/or actioned.	All recommendations were addressed and/or actioned.
	Continue implementation of the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and associated action plans.	Complete the review of the 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan. Complete the 2025-29 Climate Change Action Plan, and start implementation.	Review of 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan is completed. New action plan is completed, and actions are initiated.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.	Work with other divisions and departments to develop and compile community hazard information, such as flood maps and geo surficial data, for all NWT communities to inform emergency management and planning, and land administration processes.	# of communities with updated hazard information.	All communities have updated hazard information.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.	Continue to collaborate with Indigenous Governments on the Respectful Harvesters initiative.	# of joint public communication messages with Indigenous governments to promote respectful harvesting practices.	Increase public awareness of respectful harvesting practices.
		Reporting on the # of investigations into illegal harvesting incidents related to poor harvesting practices.	# of investigations into illegal harvesting related to poor harvesting practices will be reduced.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The following section highlights potential barriers and challenges to ECC fulfilling the GNWT's mandate commitments. While some challenges may be beyond the department's control, this section will focus on five key issues: collaboration and good governance, land administration, climate change, wildfire prevention, and land use planning. Each subsection will highlight mitigation activities to effectively address these challenges.

Collaboration and Good Governance

Improving relationships and enhancing coordination and communications with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations related to regulatory and environmental assessment is a priority. Collaboration with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to improve regulatory and assessment processes must also involve the federal government to be successful.

Land Administration

In order to transfer land to communities, community plans, bylaws and surveys are required which can be an obstacle. Additional uncertainties exist in unsettled regions regarding land selection related to Aboriginal rights negotiations and the potential for extended consultation timelines which can delay decision-making. Further challenges include competing land administration priorities (i.e. fire/flood impacted clients vs general applicants) and capacity challenges.

To address these challenges, ECC will continue efforts to bring the *Public Land Act* into force through finalization of regulations, a crucial step to address concerns over the existing land management regime and utilize land as a critical asset across sectors and stakeholders in the Northwest Territories. Collaboration with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations will be critical in addressing concerns and issues including potential overlap and duplication.

Climate Change

As a jurisdiction at the forefront of climate change, the GNWT continues to prioritize and fund monitoring, adaptation and mitigation activities. However, given the territory's cold, remote location and major knowledge and infrastructure gaps, there are a significant number of key actions that will require funding to address. The GNWT continues to work with Indigenous and community government partners to prioritize necessary actions and to seek the funding that is needed to address these actions from the federal government and other funding sources.

Wildfire Prevention

Changes to the frequency, duration and intensity of wildfires associated with climate change have implications for how wildfire management agencies respond and ensure surge capacity is available when needed. Proactive measures are crucial to adapt to the evolving wildfire environment and reassure the

public that we are taking steps necessary to keep residents safe. Protecting communities and individual properties safe from wildfire is a shared responsibility, and ECC is working to promote increased uptake of FireSmart activities and other mitigation measures by communities and individuals.

Land Use Planning

Regional land use planning needs to consider and balance a range of varied interests, goals and legislated requirements. Land use planning is a shared responsibility among the GNWT, Indigenous Governments and the Government of Canada. Collaboration and partnerships are essential to effective planning. Working towards achieving an appropriate balance of interests can also be challenging as the planning work occurs concurrently with the advancement of other, sometimes competing, initiatives.

ECC will continue to provide contribution funding to Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations that do not have other base land use planning funding (to support capacity building and their pre-planning activities).

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department is committed to contributing to the GNWT's fiscal strategy for the 20th Assembly. ECC has put forward a number of items for reduction in 2024-25 and will continue to seek additional costs savings and revenue increases, including fee increases and additional funding, to support the fiscal strategy of the 20th Assembly. ECC will also leverage existing resources to address forced growth pressures, except in fire suppression, where a large supplementary appropriation is usually required.

As part of the two-phase amalgamation and optimization process for the new Department of Environment and Climate Change, efforts to ensure fiscal sustainability continue. The Department is looking for other cost-saving measures such as improving telecommunications, travel efficiency, more online meetings, and seeking more efficient lease spaces in the regions. The optimization process is ongoing, and we are using evidence-based decisions to optimize organizational efficiency.

Departmental Highlights

Optimization

The merger of the former Department of Lands and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources aims to improve and streamline programs and services. The ongoing optimization phase, the second phase of the merger, focuses on improving departmental teamwork, productivity, and resource management to efficiently delivery of programs and services to the public. The Department hired a staff member to focus on coordination of the second phase, which is expected to conclude by the fourth quarter of 2024-25. ECC will report on the outcomes of the optimization phase.

Approach to Traditional-use Cabins

The Department is committed to advancing collaborative work with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations to develop an approach for the administration and management of traditional use cabins on public land.

This approach will be informed by engagement with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations. Through this work, the GNWT expects to establish long-term policies regarding the administration and management of traditional use cabins and traditional use camps and cabins that meet the interests of both the GNWT and Indigenous governments.

Conservation and Recovery of Barren-ground and Boreal Caribou

Barren-ground Caribou

Barren-ground caribou are a shared resource, managed through the NWT's well-established wildlife co-management system. Co-management boards established under lands, resources and self-government agreements, as well as a number of herd-specific caribou management boards, are involved in making decisions and/or recommendations with respect to the management, conservation and recovery of barren-ground caribou. Other co-management processes have also been established to provide direction and advice to governments on the management of human activities with respect to caribou herds and their habitat.

The GNWT works closely with Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations, renewable resources boards and other co-management partners and neighbouring jurisdictions to support barren-ground caribou management and conservation.

A Recovery Strategy for Barren-ground Caribou in the NWT was released in 2020 to fulfill requirements under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* and provides overall guidance on barren-ground caribou recovery in the NWT. There are a number of other collaboratively developed plans and documents that guide various aspects of barren-ground caribou management and conservation in the NWT.

Boreal Caribou

Boreal caribou, or woodland caribou, were listed as a Threatened species under the federal Species at Risk Act (SARA) in 2003 and under the *Species at Risk (NWT) Act* in 2014.

The GNWT completed a Framework for Boreal Caribou Range Planning, which lays out a common approach and provides guidance to the GNWT and its Indigenous co-management partners for developing five regional range plans across the NWT by 2027.

Caribou are central to the way of life of Indigenous peoples in the NWT and have sustained individuals, communities, and cultures for many generations. The current caribou declines are a cause of significant concern for long-term species conservation and the social, cultural, and food security needs of northerners, particularly Indigenous peoples.

ECC is committed to continuing to work collaboratively with co-management partners to ensure that boreal caribou and barren-ground caribou populations are healthy and can support sustainable harvest. For boreal caribou, a new Section 11 agreement is being negotiated with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to continue collaborative efforts to develop and implement five regional boreal caribou range plans across the NWT to meet critical habitat requirements under federal legislation.

For barren-ground caribou, ECC will continue to work with our co-management partners to implement collaboratively developed barren-ground caribou management plans to support the conservation and recovery of herds which have undergone significant declines. It is expected that a decision on the federal listing of barren-ground caribou will be made soon and, if listed, will require collaborative discussions on development of a federal recovery strategy.

Environmental Stewardship and Management

The GNWT has the responsibility to ensure the use of the air, land and water does not harm the ecosystems on which people, plants and animals depend, while also ensuring that broader public needs are also met. Residents have raised, and continue to raise, concerns regarding air, land, water, forest and wildlife management, potential impacts of oil sands development, potential resource development impacts and climate change (including the intensity of forest fires and flooding).

To effectively address the issues and challenges at hand, it is important for the Department to continue to work in close collaboration with Indigenous governments and Indigenous organizations. This will enable the co-management system to be supported and all types of knowledge - local, Indigenous, and scientific - to be incorporated in decisions. Legislative amendments to land and natural resources will continue to be developed through the Intergovernmental Secretariat Council Legislative Development Protocol.

Environmental stewardship and management activities include Implementing the Northwest Territories Waste Resource Management Strategy and Implementation Plan, developing and implementing the next

five-year NWT Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program Action Plan, and implementing Healthy Land, Healthy People Work Plan: GNWT priorities for the NWT Conservation Network (2023-2028) as well as:

- Continuing to collaboratively implement the NWT Water Stewardship Strategy Action Plan 2021-2025 with water partners, work together to assess and develop an updated action plan for 2026-2030 in collaboration with the Water Strategy Indigenous Steering Committee and water partners;
- Continuing to negotiate towards the completion of transboundary water management agreements with Saskatchewan and Nunavut; and
- Continuing to implement transboundary water management agreements with Alberta, British Columbia and Yukon.

Human Resource Initiatives

Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

In 2023-2024, ECC implemented an Indigenous Hiring and Development Directive and Educational Supports Directive to ensure transparency and accountability in its application of the Affirmative Action Policy. In line with the Indigenous Hiring and Development Directive, the Department is creating an ECC Indigenous Hiring Committee with a goal of having an Indigenous representative for every hiring competition.

In 2023-2024, the ECC Diversity and Inclusion team launched a series of initiatives that include podcasts and workshops. The podcast touched on themes such as Indigenous languages revitalization, Black history, Pride and the 2SLGBTQQIA community, decolonization, privilege, disability awareness, agism, Truth and Reconciliation, women's history, and neurodivergence in the workplace. The workshops focused on developing and implementing Regional/Divisional Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Environmental Protection Act</i>	Amendments to the Environmental Protection Act (2017) will bring it in line with best practices, gain equivalency under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, eliminate perceived or existing overlap with other legislation, and provide regulatory clarity and consistency.	TBD	TBD
2	<i>Waters Act</i>	The provisions of the Waters Act (2016) and its associated regulations have remained substantially the same since its enactment in 1992. Potential amendments include changes to modernize the Act, fill gaps, eliminate overlap with other legislation, provide regulatory efficiencies and certainty, and create consistency with other NWT legislation and agreements entered by the GNWT.	TBD	TBD

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	<i>Forest Act</i> Regulations	Regulations are required to bring the <i>Forest Act</i> into force, passed by the 19 th Legislative Assembly. The Intergovernmental Council (IGC) will participate under the IGC Legislative Development Protocol.	Begin 2024 Q3 Completion TBD
2	<i>Public Land Act</i> Regulations	Regulations are required to bring the <i>Public Land Act</i> into force, passed by the 18 th Legislative Assembly. There are nine existing regulations being reviewed and new regulations being developed dealing with public land grants and dispositions, quarry dispositions, and land use permitting in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The IGC is participating under the IGC Legislative Development Protocol.	Underway Completion 2024 Q4
3	<i>Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Act</i> Regulations	The Beverage Container regulations, the Single-use Retail Bag regulations, and the Electronics Recycling regulations must be amended to ensure alignment with the <i>Waste Reduction and Resource Recovery Act</i> , passed by the 19 th Legislative Assembly. Amendments to the Beverage Container regulations and Electronics Recycling regulations will also expand the system of licensing to include an option for selecting operators using a competitive process. Regulations are also required to meet ECC's commitment under the Waste Resource Management Strategy to implement 3-5 waste reduction or diversion programs by 2028.	Begin TBD Completion 2028
4	Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area Regulations	The GNWT has committed to develop more fulsome regulations under the <i>Protected Areas Act</i> for Thaidene Nënë Territorial Protected Area consistent with Establishment Agreements between the GNWT and Łutselk'e Dene First Nation, Deninu K'ue First Nation and Northwest Territory Métis Nation. The IGC is participating under the IGC Legislative Development Protocol.	Underway Completion TBD
5	<i>Wildlife Act</i> Regulations	Wildlife regulations are amended periodically and regularly based on emerging conservation goals, public health, or public safety reasons, or upon recommendations from processes following the settled land claim agreements.	Ongoing
6	<i>Waters Act</i> Regulations	Amendment to regulations under the <i>Waters Act</i> to update and modernize regulations, eliminate overlaps, provide regulatory clarity. Timing of this regulatory initiative is contingent on the progress of the <i>Waters Act</i> legislative initiative. The IGC will be invited to participate under the IGC Legislative Development Protocol.	Begin TBD

7	<i>Reindeer Act</i> Regulation	The provisions of the <i>Reindeer Act</i> (2014) and its regulation, inherited from the Government of Canada through Devolution, have remained substantially the same since 2006. Amendments may be needed to modernize and provide regulatory efficiency and enable newly requested ways of administering reindeer herds in the Beaufort Delta Region or possibly elsewhere.	Begin TBD
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#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Outfit er regime	The Department will review the outfit er regime and determine if changes to the <i>Wildlife Business Regulations</i> under the <i>Wildlife Act</i> are necessary. Possible changes include clarified timelines, review of requirements for the issuing of licences, clarification around the number of licences available for each management zone, and consistency with land claims. If regulatory changes are necessary, the IGC will be invited to participate under the IGC Legislative Development Protocol.	TBD
2	Air Quality	Air quality is largely unregulated in the NWT. The development air quality regulations are being reviewed, to be developed either under the authority of the <i>Environmental Protection Act</i> or the <i>Waters Act</i> . The timing is contingent on the progress of those two legislative initiatives.	TBD
3	Caribou Range Planning	Regulations may be required under the <i>Species at Risk Act (NWT)</i> to ensure the enforceability of boreal caribou range plans. Policy analysis needs to be completed.	TBD

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF EXECUTIVE AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

2024-25 to 2027-28

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs provides overall management and direction to the Executive Branch of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The Department is responsible for managing the executive functions of government including secretariat and administrative support to Executive Council committees and to other Ministers and for ensuring that the interests of Indigenous governments are fully considered in the development and delivery of policies and programs.

The Department is also responsible for leading the development and maintenance of mutually respectful intergovernmental relations between the territorial government and Indigenous, provincial, territorial, national and international governments. and to negotiate and implement land, resources and self-government agreements that address Aboriginal rights in the Northwest Territories.

The Department is also responsible for leading efforts to improve governance and service integration with the goal of moving towards a more person-centred approach to serving residents of the Northwest Territories.

Activity	Business functions supported
Cabinet Support	Provides secretariat support to Cabinet, is responsible for legislation and house planning and administrative support to the Public Utilities Board.
Corporate Communications	Corporate Communications is responsible for operationalizing the strategic communications priorities of the government, providing communications leadership and direction to GNWT departments, facilitating messaging for interdepartmental initiatives, and promoting a consistent, positive identity for the GNWT. Corporate Communications provides broad communications advice and support across government and promotes an integrated corporate approach to communications.
Directorate	Responsible for leading the senior management of the territorial public service, managing the executive functions of the organization and supporting Executive Council decision making. Directorate is also responsible for government wide governance improvement initiatives, service integration and gender equity.
Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs	Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs is responsible for supporting the GNWT's efforts to build and maintain strong collaborative relationships with Indigenous, federal, provincial, territorial and international governments to help advance issues of priority; providing policy advice in regards to Aboriginal Rights including with respect to Consultation; advancing the GNWT's interests in land, resources and self-government negotiations in the NWT; and implementing finalized land claims and/or self-government agreements, providing support to the overall objectives and commitments involved in these agreements.
Executive Council Offices	<p>The Executive Council Offices comprises the Premier's Office, Ministers' Offices, and Cabinet Communications. The Premier's Office provides the Premier and Ministers' Offices with political, communications, and strategic operations advice and coordination.</p> <p>Ministers' Offices provide support for the Ministers, their offices and support staff.</p>

Cabinet Communications provides strategic communications advice to the Premier, Cabinet Ministers, and departments to support effective and coordinated communications to promote public awareness and understanding of GNWT positions, policies and initiatives to advance the priorities of the Legislative Assembly and fulfill mandate commitments.

Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found at Departments’ website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

EIA is committed to supporting the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly – housing, economy, health care and safety of residents and communities- by aligning its strategies, programs, and initiatives with the GNWT’s Mandate. These priorities will be supported through collaboration with Indigenous governments, the federal government and other governments, through strong public strategic communications, and through the development or enhancement of governance and service integration.

As a Central Agency of the territorial government, EIA is well positioned to play a leading and coordinating role with other GNWT departments and agencies as well as with other orders of government, partners and stakeholders. While EIA is generally not a front-line service department it works in close partnership with other governments and organizations to support the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

To support the goal of good governance, EIA will play a leadership role in exploring new ways of working across a variety of departments and agencies to improve how residents’ access and experience government programs and services. A key priority for this will be to explore how services can be further integrated to become person-centred rather than siloed by organization, including through the co-location of front-line staff to make access to services easier for residents.

We will prioritize reconciliation through collaboration with Indigenous governments, including negotiation and implementation of land claims and self-governments, the *UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act* (UNDRIP), and the advancement of the Intergovernmental Council, Council of Leaders and other formalized relationships.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the <i>United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> .	Work across government and collaborate with Indigenous governments to co-develop the Action Plan that is required by UNDRIPIA.	Departments will provide items, regulations, policies, legislation that will be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan.	Action Plan complete by 2025-2026.
	Work to ensure the Statement of Consistency for legislative initiatives is prepared as prepared as required in the Act.	Preparation and tabling of the Statement of Consistency for each Bill.	Ongoing for all legislative initiatives for the life of the 20th Assembly.
Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage the federal government to advance issues of shared interest.	EIA will coordinate with Indigenous governments to identify or confirm shared priorities for engagement with the federal government.	Identification of multilateral and bilateral shared interests.	
Work with negotiation partners to advance, set le and implement land claim, self-government and other Indigenous rights agreements.	EIA, working with departments, will review the GNWT Principles and Interests (for negotiations) to explore possible updates.		Publish updates by 2025-2026.
Explore options to support Economic Reconciliation through more flexible and streamlined funding arrangements with Indigenous governments.	EIA will support departments to work with interested Indigenous Governments to streamline funding arrangements such as contribution agreements.	# of funding agreements.	

	Identify number of grants and contributions by department and Indigenous governments and organizations.	
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	EIA will continue to implement the “Changing the Relationship: The GNWT’s Action Plan to Respond to the Calls to Justice on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+”.	Installed monument.
	In response to Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action #82, complete a residential school monument in the capital city.	

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	EIA will explore ways to reduce silos or barriers between departments and agencies.	Co-location of front-line staff where possible Introduction of information sharing agreements.	5 co-located, integrated service teams.
Implement approaches to design programs and services in ways that promote and the support self reliance and resiliency of residents.	Lead GNWT efforts to support NGOs to secure sustainable, multi-year funding by providing support and guidance in funding submissions to the Federal Government, private industry, and charitable organizations.	# of funding submissions supported by staff.	Ongoing.
	Liaise between NGOs and Indigenous Governments to support partnerships in funding submissions where common interests are identified.	#of meetings arranged. # of letters/correspondence.	
Better streamline administrative processes, policies and legislation across government to enhance the capacity of the public service to work better together.	EIA will work with departments to identify where to align strategies and action plans across government.		
Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	EIA will review the number of boards and agencies and their alignment with existing legislation.	Completed recommendations.	Completed review.
Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the	EIA will regularly review its expenditures to	Reduced expenditures.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Government of Northwest Territories through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of residents and communities.	identify savings in travel, contract services, purchased services, compensation and benefits, fees, and lease costs.		
Empower the public service by ensuring they are provided the flexibility to deliver programs and implement policies in ways that best serve residents.	EIA will establish a governance model for the delivery of integrated services across government.	Employees are more aware of the impacts of their policy decisions on other areas of government.	Governance model established.
Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Work across government to ensure that all departments are including awareness and consideration of technology into the policy and program planning at the earliest opportunity.	IT systems and policy considerations are included in the development of project plans/charters and considered as a factor in resourcing and financing projects.	Department Project plans/Project charters include considerations of IT systems and resources.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	Work with partners to ensure accurate data is available to support actions to address homelessness.	On-going data collection in place to assess regional specific needs and gaps. Use data to address gaps and create efficiencies with current services.	Establish functional zero homelessness goals for all communities.
	Establish a continuous mechanism to allow for ongoing and accurate decision making related to services and supports for homelessness.	Housing and shelter needs and program gaps in capacity identified for each community.	Business plans and budgets adjusted annually to better meet identified needs.
	Establish inter-agency tables to coordinate information sharing and service delivery related to homelessness.	Number of community partners included in ISD development and trainings.	Regional ISD locations working through a coordinated systems approach. Community partners included in ISD development and trainings.
Collaborate across departments and with partners to support vulnerable residents, prevent and reduce homelessness and encourage self-sufficiency.	Implement the Homelessness Strategy A Way Home: A Comprehensive Strategy to Address Homelessness in the Northwest Territories.	Establish five co located integrated teams.	Co-located integrated teams at the five ISD locations.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with Indigenous, federal, and community governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to secure sustainable funding for housing now and into the future.	EIA will support other departments and agencies to attract federal funding opportunities in support of homelessness and the northern housing continuum. Support NWT Housing in the coordination of the NWT Housing forum.	Identification of funding opportunities.	
Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities.	Complete land claim and self-government negotiations. Work across GNWT departments to identify the regionally specific issues preventing land availability for housing.	Where negotiated, transfer lands to Indigenous governments.	Ongoing

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision making are consistent, efficient and predictable.	Implement the provisions of Land Claim and Self-Government agreements, providing certainty to land ownership and the regulatory process. EIA will work with departments and IGs to explore ways to make projects more efficient and viable.	EIA will hold regular meetings with departments and IGC governments on lands and resource related legislation through technical working groups.	# of initiatives underway at IGCS TWG. # of initiatives completed through IGCS process.
		# of Intergovernmental Council (IGC), IGCs and Territorial Working Group (TWG) meetings.	
		Increased number of set led Land Claim and Self-Government Agreements.	Resolution of Aboriginal rights agreements in the NWT.
Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks.	EIA will bring federal and Indigenous government partners together to advance collaboration related to major infrastructure projects.	# of meetings between Indigenous governments, the GNWT and the federal government.	
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Work with other GNWT departments and other governments to ensure the Economic Measures provisions of finalized Land Claim Agreements are implemented.	# of meetings to discuss Economic Measures.	Implementation of the Economic Measures chapters of the set led Agreements.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.	Work across GNWT departments to identify the regionally specific issues preventing land availability.		Increased land availability within community boundaries across the NWT.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Improve medical travel and out-of-territory care, with a focus on clinical coordination and cultural safety.	Support Health and Social Services and Council of Leaders in working with the federal government to renew the approach to non-insured health benefits.		Full costs of medical travel and other non-insured health benefits are reimbursed.
	Work with Indigenous governments to advocate for the federal government to expand non-insured health benefits coverage to include Métis.		Métis receive non-insured health benefits from the Government of Canada.

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	EIA will support the ongoing review of GNWT legislation through UNDRIPIA working group.	UNDRIPIA Action Plan. Annual Reports.	Implementation of UNDRIPIA.
Support Indigenous governments and other partners to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, northern and regional trauma treatment, mental wellness and addictions programming by removing administrative barriers and streamlining supports.	Identify barriers to service access. Identify resources required to improve outreach and supports. Implement standardized tools to ensure continuity of care.	Centralized intake and referrals process developed. An approach to improve efficiencies and a plan for co located integrated teams. A suite of common tools for use by co-located integrated teams.	Co-located integrated teams using centralized intake and referrals process. Co-located integrated teams using standardized tools and processes.
Enable residents to focus on healing by making programs and services easier to access through an integrated and person-centered service delivery approach and by working in collaboration with Indigenous governments, community governments and other partners.	Implement Integrated Services with a focus on Homelessness. Work with partners to co-develop approaches to achieve integrated and person-centered services.	Regional engagement with partners. Shared commitment to a collaborative approach to integrated and person-centered services.	Ongoing regional partnership committees.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Facilitate the provision of federal Women and Gender Equality Canada funding to GNWT departments to support actions aligned with the National Action Plan to end Gender-Based Violence.	Funds distributed to departments to support actions aligned with the National Action Plan to end gender-based violence.	Departments have funds to deliver programs that support actions aligned with the National Action Plan to end gender-based violence.
	Financially contributing to Indigenous Governments and Non-Profit Organizations in gender-based violence prevention and awareness activities.	Funds distributed to Indigenous governments and non-profit organizations to support actions to address gender-based violence prevention and awareness activities.	Indigenous-led gender-based violence prevention and awareness projects funded.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Coordination of the Wildfire Evacuation After Action Review 2023 Fire Season. Confirm an intergovernmental communication approach to emergencies with Indigenous governments.	The Review Report of the Wildfire Evacuation After Action Review 2023 Fire Season.	Recommendations that improve the GNWTs preparedness and response to climate driven disasters and other emergencies. Communications Protocol with Indigenous governments.
Invest in robust and redundant community, energy, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure.	Advocate for a new approach to federal investment in major infrastructure projects in the Northwest Territories.		A defined policy approach from the federal government.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions.	Identify barriers to service access that address root causes of crime. Identify resources required to support reintegration efforts and crime prevention.	Services to support reintegration and crime prevention at co located integrated team locations.	
Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.	Provide One Window Service Centres with resources and support to enhance public education and awareness.	Resources provided for public distribution.	Increased access to educational materials.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

Intergovernmental Relations

EIA's role in fostering relationships with Indigenous governments carries the risk of misalignment or conflict in the priorities and objectives. This could impact the effectiveness of collaborative governance and the implementation of shared initiatives and damage relationships. EIA's approach to mitigating these areas is to build strong relationships founded on early and ongoing communication on priorities and items of interest or concern to Indigenous governments.

Federal Relations

There is a risk associated with not taking a disciplined approach to federal engagement as it relates to funding and policy decisions that have a direct impact on the lives of NWT residents across all sectors including health care, infrastructure, energy and food security. Without a disciplined approach the Federal government will not be able to respond in a systematic way to GNWT requests. To mitigate this risk the GNWT is developing a federal engagement approach that will clearly articulate what the priorities are for federal engagement. All departments will be expected to support this approach.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Call for Justice

EIA is tasked with addressing the Calls for Justice, which is a complex challenge requiring multi-faceted, community-based solutions and a collaborative approach across government and with partners. Inadequate or the perception of inadequacy in the response or implementation could lead to social unrest and a lack of trust in government efforts. The risk is mitigated by raising the profile, the visibility and importance of the work within government supported by the public facing engagement with communities and annual reporting.

Integrated Service Delivery (ISD)

ISD depends on information sharing, collaboration, and co-location, each presenting its own set of risks. Navigating privacy legislation is crucial for effective information sharing among service providers, while collaboration among departments requires managing multiple priorities. The department is mitigating the risk by dedicating resources to address barriers to the successful implementation of ISD.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

In support of Fiscal Sustainability, the Department has reviewed its expenditures in the following areas to identify savings. Travel, contract services, purchased services, compensation and benefits, fees, and lease costs. The Department will continue to review its expenditures to identify further cost savings, and to explore revenue generation activities.

Departmental Highlights

Indigenous Engagement Strategy

Indigenous and Intergovernmental Affairs will be updating the Indigenous Engagement Strategy component of the Respect, Recognition and Responsibility (RRR) framework. Respect, Recognition and Responsibility was finalized in 2012 and will benefit from a refreshed approach to ensure alignment with current processes and conventions. This will be a collaborative effort among departments and with Indigenous governments.

Intergovernmental Council Review

The Intergovernmental Council Secretariat will be coordinating with Intergovernmental Council Indigenous Governments to advance the 7-year review of the 2014 NWT Intergovernmental Agreement on Lands and Resources Management.

Reconciliation Actions

EIA is responsible for monitoring and supporting the implementation of key reconciliation frameworks such as the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Non-Governmental Organization Stabilization

EIA is responsible for leading GNWT wide efforts to improve relationships with NGOs and to explore ways to improve GNWT supports to that sector and to ensuring it is strong and resilient.

Evacuation After Action Review

EIA is responsible for coordination of GNWT provision of information to support the contractor responsible for undertaking the Evacuation After Action Review. This also includes provision of support to the Oversight Committee.

OneGov Project

During the life of the 20th Assembly, EIA will develop, build and launch a new and improved GNWT web presence. This project will consolidate ten core departmental websites, the GNWT Flagship website, and eight smaller specialty/marketing sites into a unified platform. The primary goal of the OneGov project is to enhance user experience by creating a more streamlined and accessible web presence that simplifies access to government services and information. The website will serve as a central hub, reducing redundancy and improving the ease of content management. The project aims to improve the public's ability to access services and find and use government information and resources efficiently.

Communications Functional Review

EIA is reviewing the GNWT's communications function to assess the policy, processes and management of the function to ensure alignment with contemporary public sector best practices and professional excellence. The review project will consider several key areas, including policy congruency, operational efficiency, strategic management, operational efficiency and resource alignment, to determine how well the communications function meets the organization's needs and ensures that it can respond nimbly to everyday communications needs and emergent situations.

Human Resource Initiatives

Executive and Indigenous Affairs is responsible for leading the senior management of the territorial public service. This involves promoting opportunities for professional growth for senior management and ensuring succession planning improves across the organization.

Corporately, this will involve working in partnership with Department of Finance in actively promoting opportunities for senior managers such as ADMs and Directors/superintendents to transfer to other positions across government to broaden their experiences, skills and to expand their contacts across the organization.

As the importance of succession planning has become prevalent there will be an increased focus over the upcoming years on mentorship opportunities, and on the job training to allow employees to gain the necessary experience to take on advanced roles or specialized job duties and promote from within the organization.

EIA employees will have consistent performance targets that will include guidance to emphasize professional development, employee wellness, completion of mandatory training and adherence to the GNWT competency model.

EIA will review its organizational structure to determine whether there are opportunities to create more gradual steps to progress in responsibilities and duties to support succession planning and Indigenous Recruitment and Retention.

EIA will promote opportunities to work with Indigenous governments and organizations to build capacity through mechanisms such as secondments.

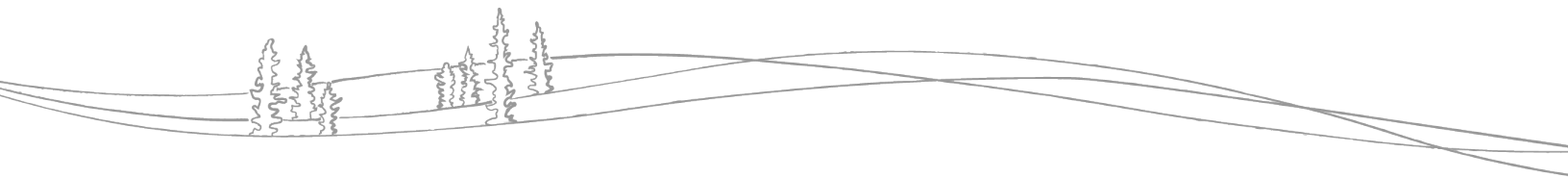
Legislative Initiatives

The Department currently has no legislative initiatives on the Legislative Agenda; however, it will support initiatives led by other departments.

The Department is working on several projects/policy initiatives:

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Integrated Service Delivery	Needs assessment and analysis, stakeholder engagement and partnership building, policy and legal framework development, information sharing and technology integration, service design and standardization, training and capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, communication and outreach, risk management and contingency planning, sustainability, and scalability.	Implementation of NWT homelessness, anti-poverty, and alcohol strategies, and coordination of GNWT strategies associated with food security.
2	Review of negotiating principles and interests	Discussion of negotiating principles and interests by Cabinet to confirm any updates or changes.	Iterative process that will take time and involve all departments.
3	Federal Engagement Approach	Ensure departments are coordinated and strategic in their approach to engaging with federal departments and agencies when seeking policy and financial support from the federal departments.	Involves all departments.
4	Indigenous Engagement	Update of GNWT approach to engaging and working with Indigenous governments and people.	Involves all departments and Indigenous governments.
5	UNDRIPIA action plan	Commitment of UNDRIPIA work with Indigenous governments.	Involves all departments.

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

2024-25 to 2027-28

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The Department of Finance (the Department) has a wide-ranging mandate that includes obtaining, managing and controlling the financial resources required to implement the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) policies and programs. The Department provides leadership and direction in all areas of human resource management and ensures the effective management of government technology resources and manages the procurement of government goods and services. The Department provides access to broad economic, social and demographic information, including the regulation of the insurance industry and the sale of alcohol and cannabis products in the Northwest Territories (NWT).

Finance has the main central agency role to support the Financial Management Board (FMB) and provides advice and support to other Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) departments and public agencies, ensuring that the Government has the resources to deliver programs, services and infrastructure to NWT residents. Finance is also responsible for ensuring that financial controls and administrative policies are in place, and that financial results/information are reported to the public in a clear and timely manner and in accordance with statutory reporting requirements.

Activity	Business functions supported
Directorate (Financial and Administrative Leadership)	Strategic planning; policy and legislative development; financial and economic analysis services; public affairs and communications.
Human Resources	Wide strategic and corporate human resource leadership and advice; recruitment and retention efforts focussed on a representative workforce.
Management Board Secretariat	Coordinates the GNWT annual budget process; implements fiscal and tax policy; oversees program evaluation; collects and reports on relevant statistics coordinates the Public Private Partnership (P3) Policy and Management Framework; oversees the NWT Liquor and Cannabis Commission (NTLCC) and operation of the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link.
Office of the Chief Information Officer (Information Management and Technology)	Overall leadership to the GNWT information management and technology sector; strategic advice on the application of technology; geospatial services and support; information and cybersecurity support; information systems solution delivery and support; technology infrastructure and operations; mobile and desktop device support; client service and support; governance of information and technology.
Office of the Comptroller General	Control and administration of the consolidated revenue fund; enterprise resource planning functions, including operation of the System for Accountability and Management (SAM) and the Human Resources Information System (HRIS); financial transactions, payroll processing and employee benefits administration through Financial and Employee Shared Services; supervision of the Internal Audit Bureau; issues and reviews corporate accounting policies, prepares the consolidated public accounts; managing the governments short term debt position, includes Procurement Shared Services as well as collections, tax administration and tax audits as well as oversight over the insurance industry.
Liquor Revolving Fund	Provides working capital (revenues generated by the sale of alcohol and federally approved cannabis products) to finance the operations of the Northwest Territories Liquor & Cannabis Commission, the Liquor Licensing Board, Liquor Licensing and Enforcement.
Detailed descriptions of the Department's programs and services can be found at Departments' website.	

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department of Finance is committed to supporting the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly by aligning its strategies, programs, and initiatives with the GNWT's Mandate Commitments. The Department recognizes the role it plays in fostering economic stability, enhancing public services, and ensuring the well-being and prosperity of the residents of the NWT.

To address the housing challenges in the NWT a comprehensive territory-wide in-depth housing needs analysis/assessment will be conducted in partnership with Housing NWT, the Department of Finance, Indigenous Governments, and community governments.

The Department is committed to developing a strong and capable northern workforce. One action, participation in the federally developed, Employment and Social Development Canada, IT Apprenticeship Program for Indigenous Peoples, supports this commitment. The program is being piloted by the GNWT across the territory. This initiative provides a pathway to employment and aims to remove barriers to entry for information technology jobs; it will include a target to hire a minimum of two apprentices over the next four years. The Department will also undertake further analysis and research on the NWT labour market. This will provide a better understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities in the NWT workforce and job market.

To foster entrepreneurship and leverage opportunities in a variety of economic sectors, the Department will advocate that all proposed initiatives undergo a Macroeconomic Policy Framework lens review to ensure economic implications are considered. This will provide decision-makers with insight into the economic structures and market failures within the NWT, helping to lower risks for the private sector and encourage innovation.

The Department is committed to collaborating with the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) and the Tłıchq Community Services Agency (TCSA) to establish innovating and strengthening approaches to attract and retain qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.

The Department of Finance is collaborating with the Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) to enhance long-term public safety, by updating flood maps for flood-prone communities in the NWT. This initiative will provide updated mapping for seven communities by 2026.

The Department will continue to advocate for improved internet services in the NWT through participation in CRTC proceedings, further supporting community and infrastructure resilience, redundancy, and connectivity.

To support the GNWT's commitment to openness, transparency, and accountability in government the Department provides a platform for open data sharing through the Open Data Portal and the NWT Centre for

Geomatics' website. This initiative ensures that data is accessible and usable by all GNWT departments for publishing their datasets, which promotes transparency.

To advance reconciliation, the Department supports the delivery of Living Well Together, the GNWT's online Indigenous Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity Training program and is committed to the recruitment and training of a public service that is representative of the Indigenous population of the NWT.

Technology plays a critical role in ensuring good governance. The Department is committed to embedding this understanding into the Government's plans and to fostering a culture that is more at tuned to elevating the role of technology in policy decisions and program service delivery. Our immediate priority is to find ways to bolster information technology capabilities, including acknowledging the need to modernize legacy technologies that are creating barriers for government to achieve its policy objectives. The Department will ensure investments in technology are strongly linked to government priorities so that the Government is equipped to govern effectively in an increasingly digital age.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Continue to support the delivery of ‘Living Well Together,’ the online training is mandatory for all GNWT employees.	% of employees who complete Living Well Together Training within 1 year of hire.	90% of employees complete training within 1 year of hire.
	Recruitment and training of a public service that is representative of the Indigenous population of the NWT with the cultural competencies required for reconciliation.	All departments and agencies Indigenous Employment Plans completed with attainable and achievable targets.	Departmental Indigenous Employment Plan targets are met and reported on a yearly basis.

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	Continue working with departments, to provide an additional channel (online) for the public to access government services, via the GNWT’s eServices portal.	Percentage of projects assessed for online services suitability.	100% of IT Capital project proposals assessed for online service delivery suitability.

	Update the IT Business Case template to ensure online service delivery is considered early in the development of the project proposal.	Update IT Business Case template.	N/A
Implement approaches to design programs and services in ways that promote and the support self reliance and resiliency of residents.	Continue to support the Building Capacity with Indigenous Governments Program that supports secondment arrangements with Indigenous governments in all regions to help develop their human resource capacity.	# of secondments with Indigenous governments per year.	Funding of \$400,000 for BCIG is fully subscribed annually (approximately 10 supported employees per fiscal year).
Better streamline administrative processes, policies and legislation across government to enhance the capacity of the public service to work better together.	Update the Public Service Act with a framework for a more streamlined approach for the management and direction of an effective and skilled territorial public service that meets the needs of the GNWT.	Legislative Proposal submitted. Bill is drafted.	The Public Service Act bill is passed during the 20th Legislative Assembly.
	Realize the benefits of having the Technology Services Centre join the Department of Finance by amalgamating the TSC Service Desk and the Information Systems Shared Services Client Care desk to simplify and improvement client experience.	Client Satisfaction with the new amalgamated IT Service Desk.	70% initial target for satisfaction with an increasing trend over time.

Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	Development and implementation of an Employee Satisfaction Action Plan that includes information gathering and policy initiatives.	Measures will be developed within the action plan. New programs, training, and resources to improve employee engagement and satisfaction. Review of existing programs, training, and resources to improve employee engagement and satisfaction to enhance performance and effectiveness across the GNWT. Employee Satisfaction Action Plan is launched in 2024. Completed assessment.	Improved scores on the Employment Satisfaction.
	Complete an assessment of current IT Governance processes, IT organizational structures and IT operating models to identify and correct areas of inefficiency or redundancy.	Renewal of IT. Strategy to include a new organizational structure for the Office of the Chief Information Officer branch.	Assessment completed. Adjustments to IT Governance processes, structures, and operating models completed. IT Strategy reviewed and renewed.
	Internal review and reduction of discretionary expenditures for travel, materials, and contract services. Continued adherence to the fiscal sustainability strategy, Restoring Balance: A Fiscal.	Increased revenues. Decreased expenditures. Improved efficiency. Reduced redundancy of programs and services across departments.	An overall reduction of \$10.3 million.

Sustainability Plan for the 20th Legislative Assembly, that was announced in February 2024.			
Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Work across government to ensure that all departments are including awareness and consideration of Technology into the policy and program planning at the earliest opportunity.	IT systems and policy considerations are included in the development of project plans/charters and considered as a factor in resourcing and financing projects.	Project plans/Project charters include considerations of IT systems and resources.
	Explore ways in which the GNWT can further incorporate consideration of technology such as systems, artificial intelligence, etc. when developing policy and initiatives.	Government wide approaches to consideration of technology in development of policy and initiatives.	IT factors are included as considerations in Cabinet and FMB submissions.
	Platforms that provide open data include the GNWT Open Data Portal and the NWT Centre for Geomatics' website.	Maintain the Open Data Portal to be used by all GNWT departments for publishing their datasets. NWT Centre for Geomatics publishes data via its website as they become available.	Increased availability of a wider range of data.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	Develop an in-depth territory-wide housing needs analysis/assessment in partnership with Housing NWT, the Department of Finance, Indigenous Governments, and community governments.	# of meetings in collaboration with Housing NWT, FIN, Indigenous and Community Governments.	Territory-wide housing needs analysis/assessment completed.

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	IT Apprenticeship program for Indigenous Peoples (collaboration between OCIO and Employment and Social Development Canada) to address the barrier to entry for IT jobs.	# of apprentices hired through the GNWT pilot program.	Agreement signed by GNWT and Canada A minimum of two apprentices hired over four years.
	Internships/Summer student programs range of programs focused on improving Indigenous recruitment and retention.	# of internships awarded. #of summer students participating.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by eliminating unnecessary administrative processes, mitigating the cumulative impacts of regulations on productivity, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable.	Applying the Macroeconomic Policy Framework to all proposed initiatives and existing programs with economic components to ensure that decisions are based on evidence and consider important economic implications.	% of briefing and submission material clearly identify and consider the Macroeconomic Policy Framework lens.	All briefing materials and submission material clearly identify and consider the Macroeconomic Policy Framework lens.
	Support Red Tape Reduction efforts, including continued participation in the Red Tape Reduction Working Group (small business).	# of red tape issues identified and resolved immediately. # of red tape issues identified and resolved within 5 business days.	
Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks.	Advocating to CRTC for improved affordability, quality, reliability, and competitive choice for broadband services in the NWT.	# of CRTC proceedings GNWT participated in.	100% departmental participation in proceedings impacting residents and businesses in the NWT.
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Revising the vendor complaint process and continuing to implement the vendor performance management policy.	Not applicable- specific measures to be established when Policy is approved.	Revised Vendor Complaint Policy Fall 2024.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions, while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.	Continue to support employee development in health care professions through the Indigenous Development Training Program (IDTP).	# of employees supported through IDTP to pursue development in health-related areas per year.	7 employees supported through IDTP pursuing development in health-related areas per year.
	Support increases in the number of health care professionals in the NWT through the established Health Recruitment Unit that will work with DHSS, NTHSSA and the TCSA to identify qualified candidates and promote positions within the organizations.	# of indeterminately filled health professional positions.	Increase the number of indeterminately filled health professionals by 5% annually during the 20th Assembly.

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Continue implementing the Indigenous Recruitment and Retention Framework and Action Plan to ensure policy initiatives, programs, training and resources are reviewed and developed are culturally appropriate, culturally sensitive, and barriers are removed.	All departments and agencies Indigenous Employment Plans completed with at ainable and achievable targets.	Departmental Indigenous Employment Plan targets are met and reported yearly.
	Continue collaborating with the Indigenous Employee Advisory Committee and the GNWT Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion to review new and existing programs and initiatives with anti- racist and cultural safety lens.	# of committee meetings held per year.	4 committee meeting held per year.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Provide financial support to evacuation emergency relief program.	# of residents who access the program.	
Invest in robust and redundant community, energy, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure.	Advocating to CRTC for improved affordability, quality, reliability, and competitive choice for broadband services in the NWT.	Participation in CRTC proceedings impacting residents and businesses in the NWT.	100% participation in proceedings impacting residents and businesses in the NWT.
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, building standards, and community hazard mapping and monitoring.	The NWT Centre for Geomatics is collaborating with the department of ECC to update Flood maps for flood-prone communities in the NWT.	Flood hazard and inundation maps will be updated using available federal funding and GNWT in-kind funding and support.	Updated mapping will be provided for seven communities by 2026.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Risks and Mitigation Activities

Economic Diversification

The NWT's economic reliance on mineral extraction poses a risk due to market volatility and the finite nature of these resources. The risk is that the overreliance on the nonrenewable resource industry creates a vulnerable labour market and overall economy. Applying the Macroeconomic Policy Framework to all new proposed economic initiatives, including investment in emerging sectors and the NWT labour market, will help decisionmakers choose the best investments to promote a resilient economy.

Federal Transfers

The reliance on federal transfers risks creating a relationship of dependence and makes it difficult for the GNWT to move towards economic self-sufficiency. Economic development and NWT labour market support will promote a stronger economy and encourage population growth, which leads to higher federal transfers and more own-source revenues.

Climate Change Adaptation

The pace of climate change in the North bears the risk of failing infrastructure and increased cost of living. To mitigate the risk the Department of Finance will need to carefully manage total government spending and revenues to keep within the fiscal strategy targets that are necessary to ensure the GNWT has the fiscal flexibility to address adaptations needed because of climate changes.

Climate Emergencies

Climate-related emergencies, including wildfires, floods, and other extreme weather events can lead to widespread evacuations and loss of personal property. The GNWT also relies heavily on federal assistance to support its response and recovery efforts during these emergencies. Proactive emergency planning, appropriate budgeting, and contingency planning will mitigate the increased frequency and severity of climate related disasters.

Labour Market Challenges

The GNWT encounters challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled employees, especially for positions that require specialized skills such as healthcare professionals, engineers, and other technical experts. These labour market challenges have a widespread impact, affecting both the government sector, and the private sector, leading to operational constraints hindering program delivery, delivery of service and overall growth and development of the economy. Supporting and investing in the NWT labour market and focused recruitment and retention strategies are intended to mitigate the labour market challenges and support a resilient economy.

Aging Information Technology Assets and Increased Demand for Technology

The GNWT has aging computer (hardware and software assets) which require frequent and expensive maintenance and replacement. There is a growing demand for technology advancements to support program

delivery. There is a risk of government not being able to meet the increasing demands of residents and businesses in the NWT. Raising the profile of aging technologies and their implications on policy decisions and incorporating advance consideration of technology impacts in decision making processes, will help mitigate the risk, along with tracking and reporting on the amount of deferred maintenance for technology systems.

Cyber Security

Information and Cyber Security threats and incidents are increasing and pose an extremely high risk of impact on government's infrastructure and operations. Despite increased investments in security tools and technologies that enable faster identification and response efforts, the GNWT is challenged to defend against criminal organizations with resources and capabilities far beyond its own. The risks include inability to protect information, inability to operate any services including essential services and loss of data. Adopting mandatory awareness training across government, requiring refresher courses and running internal phishing campaigns will help mitigate these threats, along with increased training and investments in advanced security technologies and staff.

Lack of internet redundancy to Yellowknife

There is currently a single point of failure for internet connectivity in Yellowknife. Since most government information and technology systems are operated out of Yellowknife, the risk is that severing or disrupting internet connectivity in Yellowknife means that all systems used across or outside the NWT become inaccessible, impacting government program delivery. Continuing to advocate with the federal government, for improvements to telecommunications capacity, redundancy, affordability and competitiveness will help mitigate the risks, and working with the private sector and Canada to highlight the lack of redundant telecom infrastructure across the Far North.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department will lead the GNWT in the implementation of the fiscal sustainability strategy, Restoring Balance: A Fiscal Sustainability Plan for the 20th Legislative Assembly. The strategy is a government wide initiative that outlines the territory's financial situation and sets significant targets to help support the territory's economic recovery through the life of the 20th Assembly. The goal of the strategy is to increase revenues and reduce expenditures in a way that minimizes impacts on critical programs and services and to make \$150 million in payments to reduce GNWT debt over the life of this government.

The Department is experiencing increased cost pressures including but not limited to, increased borrowing costs due to higher levels of debt and interest rates, employee medical travel, and insurance premiums. While the department has little control on the demand of shared services, it is looking at the use of technology and a review of business processes to gain efficiencies where possible.

As a result, the Department is supporting the Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly by implementing a number of cost saving measures and new revenue initiatives in 2024-25 totaling \$10.355 million. These financial adjustments are being implemented with minimal impact to residents and the Department's core business in providing financial, human resource, and information technology support to the GNWT.

For 2024-25, the Department will implement the following:

- Internal review and reduction of discretionary expenditures across all Branches in the areas of travel, materials, and contract services. Budget adjustments to these areas are expected given current business practices (e.g. employment of virtual meeting technology vs. travel to meetings).
- Better alignment of current budgets with actual expenditures when sharing resource revenues with Indigenous Governments and when making contributions to the Heritage Fund. These changes will take into account current and projected level of royalties in the NWT.
- Increase GNWT revenues by:
 - Tax vaping products through an agreement with Canada.
 - Review and implement improvements to procurement of cannabis and liquor that eliminates credit card service fees. This initiative utilizes current banking technology, which will allow liquor and cannabis vendors to purchase product via electronic fund transfer (EFT), thereby removing the use of credit cards and the associated fees.
 - Review and implement improvements to discounts currently provided to liquor license holders. This initiative eliminates a discount currently provided to license holders (i.e. bars, restaurants) when purchasing liquor. The elimination of this discount is expected to be passed onto user of alcohol at these establishments.

The Department is committed to a process of continuous improvement and will endeavour to look for efficiencies and cost savings measures through the Government Renewal Initiatives and internal evaluations through upcoming budget cycles.

Departmental Highlights

Fiscal Sustainability Strategy

The Department will lead the GNWT in the implementation of the fiscal sustainability strategy, Restoring Balance: A Fiscal Sustainability Plan for the 20th Legislative Assembly. The strategy is a government wide initiative that outlines the territory's financial situation and sets significant targets to help support the territory's economic recovery through the life of the 20th Assembly. The goal of the strategy is to increase revenues and reduce expenditures in a way that minimizes impacts on critical programs and services and to make \$150 million in payments to reduce GNWT debt over the life of this government.

Connecting Families

As a result of the Department's CRTC advocacy, Northwestel recently joined the federal government's Connecting Families program. This program provides \$20 per month (for 50/10) Internet packages to NWT residents currently receiving the federal Maximum Child Care Benefit (CCB) or seniors receiving the maximum Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS). The federal government estimates nearly 1,700 NWT households will qualify for this program by the end of 2024.

Civic Addressing

Civic Addressing – The NWT Centre for Geomatics is collaborating with Municipal and Community Affairs, to support community addressing efforts and create addressing using geospatial information, to support land-use planning and emergency management and response across the NWT.

Psychological Health and Safety

Human Resource Branch will develop a plan to implement the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety to help prevent psychological harm and promote employees' psychological health and well-being.

Review of the Affirmative Action Policy

The Human Resource Branch is committed to reviewing the Affirmative Action Policy and developing a new approach to prioritizing the hiring and career advancement of Indigenous persons.

Human Resource Initiatives

The Department of Finance (Department) is committed to increasing Indigenous representation and supporting Indigenous leadership. Since 2018 the Department has supported 17 Indigenous employees with entry-level employment and trainee opportunities through the Indigenous Career Gateway Program and provided 22 Indigenous employees within financial assistance to support their professional development through the Indigenous Development Training program.

The Department is piloting an IT Apprenticeship Program for Indigenous Peoples in collaboration with Employment and Social Development Canada, to address the barrier to entry for IT jobs in the GNWT.

The Department supports employees in continuous learning and development ensuring workplace culture focused on health, safety, wellness, and anti-racism within the GNWT. 487 Department employees have completed *Living Well*, Indigenous Cultural Awareness & Sensitivity Training, 84 employees have completed Mitigating Unconscious Biases training, and 106 employees have completed Equitable Workplace: Cultivating Attitudes of Anti-Racism and Allyship for Employees.

The Department recognizes that due to the increasing number of employees eligible to retire within 5 to ten 10, it is essential to expand the labour pool and improve job opportunities and skills of young northerners in the NWT. Over the last 5 year the Department has hired 21 interns and 14 are still employed with the GNWT.

The Department promotes employee engagement across the GNWT and over the past 4 years the Department held 6 town hall meetings where all GNWT employees were provided the opportunity to ask questions directly to the Minister and Deputy Minister of Finance.

Legislative Initiatives

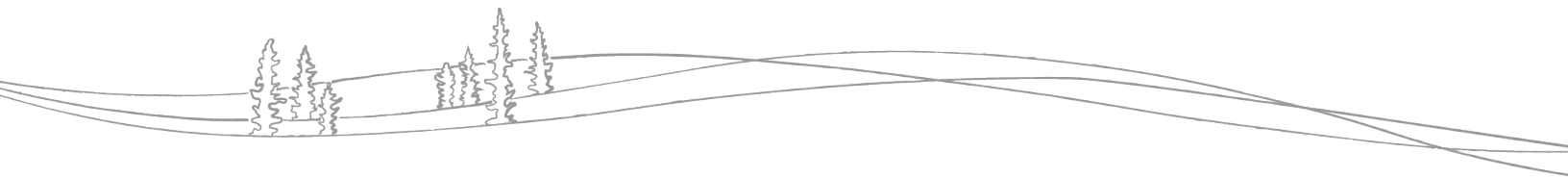
The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Insurance Act</i>	A comprehensive review and subsequent amendments to the <i>Insurance Act</i> to update administrative requirements of the Act, as well as eliminate the duplication of requirements stated in both legislation and regulations.	Legislative Proposal Under Development.	February 2026
2	<i>Payroll Tax Act</i>	Amendments to the <i>Payroll Tax Act</i> to account for new workforce trends that are not covered in current legislation.	Need Identified/Policy Development.	May 2026
3	<i>Public Service Act</i>	Amendments to the <i>Public Service Act</i> to set out a modern framework for the management and direction of an effective and skilled public service for the GNWT.	Legislative Proposal Under Development.	October 2025

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Liquor Act Regulations	Regulations required to bring the <i>Liquor Act</i> into force.	

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

2024-25 to 2027-28

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The Department of Health and Social Services' mandate is to promote, protect and provide for the health and wellbeing of the people of the Northwest Territories. The vision of the Health and Social Services system is: Best Health, Best Care, for a Better Future.

The role of the Department is to support the Minister of Health and Social Services in carrying out the Government of the NWT's Mandate by setting the strategic direction for the system through the development of legislation, policy, and standards; establishing approved programs and services; establishing and monitoring system budgets and expenditures; and evaluating and reporting on system outcomes and performance. The Department is also responsible for ensuring that all statutory functions and requirements are fulfilled, ensuring professionals are appropriately licensed, and managing access to health insurance and vital statistics services.

The Health and Social Services Authorities are responsible for developing and implementing annual Operational Plans to operationalize the strategic direction, as laid out in the four-year Department Business Plan, and in accordance with annual budgets approved by the Minister.

This mandate is carried out under five Key Activities:

1. **Administrative and Support Services** – Provision of strategic leadership to the Department and the Authorities; financial planning and management, human resource planning and promotion, information management, and infrastructure and technology planning. Activities include planning, organizing, directing, and monitoring the delivery of programs and services, in accordance with government policy and legislation with a focus on quality improvement, sustainability, risk management, privacy protection and intergovernmental relations.
2. **Health and Social Programs** – Provision of adult support services; child and family services; health services administration; community clinics and health centres; community mental wellness and addictions recovery; family violence prevention; hospital and physician services; rehabilitation services; Indigenous health and community wellness; and population and public health services.
3. **Long Term and Continuing Care Services** – Provision of Home Care and Support Services, which consist of nursing care and support for personal care and daily living activities, as well as Long Term Care and Supported Living services for residents who require onsite nursing care, and/or 24-hour supervision, or personal support.
4. **Out of Territory Services** – Provision of access to services outside the NWT, including insured hospital and physician services; addictions treatment facilities; supportive living arrangements for

adults in residential/group home settings; and specialized services for children, youth, and/or families.

5. **Supplementary Health Benefits** – Provision of eligible prescription drugs, medical supplies and equipment, dental and vision benefits, and certain medical travel benefits to residents who meet eligibility criteria.

Activity	Business functions supported
Administrative and Support Services	Administration - strategic leadership to the Department and Health and Social Services Authorities. The Department is responsible for establishing the overall strategic direction and coordination of initiatives aimed at ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Health and Social Services system, while Health and Social Services Authorities are responsible for operations.
	Finance- financial planning and management services for the health and social services system, including financial analysis and reporting, implementation and monitoring of internal controls, accounting and audit functions, and the administration of funding agreements.
	Human Resources - human resources planning for the health and social services system and the promotion careers in health and social services. Personnel services are provided to the system by the Department of Finance, apart from the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, which administers its own personnel services.
	Information Services - strategic planning, project management, information management, and privacy leadership for enterprise information management and technology solutions critical to health and social service delivery.
	Infrastructure Planning- planning for facilities and health technology within the Health and Social Services System.
Health and Social Programs	Adult Support Services- support to adults to navigate and access GNWT and community-based programs and services to enable independent living. This includes Adult Service Workers and the Office of the Public Guardian, which is governed by the <i>Public Guardianship and Trusteeship Act</i> .
	Child and Family Services - services to ensure the best interests of children, youth, and families; maintain family unity; and promote the strength of communities. Services include prevention supports, family preservation, and protection, which are available and provided to each of the 33 communities in the NWT. Services delivery frameworks are set out in the NWT's <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> , the <i>Adoption Act</i> , the <i>Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act</i> , and the federal <i>Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families</i> .
	Client Support Services- the Health Services Administration office in Inuvik registers clients for vital statistics and health

care eligibility and is responsible for administering Health Benefits Programs and Supplementary Health Benefit Programs.

Community Clinics and Health Centres - primary care services, which are commonly the first level of contact for individuals within the health system. These services are provided through health centres, community clinics and public health clinics.

Community, Culture and Innovation - oversight for the System to embed cultural safety, social determinants of health, community development, and public engagement into service delivery by leading reform initiatives and renewing policies and programs, designing integrated and person-centered service delivery, and prioritizing Indigenous health and wellness, together with Indigenous communities and governments.

Community Mental Wellness and Addictions Recovery- the delivery of mental health and addictions programming as legislated by the *Mental Health Act* and through the establishment of program standards. This includes programs delivered by the Health and Social Services Authorities like community counselling, as well as through partnerships with Indigenous and other community groups for projects such as land-based programming.

Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism- direction, guidance, and support for a shared vision of a culturally safe GNWT system aimed at eradicating anti-Indigenous racism. Activities include incorporating cultural safety and anti-racism knowledge and research into policies, practices, and educational programs.

Family Violence Prevention - prevention and promotion, protection, assistance and shelter services to families impacted by domestic abuse and/or violence.

Hospital Services- all activities associated with the provision of inpatient and ambulatory outpatient services in NWT hospitals. This includes the units that coordinate admission and discharge of patients, maintain health records, and provide operational support such as housekeeping, laundry services, security, bio-medical engineering, and facility maintenance.

Rehabilitation Services - physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech language pathology, and audiology services to address functional impairments as a result of an

	<p>injury, acute or chronic health condition, or developmental disability.</p>
	<p>Population and Public Health Services - coordination and ongoing management of health prevention, health promotion and health protection activities, led by the Office of the Chief Public Health Officer. This includes the development and auditing of program standards, surveillance, monitoring and evaluation in the areas of public health and community wellness, environmental public health, and communicable disease control including surge response initiatives. The Epidemiology unit and public health registries provide background support in data capture and analytics for these areas. The Public Health Act and regulations set out legislated requirements for the health and social services system and, in some cases, premises and persons in the NWT.</p>
	<p>Specialty Services- diagnostic, consultative, and treatment services provided in the NWT as a result of referral from a primary care practitioner. This includes services such as Internal Medicine, General Surgery, Pediatrics, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Orthopedics, Urology, Oncology, Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology (ENT).</p>
Long Term and Continuing Care Services	<p>Home Care and Support Services- nursing care and support for personal care and daily living activities for individuals unable to perform these activities on their own.</p> <p>Long Term Care- home-like environments that provide care and services for people who can no longer live independently or who require onsite nursing care, 24-hour supervision, or personal support.</p> <p>Supported Living Services - supports for adults with disabilities to live as independently as possible in their own homes or in accommodations provided by a supported living service provider.</p>
Out of Territory Services	<p>Facility-Based Addictions Treatment- specialized treatment for NWT residents in southern facilities.</p> <p>Medical Services- insured hospital and physician services provided to NWT residents outside the NWT.</p> <p>Residential Care - supportive living arrangements for children and adults in residential/group home settings in</p>

	facilities outside the NWT, when their needs cannot be met within the territory.
Supplementary Health Benefits	Prescription drugs, medical supplies and equipment, dental and vision benefits, and certain medical travel benefits provided to residents who meet eligibility criteria. These benefits are provided through the Extended Health Benefits Policy, Métis Health Benefits Policy, and the NWT Medical Travel Benefit Policy. These benefits do not include Non-Insured Health Benefits administrated by the GNWT on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada.

Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found at Departments’ website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

To support the 20th Legislative Assembly's vision of a territory where people are supported in the ways they want to live, work and grow, the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services (HSS) system, which is comprised of the Department of Health and Social Services and the three Health and Social Services Authorities, will undertake several actions to improve *sustainability, accessibility and affordability of housing, foster a strong economic foundation, support access to health care, address the effects of trauma, promote safe residents and communities, and advance reconciliation and good governance.*

Individuals impacted by addictions require a variety of person-centred and specialized aftercare supports. HSS will enhance these options by working to address gaps in the northern housing continuum, through establishing access to transitional housing for individuals in recovery from addiction.

Improving food security through the provision of local food production will foster a strong economic foundation. HSS will focus on supporting increased local food production and improvements to food security by advancing meat-processing safety regulations to support safe production of meat by NWT food producers.

Trauma and intergenerational trauma are root causes of many of the health and social challenges in the NWT today. To address the effects of trauma, HSS will work to strengthen preventative measures and awareness. Furthermore, HSS is committed to improving access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate care for vulnerable residents with complex health and social care needs. This will be achieved by clearly defining the suite of continuing care services for residents. To improve access to health care and ensure residents have access to sustainable and equitable care, HSS will prioritize the implementation of primary health care reform in the regions and will establish a governance model for chronic disease management.

While continuing to improve cultural safety and anti-racism in the delivery of its own programs and services, HSS will also support, where possible, the efforts of other GNWT departments in expanding their delivery of cultural safety and anti-racism training by sharing best practices and resources.

A shared vision for healthy communities requires a whole-of-GNWT approach to advance long-term public safety. Through the development and implementation of elder abuse training for GNWT Departments, HSS will help protect seniors and elders from abuse and neglect.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Explore options to support Economic Reconciliation through more flexible and streamlined funding arrangements with Indigenous governments.	Develop and implement funding structures that reduce administrative burdens for communities and increase local autonomy in program design.	# of funding agreements per partner.	
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Train HSS staff, while supporting GNWT Departments in their delivery of cultural safety and anti-racism training by offering resources and promoting best practices.	# of HSS staff trained a year. Pathways for supporting GNWT Departments identified.	

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	Clarify and redefine roles and responsibilities for HSS corporate support, and program and service delivery between the Department and Authorities.	Roles and responsibilities defined.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the Government of Northwest Territories through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of residents and communities.	Contribute to GNWT Restoring Balance exercise.	Income assessment process and fee structures established and incorporated into more HSS program and service delivery areas.	

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	In collaboration with GNWT partners, increase access to transitional housing for individuals in recovery.	# of Transitional Housing Addictions Recovery Programs (THARP) supported by HSS and partners.	

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable.	Advance meat processing safety regulations to support safe production of meat by NWT food producers.	% of producers trained on regulatory requirements.	100% of producers trained on regulatory requirements.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Deliver equitable access to sustainable primary care in all NWT communities.	Update HSS system approach to quality assurance.	Critical incident guidelines reviewed and updated.	2028
	Advance Electronic Health Record (EHR) Implementation.	Replace MediPatient (Clinical Information System) registration, admission, discharge, and transfer modules.	2028
	As part of GNWT Restoring Balance, progressively identify, define and communicate core programs services for HSS system, including insured services.	% of programs and services assessed to determine if core service, including insured services.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Continue Primary Health Care Reform.	Integrated primary care framework developed.	Framework communicated, performance monitoring in place by 2025.
		Performance measures established and trended to identify improvement areas.	
	Transform Public Health System.	Public health considerations are built into all appropriate health information systems and processes.	2028
		% of Canadian public health accreditation standards met.	NWT Public Health meets 100% of Canadian public health accreditation standards.
		Clarity and alignment of roles and responsibilities between Department and Authorities.	
	Modernize regulatory framework and expand scope of practice for pharmacists.	Work completed in alignment with Health and Social Services Professions Act implementation.	2026
	Support youth in care as they transition from childhood to adulthood through the completion of the Action Plan.	Progress on publicly disseminated action tracker.	
	Focus on health promotion and preventative care, and disease prevention across all age groups.	Progress on establishment of governance model.	
	Improve Chronic Disease Prevention and Management through the establishment of a governance model and standards of care.	Progress on standards of care developed and implemented.	
	Improve access to information about available mental health and addictions services.	Progress on public-facing resources, model for access, indicators and measures of equitable access.	Public-facing resources, model for access, indicators and measures available by 2026.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	With partners and across the HSS system and the GNWT, improve the co-ordination of public health education and awareness.	Areas of co-ordination identified and actioned.	
	In partnership with existing community resources, increase access to early childhood development programs and services.	% increase in Well Child visits. % of NWT communities with access to programs that support healthy families.	
Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions, while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.	Create, support, and evaluate recruitment and retention strategies and initiatives.	% decrease in employee turnover. % decrease in vacancy rates.	
	Partner with GNWT Departments to identify and support opportunities to improve the availability of market housing, critical to the recruitment and retention of HSS professionals.	% decrease in employee turnover. % decrease in vacancy rates.	
	Prioritize connecting with NWT students and graduates for employment opportunities with HSS System and reduce barriers to entry for residents into HSS professions.	% of NWT resident health and social services professionals. % of new hires that are NWT residents.	Increased %.
	Amend the Health and Social Services Profession Act to modernize regulatory framework for pharmacists, midwives and dental hygienists.	Progress on Health and Social Services Profession Act amendments.	Amendments implemented by 2026.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Improve medical travel and out-of-territory care, with a focus on clinical coordination and cultural safety.	Review and update medical travel program, including scheduling, appointment co-ordination, and communication.	Updated medical travel program in place.	

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Better meet the needs of foster caregivers and First Nation, Mtis, and Inuit children/youth in the NWT.	% of foster caregivers trained in HEART and SPIRIT ¹ .	70% by 2028.
	Redesign proposed respite and foster care model(s) for families receiving prevention and protection services.	Proposed care models developed to reflect Indigenous practices.	2027
	Review and develop HSS policies and programs that are culturally safe, anti-racist and trauma-informed.	Pathways for policy review and development designed and implemented.	2027
		Re-designed territorial prenatal education program.	2028

¹ HEART: Helping Establish Able Resource-Homes Together; SPIRIT: the Strong Parent Indigenous Relationships Information Training.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Support Indigenous governments and other partners to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, northern and regional trauma treatment, mental wellness and addictions programming by removing administrative barriers and streamlining supports.	Identify system changes to strengthen engagement with the Indigenous Advisory Body (IAB).	Pathway to consider and address recommendations from IAB established.	
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Implement review for revised approach to early intervention service delivery and training.	Scope of review defined, and progress on review.	Training modules completed by 2026.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Update HSS emergency response plans to reflect lessons learned from after-action review, including clarification of HSS roles in overall GNWT response, and on a regular basis.	Emergency response plans updated.	
	Establish HSS Emergency Management working group to provide oversight and coordination of HSS specific emergency response and support our partners.	Working group established and active.	

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions.	Develop and implement elder abuse training and awareness campaigns for GNWT service providers and organizations serving seniors.	Progress on the development of elder abuse training.	
		# of relevant GNWT departments and organizations that participate in training sessions.	
Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.	Work with partners to deliver education and awareness campaign focused on illicit drugs, by providing data, expertise, and tools.	# of Naloxone kits distributed.	
		# of Fentanyl testing strips distributed. # of communications and education sessions.	

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The HSS system, faces several challenges, including increasing rates of chronic disease, impacts related to mental health and substance use, an aging population and significant health status disparities. This is combined with significant fiscal challenges and mounting accumulated Health and Social Services Authority debts.

Health of the Population and Equity of Outcomes

Relative to the rest of Canada, the NWT population fares worse in several lifestyle indicators such as daily smoking, heavy drinking, and obesity. These disparities are linked to differences in social determinants of health due to racism, colonialization, and the legacies of the residential school system. The lack of a robust Public Health Information system has resulted in reduced effectiveness of coordinated health response and preventative measures.

The Electronic Health Record Program (EHR) initiatives will provide an information framework to support improved client identity and data, as well as future sharing of information among program areas. Acknowledging and addressing systemic racism in the HSS system will improve accessibility and improve the ability of the system to identify disease conditions at earlier stages. Primary Health Care Reform is a HSS system priority, to provide residents with the right care, by the right provider, at the right time and place through the delivery of culturally safe and people-centered health and social services.

Aging NWT Population

The number of seniors in the NWT is projected to increase by 59% by 2035. The combination of an aging population and a rising chronic disease rate results in an increased need for health services, including home and community care and long-term care services.

Most recently, a whole-of-government Seniors Strategic Framework was released and provides a roadmap for GNWT departments to improve services to aid seniors to age in place. Updated NWT Long Term Care standards were completed in March 2024 and are being implemented beginning in April 2024. Home Care Standards are expected to be completed by March 31, 2025. The Electronic Health Record initiatives will assist with mitigating multiple risks through information and technology improvements for program areas.

Better Access to Better Services

To improve the experience of residents, programs and services must consider issues of equity, address them where possible, and avoid contributing to barriers to access.

The HSS system is focused on improving and designing new models of access, reducing wait times, strengthening cultural safety, addressing anti-Indigenous and systemic racism, and creating a more robust system of supports. HSS has invested in 811 services to provide 24/7 nurse advice, mental health support and smoking cessation. Continued expansion of this service will support system access and health care

improvements. As well, increased focus has been placed on client experience and cultural safety through the newly established Office of Client Experience and Indigenous Patient Advocate positions, and enhancements to patient navigation. The Electronic Health Record will enable a more complete patient record, with the right information being shared with the right person, at the right time. The HSS system is advancing integrated care to prioritize early childhood development, and culture-centered, preventative approaches to supporting parents, caregivers, and nurturing children.

Quality, Efficiency and Sustainability of the Health and Social Services

Increasing cost pressures and the increasing demand for programs and services require efforts to manage growth in expenditures and maximize the return on health and social service system investments. These pressures are resulting in an affordability issue for the HSS System and the GNWT overall. There is much reliance on third party funding to support system sustainability initiatives and capacity is challenged.

Work under the Health and Social Service System Sustainability Plan continues to focus on initiatives targeting cost containment, quality improvement, and alignment of funding and services levels, while also contributing to the GNWT Restoring Balance initiative.

Stable and Representative Workforce

The NWT, like the rest of Canada, faces challenges in recruiting and retaining the necessary workforce for effectively and efficiently delivering services.

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services System Human Resources Plan (2021-2024) focuses on building a robust and representative workforce supported by strong leadership fostering an organizational culture rooted in the principles of cultural safety and anti-racism. The objectives of the Plan are to promote informed decision-making related to workforce planning, support recruitment and retention, develop and support Indigenous populations pursuing careers in HSS, implement enhanced attraction and recruitment strategies, increase employee engagement, provide quality and targeted training, and improve health, safety, and wellness support systems for staff. Modernization of information systems will increase availability of appropriate tools and information to support staff working in the system, which supports recruitment and retention.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Health and Social Services system has been challenged with annual deficits for many years. The accumulated deficit for the Health and Social Services Authorities was \$238 million as of March 31, 2023. Through the *NWT Health and Social Services System Sustainability Plan (2020)*, a multi-year and multi-tiered approach, the Department and the Authorities have been working to address the financial challenges facing the system. The Plan has been guiding actions and the consideration of options for savings, reflecting operational efficiency, quality improvements, and service scope adjustments. There was never the intent, nor the expectation, that the actions and options identified would eliminate the accumulated deficit; instead, the focus has been on mitigating further cost growth in a time of significant inflation, as well as a period of unique and enormous demand for health and social services. Key areas of focus for sustainability over the next four years, while supporting and contributing to the overall GNWT Restoring Balance initiative include:

- Pharmaceutical management to support sustainable extended health benefit and core health care programs.
- Defining insured and core services for the HSS system and to inform priority delivery with limited resources.
- Implementing changes to the medical travel program and policies.
- Identifying opportunities for revenue generation within the HSS System, with the establishment of income assessment processes to ensure equitable access to program and services and responsible use of limited public funds.

The Department has been successful in negotiating multi-year funding agreements with various federal partners which supports HSS system sustainability efforts, as well as the GNWT fiscal strategy for the 20th Assembly, while also ensuring progress in the delivery of enhanced programs and service delivery.

- The Aging with Dignity Bilateral agreement with Health Canada is a five-year funding agreement to help Canadians age with dignity, closer to home, with access to home care or care in a safe long-term care facility.
- The Working Together to Improve Health Care for Canadians Bilateral Agreement with Health Canada is a five-year funding agreement to expand access to health services, supporting health workers and reducing backlogs, modernizing health systems, and improving access to quality mental health, substance use, and addictions services.
- The Territorial Health Investment Fund agreement with Health Canada is a five-year funding agreement. The NWT is using the funding to offset the costs of medical travel and support health system innovations in the areas of Primary Health Care, Health Human Resources and Cultural

Safety and Anti-Racism. Funding under the agreement provides for dedicated resources for System Sustainability.

- The HSS System administers the Non-Insured Health Benefit program on behalf of Indigenous Services Canada. An agreement has recently been reached which provides HSS with an additional \$24.2 million in each 2023-24 and 2024-25, addressing a significant amount of the funding shortfall under prior arrangements, specific to medical travel. There is commitment by Indigenous Services Canada to prioritize further conversations in 2024-25 to ensure the GNWT is adequately compensated for the program administration across all program areas (e.g. vision, dental, medical travel, medial equipment and supplies).
- In 2024-25, the Department will be negotiating with Indigenous Services Canada to renew the Northern Wellness Agreement and the First Nations and Inuit Home and Community Care Agreement. These are typically five-year agreements providing significant investment to support community wellness and homecare initiatives. HSS will advocate for funding that reflects forced growth and with which we can advance priorities in these areas.

Departmental Highlights

Administration and Support Services

To keep pace with changing patient and provider needs, HSS is focused on developing options for technology investments. In 2023, the NWT Helpline and the Quitline were integrated into 811 to support equitable and efficient access to high quality 24/7 medical advice and wellness support. An area of focus moving forward is improving the identification of diseases of concern (e.g., Measles) so that a timelier public health response can occur.

To ensure investments are prioritized, coordinated, and resourced effectively, the HSS Territorial Information Management Technology Strategy and Roadmap will guide investments. HSS will also develop and implement an HSS Information Management Framework (2024 – 2026) that enables a balanced approach to privacy protection and information sharing, with a goal of digitizing all HSS processes by 2028.

Work on the new electronic health record (EHR) is underway to achieve a full-system modernization through strategic technology and communication investments for coordinated information sharing, data security and improved clinical decision-making. There is also a focus on establishing a governance structure to manage ongoing information needs for clients and practitioners. The modernization will take several years and will continue past the life of this assembly.

Health and Social Programs

To enhance health care in the communities, including focusing on culturally safe care, and providing the right combination of mental wellness and addiction services, treatments and supports, when and where people need them, HSS will continue to implement Stepped Care 2.0. Further, construction will begin for the *Wellness and Recovery Centre* – a combined-use facility for Sobering Center/Day and Cultural Programming/Outreach in Summer 2024. It is anticipated the Centre will open in late 2027. Finally, HSS will continue to support the Northern Indigenous Counselling Program, being led by the Dene Wellness Warriors in partnership with Rhodes Wellness College, which focuses on the delivery of holistic healing for Indigenous residents.

Tenant Improvements for long term care, extended care, outpatient rehabilitation, and primary care have been completed on the *łwegòatì* Building. Opening will be phased beginning Spring 2024.

Additionally, to support the health and dignity of our residents, stand alone modular buildings to help communities deal with deceased bodies in a dignified manner have been built in Fort Liard, Tuktoyaktuk, Fort McPherson, and Gameti as of 2024. Buildings in Aklavik, Ulukhaktok, and Fort Good Hope are expected to be completed over the next two fiscal years.

As described in the Child, Youth and Family Services Strategic Direction and Action Plan, the HSS System aims to reduce administrative demands for increased opportunities to connect with families by completing

an analysis on the feasibility, considerations, and barriers of a single electronic file system and centralized intake model for child and family services.

Following the 2023 evaluation and redesign of the Child and Youth Counselling Initiative, ECE and HSS are developing shared processes that will support ongoing communication between the departments to optimize and further improve the delivery of mental health and wellness services for children, youth and families.

To improve health promotion, chronic disease prevention and self-care in the communities, HSS will prioritize education and access to free prevention resources, including pregnancy tests, condoms, naloxone, fentanyl test strips without supervision in larger communities.

To ensure continuous quality improvement and the delivery of care in a manner that is culturally safe, holistic, and reflective of best practice and consistent across facilities, HSS will modernize health system standards and clinical guidelines to advance primary health care reform.

Children, youth, and families receiving child and family services are often better supported when there is engagement and pathways for community and Indigenous government participation. HSS is working collaboratively with Indigenous governments who are developing and enacting child and family services laws under the *Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (Federal Act) or through a final self-government agreement. Since January 2020, the GNWT has been working to advance the mandate of the Federal Act by implementing the national principles and standards in the delivery of child and family services in the NWT. The implementation of the Federal Act advances reconciliation and supports program and service delivery by Indigenous governments.

Long Term and Continuing Care

To reduce gaps and barriers to promoting aging in place for seniors, the Department will develop and implement Home and Community Care and Supported Living Standards. This includes implementation of an auditing process for compliance. Long term care bed projections will be updated in 2025-26 and every five years following. Finally, over the next five years, DHSS will plan and construct long-term care facilities in Fort Simpson, Hay River, and Inuvik.

Supplementary Health Benefits

To ensure equitable access to publicly funded benefits (drugs, vision, dental and medical supplies and equipment), implementation of the new Extended Health Benefits Policy is underway, with an effective date of September 1, 2024. The redesign of the policy allows for more residents to access benefits, and eligibility for benefits is based on financial need.

Human Resource Initiatives

NWT Health and Social Services System Human Resources Plan

The Northwest Territories Health and Social Services System Human Resources Plan (2021-2024) has a vision of a robust and representative workforce, supported by strong leadership and an organizational culture rooted in the principles of cultural safety and anti-racism.

The Plan has six strategic goals:

1. Informed Decision-Making Related to Workforce Planning, Recruitment, and Retention
2. Developing and Supporting Indigenous and Northern Populations in the Pursuit of Health and Social Services Careers
3. Enhanced Attraction and Recruitment Strategies and Goals
4. Increased Employee Engagement through Organizational Change and Leadership Development
5. Support Quality Training and Targeted Development
6. Enhanced Health, Safety, and Wellness Support Systems

An overarching principle guiding the Plan is a commitment to addressing systemic racism and promoting cultural safety and anti-racism within the HSS System.

As the NWT HSS System approaches the conclusion of its current four-year Plan, an updated plan will be developed to leverage the successes and learnings from the current plan. Next steps towards the updated plan will consider assessment and feedback mechanisms, continued investment in workforce development, strategic hiring and talent management and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism Training

The Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism division leads the development, continuous improvement, and delivery of cultural safety and anti-racism training across the HSS system. This mandatory training for HSS staff is aimed to disrupt and correct long-standing racist beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours at interpersonal and organizational levels by providing information and opportunities for discussion about the history and ongoing legacy of colonialism and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada. The training facilitates increased understanding of how racism manifests within both personal and organizational settings. As a follow up to the training, the Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism and Community, Culture, and Innovation teams will continue to work with each DHSS division to develop and publish a mandate statement describing commitments to cultural safety and anti-racism. Over the course of the 20th Assembly, DHSS will support GNWT Departments in their delivery of cultural safety and anti-racism training by offering resources and promoting best practices.

Legislative Initiatives

The department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Health and Social Services Professions Act (HSSPA)</i>	Amend Act to clarify role of registration committee; allow for registration of retired members; add regulation making power for jurisprudence exams; clarify ability of registrar to impose conditions; require mandatory employer reporting if employee is accused of unprofessional conduct; and add ability to require, as part of application for registration, confirmation of employment in the NWT.	Fall 2024	
2	<i>Child and Family Services Act</i>	Amend the Act to address the Standing Committee on Social Development’s recommendations in their Report on the review of the Act and align the Act with the federal Act and recent changes in BC and Manitoba.	Summer 2024	

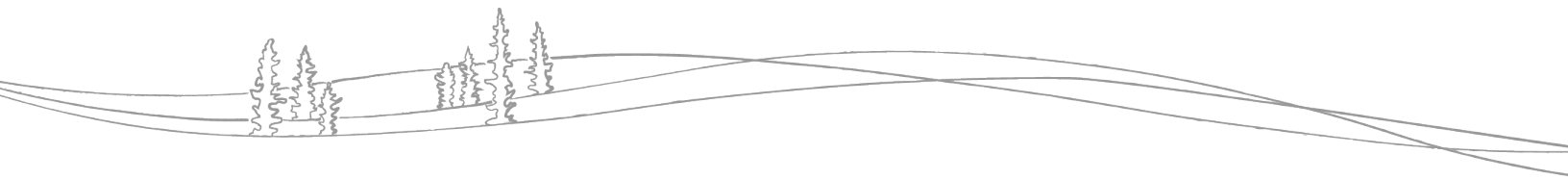
#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
3	<i>Vital Statistics Act and regulations</i>	Make amendments to correct error regarding 16–18-year-olds applying to change their gender; make the display of sex on birth certificates optional; restrict the use of third-party online vendors in obtaining birth certificates; allow up to four persons to be recognized as the parents of a child; add professionals that can complete the formal Medical Certificate of Death; introduce a change of gender certificate for residents born outside of the NWT; clarify registration of birth events that occur in the NWT but outside of a hospital and without a medical at endance; and gender neutral language.	Summer 2024	
4	<i>Change of Name Act</i>	Amend the Act to require fingerprinting; restrict sex offenders from changing their name; formalize the ability to revert to a person’s birth name at any time; and add situations where consent is not required.	Fall 2024	

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Pharmacy Profession Regulations under HSSPA	Modernize the regulatory framework for pharmacists, including an expanded scope of practice, by transitioning the regulation of pharmacists from the <i>Pharmacy Act</i> to the HSSPA.	CIF: to align with amendments to HSSPA.
2	Midwifery Profession Regulations under HSSPA	Modernize the regulatory framework for midwives, including an expanded scope of practice, by transitioning the regulation of pharmacists from the <i>Midwifery Profession Act</i> to the HSSPA.	CIF: to align with amendments to HSSPA.
3	Dental Hygienist Profession Regulations under HSSPA	Modernize the regulatory framework for dental hygienists by transitioning the regulation of dental hygienists to the HSSPA.	CIF: 2025
4	Meat Processing Safety Regulations under PHA	Develop new regulations to help facilitate the availability of safe meat and meat products for public consumption.	CIF: 2024
5	Reportable Disease Control Regulations under PHA	Amend the Regulations to change approved resource documents and update the requirements for contact tracing.	CIF: 2024
6	Long Term Care Regulations under HIHSSA	Develop new regulations to regulate public and private long term care facilities.	CIF: 2026
7	Pharmacy Profession Regulations under HSSPA	Modernize the regulatory framework for pharmacists, including an expanded scope of practice, by transitioning the regulation of pharmacists from the <i>Pharmacy Act</i> to the HSSPA.	CIF: to align with amendments to HSSPA.

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Extended Health Benefits Policy	The new Extended Health Benefits Policy is effective September 1, 2024.	
2	NWT Medical Travel Policy	The ongoing negotiations with Indigenous Services Canada on the funding agreement for Provincial and Territorial Governments will require modernization of the NWT Medical Travel Policy.	

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY,
TOURISM AND INVESTMENT

2024-25 to 2027-28

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The GNWT is committed to developing a strong and independent territory in which individuals, families and communities share the benefits and responsibilities of a prosperous, environmentally responsible economy.

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment's (ITI) mandate is to promote economic self-sufficiency through responsible mineral and petroleum resource development; advance creative and traditional economies such as arts and fine craft, film, fur, agriculture, and commercial fishing; and the promotion and support of tourism, trade and investment, business, and manufacturing and secondary industries, to create a prosperous, diverse and sustainable economy for the benefit of all Northwest Territories residents.

ITI is working to establish an economic foundation that bolsters economic diversity, sustainability, and consistent growth, in both communities and regional centres. Efforts will be focused on strengthening and diversifying the well-established extractive resource sector, which serves as the core of the territory's economy, while continuing to build support for all sectors to grow.

Driven by our territory's participation in world-class resource development projects and supported by initiatives to secure and develop a stable of northern workers and investors, ITI is investing in community self-reliance to mitigate the NWT from the effects of the ebb and flow of a globally influenced resource economy and to provide NWT residents with grass-roots economic opportunities and choices.

Activity	Business functions supported
Corporate Management	Provide overall management, financial and strategic planning, communication, human resource planning, and leadership to the department.
	Develop, review, and amend policies, programs, and legislation supported by associated economic analysis.
	Supply program guidance, support, advice, and financial assistance at the community level.
	Advance territorial economic development strategies to realize growth opportunities.
Economic Diversification and Business Support	Support a network of Community Futures Organizations and economic development officers.
	Provide advice to access investment capital and loans through partnered lending programs, and provides financial contributions under the Support to Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED) Policy.
	Deliver business pathfinding and training to residents looking to start a business and improve capacity or skills.
	Provide guidance, programming and financial support to creative and traditional economies, agriculture and film and media to diversify economic development opportunities for NWT residents.
	Lead GNWT in internal and international trade matters and administers the immigration business stream of the NWT Nominee Program and innovation.
	Administer the Business Incentive Policy and the NWT Manufactured Products Policy to ensure that NWT residents, businesses and manufacturers benefit from GNWT procurement.
Mineral and Petroleum Resources	Advance initiatives to maximize economic sustainability through broadening and diversifying the resource base and guide and attract future resource exploration and development in the NWT.
	Retain and maximize benefits from resource development through legislation and agreements, such as Socio-Economic Agreements and the Diamond Policy Framework.

	<p>Royalty and tenure administration for mineral and energy development on NWT public lands.</p> <p>Build awareness and relationships among NWT residents, communities, governments and industry to facilitate responsible resource development and stewardship.</p> <p>Promote economic self-sufficiency through Indigenous Governments and businesses participation in the resource sector.</p> <p>Advance NWT geoscience knowledge, data, and information of the Northwest Territories (NWT) through geoscience research including permafrost, analysis of mineral and energy resources, and public publications of digital data and reports.</p>
Tourism and Parks	<p>Fund destination marketing for the NWT.</p> <p>Support key tourism infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Grow the capacity of the NWT’s tourism industry.</p> <p>Maintain and upgrade the NWT’s natural parks system.</p>

Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found at Departments’ website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

ITI's continued work to support NWT residents, communities, businesses, and Indigenous governments and organizations to take advantage of opportunities to participate in the economy will play an important part in helping the 20th Assembly make meaningful progress on all five of their priorities.

A solid, economic foundation including a diversified and regionally active natural resource sector will aim to insulate the territory from traditional boom bust cycles and still include a robust natural resources sector. ITI's work to support the equitable access to economic participation at the local, regional, and territorial level will enhance sectors and support businesses and provide a platform that will support all priorities.

Finding innovative ways to encourage industries to grow and insulate from these shocks will ensure businesses continue to serve and meet customers' needs and remain in the Territory. A maintained focus is needed on strengthening sectors; supporting and encouraging innovation and new economic development opportunities including attracting investment. This will build economic resiliency and further support the housing, healthcare and safe communities' priorities.

To do this, ITI will continue to work with Indigenous Governments, its partner departments, trade partners and associations, and stakeholders to attract investment support the strengthening of all sectors including, tourism, creative and traditional economies, as well as the natural resources sectors and their support sectors.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	Complete the Mineral Resources Act (MRA) in collaboration with Indigenous Governments as per the Intergovernmental Council Legislative Development Protocol.	# of steps completed under Intergovernmental Council Legislative Development Protocol.	100% of steps completed.
	Support EIA to track and monitor and report on actions taken by the Departments to fulfill obligations and support objectives under TRC and MMIWG.	Procurement and SEA program review measures (once developed).	Target TBD dependent on measures developed.
Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage the federal government to advance issues of shared interest.	Work with Indigenous Governments, departments, and businesses to collaborate on resource exploration and development.	# of joint resource initiatives with Indigenous Governments.	4 per year.
Explore options to support Economic Reconciliation through more flexible and streamlined funding arrangements with Indigenous governments.	Migrate programs under ITI’s Grants and Contributions Policy to ensure consistent and transparent funding delivery in support of economic reconciliation.	# of ITI programs migrated under the G&C Policy.	100% of ITI contribution programs are under the G&C Policy.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Continue to implement Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice 71 and 72.	# of recommendations specific to the Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) implemented. TBD Socio Economic Agreement (SEA) Program measures once program is redesigned.	

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	Improve accessibility of the Northwest Territories Nominee program (NTNP) streams.	Measures TBD	Targets TBD
	Improve accessibility of the Northwest Territories Arts Program Streams.	Measures TBD	Targets TBD
Better streamline administrative processes, policies, legislation across government to enhance the capacity of the public service to work better together.	Migrate programs under ITI's Grants and Contributions (G&C) Policy to ensure consistent and transparent program delivery.	# of ITI programs migrated under the G&C Policy.	100% of ITI contribution programs are under the G&C Policy.
	Complete the Mineral Administrative and Registry System to manage mineral land tenure on the same platform as the Land Tenure Optimization System.	# of companies that manage their mineral tenure electronically. # of companies using online map staking.	100% of companies are managing tenure electronically. 100% of companies staking, using online map staking.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	Engage departmental staff as appropriate on updating organizational structure to support the new responsibilities required to bring the Mineral Resource Act (MRA) into force.	# of mineral and energy resource jobs updated and evaluated.	New organizational structure completed. MRA comes into force with updated organizational structure.
Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the GNWT through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of residents and communities.	Update the fee structure to bring the Mineral Resource Act (MRA) into force.	# of fees reviewed and updated.	MRA comes into force with a new fee structure. Increase revenues.
	Complete the review of the mining fiscal regime.	Publicly release the results of the royalty review.	Royalty structure is updated.
	Monitor new parks fees for intended outcomes.	% increase of park fees and park visitation statistics.	Increase revenues. 90% of statistics maintained.
	Monitor tourism fees for intended outcomes.	% increase of user fees and # of Tourism Operator Licences (TOL) issued.	90% of TOLs maintained.
Empower the public service by ensuring they are provided the flexibility to deliver programs and implement policies in ways that best serve residents.	Continue to support regional decision-making.	% of program funding delivered by regional offices.	TBD

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Develop and implement a public registry under the Mineral Resources Act (MRA) and increase notification and information sharing with Indigenous Governments.	% of companies that migrate under the new MRA. # of notifications to Indigenous Governments. # of implementation engagements. # of tenure transactions.	100% of tenure transactions delivered within new policy and timelines.
	Continue to support businesses by providing information sessions.	# information session by type (business sessions, lunch and learns, etc.).	Information sessions in every region annually.
	Complete schedules under Grants and Contributions Policy.	# of schedules completed.	The Grants and Contributions Policy includes all ITI contribution programs.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	ITI will work with FIN, Housing NWT and other partners to complete analysis/research on the NWT housing market to better describe the total housing continuum, supply and demand and quantify gaps and barriers.	# of gaps identified. # of barriers identified.	Target TBD depending on gaps and barriers identified.
	Work with industry partners to determine opportunities for economic sectors to play a role in increase access to housing.	# of facilitations for repurposing existing assets to increase housing options explored.	Target TBD depending on options identified.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities.	Conduct economic analysis of the housing sector to determine whether an industry-led micro cluster could be fostered for the NWT housing sector.	# of barriers identified. # of opportunities identified.	Target TBD depending on barriers and opportunities identified.
	Make geoscience information publicly available so that new community developments are informed by existing geoscience information.	# of documents.	Increased use of geoscience data in decision-making.
	Support community governments with their community economic development plans including identifying housing opportunities where they exist.	# of community economic development plans funded and updated.	
Support residents to gain skills and education in the trades through a range of programs and partnerships.	Support transfer of skills from mine closures by working with Indigenous governments, partners and departments to identify available opportunities for skill transfer and workforce migration.	# of NWT mine employees that find employment opportunities in the NWT.	100% of Diavik mine closure workers that want to stay in the NWT and employed. NWT workforce is maintained.

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	Continue to promote immigration in the NWT through the Northwest Territories Nominee Program (NTNP).	# of nominees in progress.	Increase business nominees in progress.
		# nominees approved.	Increase business nominees completed.
		# jobs created.	Increase jobs created.
		\$ invested in NWT.	Increase NWT investment.
	Improve accessibility of the Northwest Territories Nominee program (NTNP) streams.	Measures TBD	Targets TBD
	Through Socio-Economic Agreements, increase Indigenous and NWT resident participation in the mineral resource sector, over all phases of project lifecycles.	% Northern procurement for major resource projects.	Increase NWT Indigenous and NWT resident procurement and employment in the natural resource sector.
		% Northern employment for major resource projects.	
	Work with ECE and other GNWT partners to advance plans to transition the diamond mine workforce.	Measures TBD through working group.	Targets TBD through working group.
	Promote and support mentorship and capacity building programs in all non-extractive sectors.	# of participants in ITI mentorship and capacity building programs.	Increase participation in skill development programs.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support Indigenous Governments in increasing geoscience knowledge of the resource potential of their lands.	# of geoscience studies completed or underway. # of joint resource initiatives with Indigenous Governments.	2 geoscience studies completed. Increase participation in joint resource initiatives.
	Participate in the Giant Mine Remediation Project (GMRP) as a co-proponent with the Federal government to ensure regulatory requirements are met.	Targets for GMRP key socioeconomic performance indicators are being met or exceeded, revised, and improved based on lessons learned.	GMRP employment targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous employment 25-35% Northern employment 36% Female employment 15-30%
Increase investment certainty and create opportunities for the private sector by streamlining administrative processes, and ensuring regulatory systems and decision-making are consistent, efficient, and predictable.	Identify and work with partners to create and release an economic vision to 2035.	Performance measures TBD with economic vision.	Economic vision for the NWT is articulated and progress to achieving it is measurable.
	Identify and work with partners to create and release an Investment Strategy for the NWT.	Performance measures TBD with strategy, including population growth measure.	Economic vision for the NWT is articulated and progress to achieving it is measurable. Increase in NWT population. Increase in investment.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Complete and implement Mineral Resources Act (MRA) regulations, including royalty regime and bring the MRA into force.	<p>Regulations drafted, consultation completed, Act is in force Q4 2025-26.</p> <p>% of companies that migrate under the new MRA.</p> <p># of notifications to Indigenous Governments.</p> <p># of implementation engagement events.</p> <p># of tenure transactions.</p>	<p>Increased exploration expenditures.</p> <p>100% of tenure transactions delivered within service timeframe.</p>
	Work with partners to support and promote sustainable development of resources via efficient and timely regulatory review and environmental assessment (EA) processes and decision making.	<p># of regulatory improvement initiatives identified by the Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogues (MVOD).</p> <p># of regulatory initiatives completed under MVOD.</p> <p># of facilitated pathfinding interactions including Resource Development Advisory Groups (RDAG) between proponents, Indigenous Governments and partners.</p>	<p>MVOD meets once per year.</p> <p>1 regulatory workplan completed annually under MVOD.</p> <p>100% of requests for support are actioned.</p> <p>New projects enter production.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support advanced and operating projects.	<p># of pathfinding services delivered annually to resource industry clients, and between proponents, Indigenous Governments and partners.</p> <p># of interactions that promote Indigenous Government and NWT resident participation in advanced and operating projects.</p> <p># of projects in advanced and operating stages.</p>	Increase projects reaching the advanced and operating stages.
	Support resource exploration.	<p># of pathfinding services delivered annually to resource industry clients, between proponents, Indigenous Governments and partners.</p> <p>Ratio of leveraged private to public sector investment for Mining Incentive Program (MIP).</p> <p># of NTGS geoscience research and information documents publicly released.</p> <p># of NTGS publications downloaded.</p> <p># unique visitors to the NTGS website.</p> <p># of geoscience projects funded under new partnership agreements.</p>	Increase resource exploration expenditures.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Work with partners to support increased mineral and energy resource development capacity for Indigenous Governments and Indigenous Organizations.	# of support initiatives.	2 Indigenous led or partnered projects funded.
	Implement the actions in Priorities for Critical Minerals in NWT.	# of critical minerals actions ongoing or completed.	100% of the actions in Priorities for Critical Minerals in NWT are implemented.
	Outreach to residents about NWT mineral opportunities including critical minerals and conduct public opinion survey.	# outreach activities.	Increased awareness and support through public opinion survey.
	Facilitate collaborative efforts among industry stakeholders and partners to identify and address investment barriers.	# barriers identified.	TBD depending on barriers identified.
	Implement the actions from the procurement review under the 19th Legislative Assembly by implementing recommendations specific to the NWT Manufactured Products Policy (NMPP).	# of recommendations specific to the NMPP implemented.	Increased NWT manufacturers.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks.	Work with mineral and energy sector clients to assist them in business case development for infrastructure projects.	# of projects supported.	3 projects funded.
	Advance geoscience research on lower carbon energy initiatives and resources (carbon sequestration, geothermal, critical minerals).	# of collaborative research projects completed.	NWT Carbon capture study is completed.
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Implementation of the Innovation Action Plan (IAP).	IAP measures once developed.	Target TBD depending on measures developed.
	Implement new Business Incentive Policy (BIP) and develop and implement performance measures.	BIP performance measures TBD.	Increase number of companies registered with BIP. Service standards are met.
	Implement recommendations of the procurement review including recommendations specific to the NWT Manufactured Products Policy (NMPP).	# of recommendations implemented. # of recommendations specific to the NMPP implemented.	Increase NWT manufacturers. Service standards are met.
	Improve accessibility of the Northwest Territories Arts Program Streams.	Measures TBD	Measures TBD

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Continue to support NWT artists and arts organizations to strengthen the NWT creative sector including raising the profile of NWT arts industries and supporting creation of new jobs and opportunities within the arts.	<p>Amount of funding provided.</p> <p># artists and organizations.</p> <p>Return on Investment (ROI).</p> <p># of activities and partnerships to raise profile.</p>	<p>Increased number of funded artists and arts organizations funding.</p> <p>Increase leveraged investment in the sector (ROI).</p> <p>Increased number of activities to raise profile.</p>
	Complete program review of Support to Entrepreneurs and Economic Development (SEED) Policy with new guidelines.	<p># of recommendations implemented.</p> <p># of changes/ improvements made.</p> <p>Performance measures TBD based on review.</p>	<p>Target TBD depending on performance measures developed.</p>
	Continue to engage with partners to streamline business supports services across the NWT.	# of collaborative engagements.	TBD depending on engagement.
	Work with partner departments to identify pathways to entrepreneurship in public housing and from income assistance.	# of barriers identified.	Target TBD depending on barriers identified.
	Implement the recommendations from the evaluation of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur (GMVF) program.	<p># of ITI related recommendations implemented.</p> <p># of fur sales.</p> <p># trappers.</p>	<p>Increased fur sales.</p> <p>Increased trappers.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Identify and promote access to opportunities in non-extractive sectors and creative and traditional economies.	# of Northern Food Development Program (NFDP) applicants.	Increase number of NFDP applicants.
		# of Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) applicants.	Increase number of SCAP applicants.
		# of commercial fishers.	Increase number of commercial fishers.
		Volume of fish harvested.	Increase volume of fish harvested.
		Ratio of enrolled vs completed for film and media workshops, courses, training programs, mentorships.	Increased participation in film and media workshops, courses, training programs, mentorships.
		# of film and media applications funded through NWT Film Commission programming.	Increase number of film and media applications funded.
	Explore potential pathways for the transformation of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation (FFMC) and the future trajectory of the commercial fishing sector.	Complete research on options for the transformation of the FFMC and the future of the commercial fishing sector.	TBD depending on research.
	Complete economic analysis of emerging sectors to support decision-making with a lens of supporting innovation and benefit retention.	# of sector analyses completed.	Complete 4 sector analyses.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Explore industry-led micro clusters.	# of existing micro clusters. # of emerging micro clusters.	1 micro enterprise cluster is established.
	Promote and support tourism sector growth across all regions through NWT.	# visitors. # visitor spend.	Increase visitor numbers to pre-pandemic levels. Increase visitor spend to pre-pandemic levels.
		# Tourism Operator Licences (TOL).	Maintain # TOL for 2 years and then increase.
	Work with partners to identify barriers for remote lodge operations.	# of barriers identified. # of pathfinding activities for the sector.	Target TBD depending on barriers identified 100% of requests for support are processed.
Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.	Work with partner departments to identify, understand and reduce barriers to land access and increase access to land for economic opportunities.	# barriers identified.	Target TBD on barriers identified.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions, while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.	Support HSS to create, support, and evaluate recruitment strategies and initiatives that attract quality talent to the HSS System through novel ways to attract health care professionals to live in the NWT.	# of promotions completed.	

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Review programs under ITI's Grants and Contributions Policy to ensure that trauma-informed, anti-racist, and prioritizing cultural safety considerations are considered where appropriate.	# of programs where flexibility is added to include trauma-informed and anti-racist provisions and prioritize cultural safety (ratio to total/already in place).	ITI contribution programs are delivered under a lens of cultural safety.
	Continue to include trauma-informed, anti-racist, and cultural safety practices in training for program delivery staff.	# of training sessions that include trauma-informed, anti-racist, and cultural safety practices delivered to program officers.	100% of staff complete training programs.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Support Indigenous governments and other partners to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, northern and regional trauma treatment, mental wellness and addictions programming by removing administrative barriers and streamlining supports.	Work with industry partners on program design that identifies barriers and ensures culturally appropriate provisions.	# of barriers to culturally safe programing identified. # of best practices on culturally appropriate programming design shared with industry partners.	Target TBD on barriers identified.
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	In support of well-being, continue to deliver ITI programming in the creative and traditional economy.	# artists. # trappers. # park visitations by NWT residents. # creative and traditional economy programs delivered in parks. # mentorships.	Increase in: # artists. # trappers. # park visitations by NWT residents. # creative and traditional economy programs delivered in parks. # mentorships.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Update ITI Departmental business continuity plan annually with regional considerations.	# of business continuity plans updated. # of parks plans updated.	100% of plans updated in 2024-25.
	Participate in federal supply chain initiatives.	# of communities assisted.	
	Support communities in reducing vulnerability of supply chains.		
	Support industry and communities with business continuity and emergency preparedness initiatives.	# of tools developed. # of applications and amount funded.	1 guidance tool developed.
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Support the increased understanding of the impacts of permafrost thaw on infrastructure.	Value (\$) of research leveraged. Amount of research completed (# of studies/published research/co-authored/etc.).	100% of the research completed available to the public.
	Support permafrost training opportunities and information sharing sessions.	# of community training sessions or information meetings. # of participants.	2 community training sessions or information meetings.
		# of outreach sessions.	2 outreach sessions.
		# of advisory activities. # of mentoring activities.	2 advisory activities. 5 mentoring activities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support ECC with flood and permafrost hazard mapping integration into LMA, especially pertaining to community surficial geology maps and geotechnical information.	# of publications available pertaining to NWT community surficial geology maps and geotechnical information. # downloaded.	Increased number of publications available online.
	Support private sector investment in innovative climate resilient infrastructure.	# of applications received and funded (baseline and yearly).	3 projects funded annually.
Invest in robust and redundant community, energy, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure.	Invest in climate-resilient and lower emission strategic infrastructure in NWT Parks.	# of projects completed.	10 climate-resilient and lower emission strategic infrastructure in NWT Parks completed.
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.	Support ECC with hazard mapping integration into LMA, especially pertaining to permafrost and surficial geology characterization and geotechnical information compilation especially around communities and infrastructure corridors.	# of accessible reports, maps and datasets pertaining to permafrost and surficial geology characterization and geotechnical information around communities and infrastructure corridors.	100% of the project reports available to the public.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions.	Continue to support public safety in parks.	# of incidents reported.	Reduction in incidents.
	Support HSS in its programming with the resource sector.	# HSS program related engagements with resource sector companies and organizations.	Increased HSS mental health sessions at mine sites.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

There are a number of risks facing the territory that will have direct and substantial effects on the department's ability to fulfill its mandate. These risks and work to mitigate them have been summarised below under the three main issues.

Diamond Production Horizon

Overall, diamond production in the NWT is projected to cease almost entirely by around 2031. Mineral exploration in the territory is currently on a slight increase due to exploration for critical minerals such as lithium. The establishment of new metal mines will only partially compensate for the loss in economic output from the diamond mine. In fact, even if all the potential metal mines on the horizon come online, they will not fill the economic gap left by the closing diamond mines.

Growth in other sectors is also hindered by the limitation of the NWT's infrastructure and associated accessibility issues, coupled with a high cost of living, inflation, and supply chain challenges. These difficulties are compounded by high inflation rates and elevated interest rates. The most pressing is the shortage of skilled workers that is putting a pause in private sector investment.

The Northwest Territories (NWT) has abundant mineral resources and has a huge opportunity to play an important role as the supplier of minerals essential for the energy transition. Exploration expenditures on the rise after several years, primarily driven by the global demand for critical minerals. Recently, there has been a surge in staking activities for lithium, alongside progress in various other projects focusing on cobalt, rare earth elements, lead-zinc, tungsten, and gold, all moving towards production. In response, ITI is actively collaborating with governments and partners to facilitate the responsible advancement of mineral projects, offering pathfinding services among other supports. ITI is also finalizing regulations for the *Mineral Resources Act*, which will introduce a new mineral tenure and royalty management framework emphasizing enhanced transparency and benefit retention. ITI continues to execute sector-specific strategies to stimulate investment interest in regions, optimize opportunities from natural resource projects, and promote regional economic growth and local business development, and implementation of the Priorities for Critical Minerals in the NWT.

Global Climate Change and Geopolitics

Globally influenced decisions and events are poised to continue to challenge the territory's economy. In response to the global pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the impacts of climate change, the federal government has passed the *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* and associated 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan that sets the bar for jurisdictions to move provincial and territorial emissions to net zero.

Moreover, geopolitical events, notably Russia's conflict with Ukraine, has created a monumental shift in attention towards the critical mineral supply necessary for this transition. The heightened focus on critical mineral supply, alongside inflation and supply chain realities and shortages of workers and materials, has resulted in escalated costs of living and doing business in the NWT. The NWT is the sole jurisdiction in Canada with a declining population base, creating challenges in retaining a skilled workforce to capitalize on critical mineral potential. China's dominance in critical minerals further complicates the situation.

The commitment to substantial greenhouse gas reductions is also having other effects. Potential investors in natural resources projects now demand that prospective projects demonstrate plans to achieve low or net-zero emissions by 2035.

These shifts have altered the landscape in which both national and international competition for investment and attraction occurs in all jurisdictions. Now, the NWT must pivot to navigate these changing dynamics, adapting its strategies to remain competitive in the face of evolving environmental and demographic challenges.

ITI is proactively pursuing a coordinated and strategic approach to both attract new investment and residents. This entails:

- Cultivating growth across all economic sectors by actively seeking investment opportunities.
- Strengthening local and regional economies, fostering entrepreneurial capabilities.
- Collaborating on strategies to boost investor confidence in the regulatory regime both locally and internationally.

Achieving the intent of the *Emissions Accountability Act* in the Northwest Territories, within the timeline set out, will require a robust and expanding economy to support the necessary infrastructure development across the territory. Safeguarding the mining sector is essential to for sustaining the overall economic well-being of the territory.

"Green" economic growth does not necessitate the reduction or shrinkage of the mining sector. Rather, it includes promoting the adoption of sustainable mining practices, or Environmental-Social-Governance (ESG). ITI is collaborating with Indigenous governments to develop regulations that will modernize the mineral resources sector in the NWT. Additionally, ITI is partnering with lead departments, regulatory agencies, and industry stakeholders through the Mackenzie Valley Operational Dialogues to identify regulatory efficiencies that enhance the effectiveness of the regulatory system. Furthermore, ITI is promoting innovation in mining technologies to reduce the sector's carbon footprint.

Cost of Living and Infrastructure Deficit

The high cost of living and doing business in the NWT presents a significant barrier to both attracting and retaining residents as well as fostering growth across all sectors. The elevated cost of living can be

attributed largely to the lack of strategic infrastructure in the territory including energy and corridor infrastructure.

ITI is committed to elevating the appeal of the territory for both investment and residency. One of the most notable competitive advantages is the NWT's collaborative model to resource development. The NWT leads in Indigenous participation in mining, exploration and development, setting a benchmark in Canada and worldwide. ITI works to champion the territory's high ESG standards for resource projects. Furthermore, the advancement of exploration and potential projects not only attracts commercial and residential energy customers but contributes to lowering the cost of living. Investments in significant transportation, energy and communications projects and also offer substantial economic growth and opportunity.

ITI is actively working to promote the territory's competitive edge across many sectors. Beyond its mineral resources, the NWT offers unique opportunities in film and satellite research, thanks to our northerly location and fiberoptic infrastructure. Additionally, residents' wealth of traditional knowledge enhances the territory's appeal for Northern research activities.

Moreover, the NWT's cold climate serves as a catalyst for innovation. The predictably harsh winters attract equipment, vehicle, aircraft, and technology manufacturers seeking to certify their products for extreme cold weather use. The NWT hosts one of the longest and most enduring ice roads globally. This is a feat of engineering constructed by contractors for over three decades. Furthermore, bush-flying crews in the NWT gain invaluable experience operating in remote and harsh conditions, equipping them with skills applicable worldwide featuring harsh conditions, have invaluable experience and skills that are transferable across the globe and have been used in polar expeditions.

Acknowledging industry sentiments that the perception of the NWT as not being open for business persists, along with concerns about its readiness to serve as a source of critical minerals, presents significant risks. However, there are opportunities to address these sentiments by telling the NWT's story with a clear vision and a strong territorial voice, emphasizing the territory's value proposition alongside the future opportunities.

ITI will foster collaborations between industry stakeholders, governments, and communities, to leverage its unique position and resources to create mutually beneficial outcomes. Embracing a transparent and inclusive approach to resource development not only enhances confidence in the territory's regulatory framework but also reinforces the territory's commitment to responsible and sustainable growth. Through proactive engagement and effective communication, the NWT can showcase its strengths and aspirations, paving the way for a prosperous and dynamic future.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

ITI is committed in supporting the GNWT's fiscal strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly by increasing the revenues and reducing expenditures to streamline programs and services and where possible, the department will continue to find operating cost efficiencies. ITI has proposed expenditure reductions totalling \$2,674,000 comprised of compensation and benefits, contributions, contracts, marketing and promotion, printing and travel. ITI has also proposed new revenue generation totalling \$443,000 comprised of increased park fees and new geological materials storage facility access fees.

The department made significant reductions to programs with low uptake and duplicative programs in the following key activity areas: Economic Diversification and Business Support, Minerals and Petroleum Resources, and Tourism and Parks. ITI proposes the reprofiling of data collection and analysis to Corporate Management for efficiency; and utilizing the availability of online library services/resources.

ITI committed to continue working to improve functionality and remove red tape for businesses. ITI will continue to work with the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for the consolidation of arts and immigration programs to deliver a more unified and effective approach; and with partners such as Prosper NWT and Community Futures on the delivery of business support services.

ITI has conducted an analysis of its programming and services, aiming to identify any duplicative areas or those needing assessment to determine their effectiveness in meeting the intended objectives. The department is implementing a program streamlining exercise that will both simplify administrative burden and applicant experience for applications to many of ITI's funding programs.

As part of the work previously started through the Government Renewal Initiative (GRI), ITI is continuing to work through a full program review to determine how the department can ensure the programs offered can be measured to ensure their implementation is supporting stated objectives and that they can be updated as necessary to support the needs of all residents while extracting the maximum benefit from employees and other resources.

Additionally, each program and strategy of the department is subject to ITI's monitoring and evaluation framework, which gathers clear data and demonstrated results to help understand the effectiveness of the program in its present form, and how changes and enhancements need to be made to ensure the program continues to deliver within current fiscal and human resource restraints.

Departmental Highlights

Corporate Service

Under the direction of ITI's Directorate and with support of the department's Corporate Service Divisions, ITI is fostering a department that prioritizes local, regional and territorial access to sectoral and business development, placing the department at the forefront of program and service delivery. This is done by channelling program delivery through regional offices, where local businesses and community members can receive support from ITI employees who understand the local and regional realities and contexts. In addition to this, the department is working to attract investment in the many sectors that are already established and experiencing growth in the NWT. In doing this, the department is concentrating its efforts on expanding opportunities for Indigenous labour and businesses while facilitating access to ownership opportunities.

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, ITI introduced a new Grants and Contributions Policy, aimed at ensuring transparency and clear guidelines for all funding streams offered through ITI. The department is focussed on bringing all contribution funding programs under this policy to provide consistency for all applicants, regardless of the funding program they are applying to.

The department has also worked to create a culture of program evaluation and measurement in support of the implementation of the GNWT's adoption of the Program Evaluation Policy. To date the department has completed 18 performance measurement plans with a schedule identified to complete the remaining plans. In addition to this, and in complement to the GNWT Government Renewal Initiative, ITI is working to build its culture of implementation for program management to enable data collection and better reporting.

Regional Approach

ITI's regional offices are the primary points of contact for business support across the NWT, with a focus on creating healthy local economies. Staff members at the regional offices take the lead on program delivery and outreach efforts, regularly engaging with clients to discuss funding applications with the goal of setting clients up for success under ITI's various contribution programs.

These regional offices play a key role in educating the business community, offering pathfinding and guidance on how to start a business and implementing best practices. Interactive information sessions are provided by ITI staff in the regions, sometimes in conjunction with economic partners, to help start or grow businesses in all sectors.

This approach helps foster sustainable industries at the grass-roots level while providing the opportunity for future growth. As a result, there has been a noticeable increase in successful funding applications. To ensure that development is conducted in a coordinated manner that supports a broader local economy,

ITI has collaborated with Indigenous and community partners to develop Regional Economic Development Plans. More recently, the regional offices have played a critical part in providing relief funding where industry has been affected by emergency situations, including the Covid-19 pandemic, floods, and wildfires.

In addition to their primary responsibilities, staff in the regions are tasked with the management and upkeep of Territorial Parks across the entire territory. Through regional offices, permits for individual and group camping, as well as commercial business and special events, are administered with the aim of ensuring accessibility and the enjoyment of the public of these natural spaces.

Growing Sectors

NWT Parks provide visitors with safe and welcoming experiences to the NWT, helping to promote the territory as a place to live and do business, while also protecting the natural environment. Recently, ITI has been prioritized modernizing parks facilities to enhance overall accessibility and attractiveness of parks. This includes improvements to ITI's online campsite reservation system, expansion of the number of powered sites available, and the creation of new parks to enrich the visitor and resident experience.

ITI has a number of programs and initiatives focused on providing supports for tourism, including contribution programs aimed at marketing and promotion, tourism product development, and training opportunities for business development. These supports have contributed to a faster rebound of the tourism sector since the Covid-19 pandemic than expected with many businesses reporting the return of pre-pandemic visitor levels. Continuing to lower barriers to encourage more investment will further grow the tourism industry as a vital sector of the NWT economy.

ITI remains committed to supporting emerging sectors, including creatives (such as film) and traditional (such as fur) economies by continuing to review and improve upon existing programs to ensure client needs and market demands are being met. Collaboration with Indigenous and community partners on opportunities to showcase people, culture, and landscapes through these sectors supports the growth and diversification of the NWT economy, while also contributing to the preservation of culture and language.

Investing in local development of agriculture, such as through the delivery of the Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Partnership Program in partnership with the federal government, and the promotion of locally grown agriculture products, is contributing to increased food security in the territory. Financial assistance for equipment and training, as well as the establishment of a new fish plant in Hay River, is helping to attract new fishers and broadening interest in new markets for fish products. Recently, these initiatives have been of particular importance in the face of rising global food costs and the impacts of climate events like flooding and wildfire on local food production.

Reducing barriers for investment and capturing benefits for northern and local contractors is a key focus for ITI in supporting the overall economy. Key initiatives have included working in partnership with other GNWT departments on a review of GNWT procurement policies, has included modernizing the definition of an NWT resident and NWT business to ensure more flexibility, and an emphasis on supporting innovative business solutions and retention of local benefits.

The department is also working to grow the natural resources economies with particular focus on diversifying the natural resources sector by attracting investment in exploration and development of the territory's known deposits of critical minerals and energy resources.

The department is working to grow the territory's depository of public geoscience to support decision making at all levels. In compliment to this, the department is also researching potential carbon sequestration capacity in the territory. The territory is also home to large scale liquid natural gas resources in the Beaufort Delta, which, if proven feasible as a project, could be used as a middle term solution for global jurisdictions currently relying heavily on high carbon options as they transition to lower carbon options.

All this work in the field of natural resources is guided by the department's participation in the Intergovernmental Council's Legislative Development Protocol under which ITI and Indigenous governments participating in a Technical Working Group are developing the regulations that will bring the Mineral Resources Act into force. The collaboratively developed Act and regulations when implemented will modernize the mineral resources sector in the territory and act as the foundation for the mining sector to grow and develop in a manner that is inclusive and supporting Indigenous participation at all levels. This work is complimented by the pathfinding and community relations work that resides at the core of how ITI supports the sector. The successes of this approach can be seen in how Indigenous governments have grown their participation at key Canadian resource sector conferences in a stated effort to showcase a 'united effort' to attract potential investment.

Human Resource Initiatives

The Department continues to apply the Affirmative Action Policy to all hiring processes. The Department uses available corporate recruitment initiatives such as the Building Capacity with Indigenous Governments Program and is an active supporter of using secondments to build capacity of Indigenous governments. Previously the department has had up to four ITI employees seconded to Indigenous governments and organizations. ITI also works to recruit from the Indigenous Career Gateway program, to fill positions.

The Department will continue to use the Indigenous Management and Development Training Program and the Regional Recruitment Program while further recruitment strategies are developed and implemented. Additionally, the Department's Human Resources Approval Authorities requires Deputy Minister approval to commence any staffing actions. This step allows discussion on strategic hiring approaches to support affirmative action, such as looking at job description qualifications.

The Department's regional approach to service delivery provides access to jobs for residents in their own community in the NWT. As well, many of the Department's programs are delivered either in partnership with community organizations (Community Transfer Initiative and Economic Development Officers) or directly to NWT residents. This provides additional opportunities for NWT residents to learn about careers with the Department.

The Department faces challenges with recruiting and retaining technical and specialized positions such as geoscientists and lawyers. Candidates with these qualifications are particularly in demand in the private sector throughout Canada, and these positions are likely to remain difficult to fill. Through annual performance reviews the Department continues to provide professional development opportunities for staff to support their career progression and succession planning.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

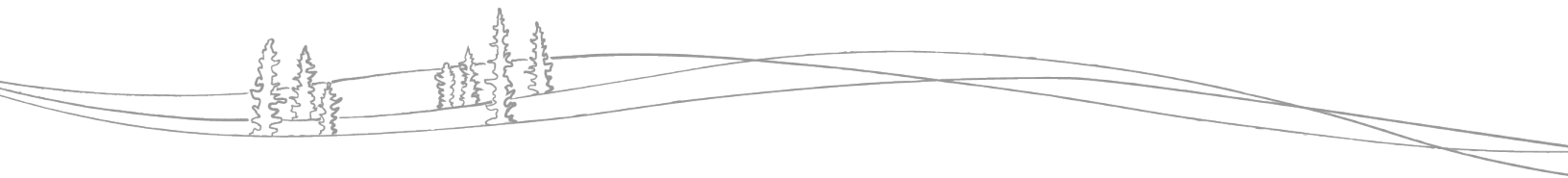
#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Tourism Act</i>	Review Act and determine if modernization of Act and regulations to determine how to best align with modern Protected Areas agreements.	TBD	Fall 2026-27
2	<i>Freshwater Fish Marketing Act</i>	Evolution of relationship with Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation: Investigate options for fisheries management through legislation or policy.	TBD	TBD

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	<i>Territorial Parks Act Regulations</i>	Update Fees Schedule D.	Coming into force: May 2024
2	<i>Mineral Resources Act Regulations</i>	Development of regulations required to bring the Mineral Resources Act into force.	Phase 1 – coming into force (Spring 2026) Phase 2 – Coming into force (Summer 2027)
3	<i>Petroleum Resources Act and Oil and Gas Operations Act</i>	Review and modernize existing regulations and considerations for geothermal legislation.	Fall 2026

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Indigenous Procurement Policy	Work continues with EIA as lead and collaboration with our Modern Treaty and Self Government Partners and the NWT Council of Leaders to develop policy approaches to enhance participation of Indigenous businesses in GNWT procurement.	TBD
2	SEED Program Review	Review and modernize the program to ensure it is meeting the needs of NWT businesses while ensuring it aligns with ITI's overarching Grants and Contributions Policy.	TBD
3	Community Futures and Community Transfer Program reviews	Review the functions of these two programs to determine if they are still necessary and meeting the original objectives for which they were established.	TBD

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE

2024-25 to 2027-28

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The mandate of the Department of Infrastructure is to provide services to the Government of the Northwest Territories with respect to the planning, design, construction, acquisition, operation and maintenance of government infrastructure, including airports, buildings, highways and bridges, and to promote the development and increased use of energy efficient technologies. This mandate also includes the provision of regulatory safety services to the public; the provision of petroleum products to communities that are not serviced by the private sector; and the marine transportation of cargo to Northwest Territories communities.

Activity	Business functions supported
Asset Management	This activity includes the planning and design of buildings, highways, bridges, marine facilities, and airports throughout the Northwest Territories on behalf of the GNWT. This activity supports the delivery of operations, maintenance, and project management services to ensure that client needs are met, and facility life cycle costs are minimized. Asset Management functions support Regional Operations by providing technical support in areas including planning, design standards, leasing options, risk assessment and project management. This activity includes the business functions of: Capital Planning, Design and Technical Services, Facilities and Properties, and Transportation.
Corporate Management	This activity provides leadership, planning, and overall management of the department to support the achievement of departmental objectives and priorities of the Legislative Assembly. It also provides financial oversight, advice, and management services. It includes the business functions of: Directorate and Corporate Services.
Energy and Strategic Initiatives	This activity includes programs, services and projects that plan and advance the GNWT's energy objectives and strategic infrastructure priorities, including establishing and building relationships with Indigenous partners on major projects. It also includes negotiating, implementing, and managing agreements with the federal government to support public infrastructure. This activity includes the business functions of: Energy; Policy, Planning and Communications; Strategic Energy Infrastructure; and Strategic Infrastructure.
Programs and Services	This activity is primarily focused on external clients, including other departments, communities, industry, and the public. This includes the following business functions: Air, Marine and Safety; Compliance and Licensing; Enterprise Information Management; Fuel Services; and Marine Transportation Services.

Regional Operations

The Department has five Regional Offices: Yellowknife (North Slave), Norman Wells (Sahtu), Fort Simpson (Deh Cho), Hay River (South Slave) and Inuvik (Beaufort Delta). Areas of responsibility include Airport Operations, Facilities Management, Highway Operations, Leases, Marine Operations, Regional Management, Regional Projects, Road Licensing and Safety, Utilities, and Winter Roads.

Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found at Departments’ website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Northwest Territories (NWT) still requires much of the basic infrastructure that already exists in southern jurisdictions. This has implications for cost of living, quality of life and economic growth.

Infrastructure corridors, including roads, airports, marine ports, and energy transmission, serve as a supporting element for a strong economic foundation, one of the Priorities of the 20th Assembly. Dependable infrastructure corridors are essential for market access, economic security, and quality of life for residents.

The Department's work to maintain and improve the public transportation and energy systems also supports the safety of NWT residents and communities, which is another top priority of this government.

Climate change is impacting the integrity of public infrastructure in the NWT, as permafrost thaws and catastrophic weather events increase in severity and frequency. Preparing for and responding to the impacts of climate change has increased the urgency with which the GNWT must focus on closing the infrastructure gap. This involves upgrading or replacing existing all-season roads, bridges, airports, marine, energy and electricity infrastructure, while exploring and developing new infrastructure.

INF continues work to advance three strategic infrastructure projects – Mackenzie Valley Highway, Slave Geological Province Corridor, and Taltson Hydro Expansion Project – all which could support economic development and provide a long-lasting legacy of public infrastructure for NWT residents.

The GNWT's current long-term vision is for the NWT to have a secure, affordable, and sustainable energy system that is less dependent on fossil fuels and contributes to the economic, social, and environmental well being of the territory and its residents. Reducing energy costs is challenging in the NWT context where energy must also be secure, reliable, and sustainable, which often comes at an increased cost.

Legislative and regulatory initiatives planned by INF in the next four years that will support the Priorities and Mandate of the 20th Assembly include elevators and lifts, electrical protection, gas protection, boilers, and pressure vessels. There is also an identified need for a territorial building standards framework to establish standard processes and requirements including permitting, design, and inspections. Establishing such a framework would require effort from multiple GNWT departments, including INF.

INF will work with other departments, Indigenous governments and partners, and the Federal government to undertake actions in support of the GNWT Mandate and the Priorities of the 20th Assembly.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage with the federal government to advance issues of shared interest.	Define ownership opportunities for Indigenous partners of the Taltson Hydro Expansion Project; grow capacity and create a framework for economic investment in the project.	Memorandum of Intent (MOI) established and signed by all Indigenous partners to the project.	MOI signed by Q4 2024-25.
	Work with the Tłıchǫ Government to advance the Whatı Transmission Line to enhance energy security in the region while lessening our reliance on diesel.	# of project design and engineering documents developed collaboratively.	Regulatory application submitted for Whatı Transmission Line within the life of this Assembly.
	The GNWT continues to work in collaboration with Indigenous Governments and Organizations on the advancement of the Mackenzie Valley Highway between Wrigley and Norman Wells.	# of engagement activities with Indigenous Governments and Organizations.	Renewed project related agreement with SSI Q2 2024-25. Regulatory authorizations submitted – Q1 2026-27.

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Engage the public service to identify opportunities to improve efficiency, and coordinate processes to support long term fiscal sustainability.	Undertake review of the governance and operating models for Marine Transportation Services (MTS).	Acceptance of revised operating structure for the entity.	Revised operating structure accepted by Executive Council by 2025.
		# of engagement opportunities provided.	Public engagement on report and options – Fall 2024.
	Establish a Continuous Improvement Committee to address opportunities for efficiencies and improve internal processes.	# of meetings held. # of process improvements made.	Quarterly meetings. Implement 1 major and 5 minor efficiencies annually.
Steward the fiscal health and sustainability of the GNWT through ongoing efforts to increase revenues, reduce expenditures, and ensure every public dollar spent serves the needs of the residents and communities.	Establish internal process and methodology for regular review and updates to INF fees and tolls.	Establishment of review process and methodology.	Review process and methodology established by 2025.
	Undertake regular evaluation of INF programs and services to ensure programs are meeting intended objectives and are cost-effective.	# of programs reviewed.	2 programs reviewed annually.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	Working with Procurement Shared Services (FIN), include requirements for training and targets for apprentices in all INF Design-Build (DB) project evaluation criteria.	# of INF contracts that include training requirements and apprentice targets. # of training opportunities provided through INF contracts. # of apprentices provided training through INF contracts.	100% DB contracts (or contracts procured through RFP) to include evaluation criteria related to local employment, local business opportunities and training opportunities.
	Hire and train INF apprentices.	# of apprentices hired. # of Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP) students.	10 apprentices hired. 5 SNAP students hired.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Leverage federal funding to close the infrastructure gap through investments in green power generation and transmission, transportation and communications networks.	Develop and release a new strategic approach to energy with targets that guide investment, in cooperation with Environment & Climate Change and Industry, Tourism & Investment.	New approach to energy targets and reporting developed as part of renewed Energy Strategy.	Approach developed in 2024-25 and released with renewed Energy Strategy by Q4 2025-26.
	Advance planning and design of Taltson Hydro Expansion:	# of project milestones met.	Selection of preferred transmission route by Q1 2024-25.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select preferred Transmission Route File EA Initiation Package with MVEIRB 		EA Initiation Package filed by Q4 2025-26.
	Sign Memorandum of Intent (MOI) between the business entities that wish to partner.		MOI signed by Q4 2024-25.
	Advance planning and design of the Mackenzie Valley Highway:	# of Engagement Activities.	Business Case Update initiated – Q2 2024-25.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Environmental Assessment Seek Regulatory authorizations 	Environmental Assessment Workplan Activities/Phases (% Complete).	Decision of Environmental Assessment – mid-2025.
	Update business case.	Regulatory Review Progress (% Complete).	Regulatory authorizations submitted – Q1 2026-27.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	<p>Advance planning and design of the Slave Geological Province Corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake community and Indigenous Government engagement Prepare Environmental Assessment Initiation Package. 	<p># of Engagement Activities.</p> <p>Environmental Assessment initiation.</p>	<p>Environmental Assessment of Lockhart All-Season Road underway – 2026.</p>
	<p>Advance planning and construction of transmission lines to expand existing hydro grids, including Fort Providence and Whatì transmission lines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete construction of the Fort Providence Transmission Line Submit regulatory application for Whatì Transmission Line. 	<p># of project milestones met.</p>	<p>Fort Providence Transmission Line construction completed 2027-28.</p> <p>Regulatory application submitted for Whatì Transmission Line within the life of this Assembly.</p>
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Work with the Economic Advisory Committee to finalize and implement the Yellowknife Airport (YZF) Strategic Plan, attract investment from business community and further develop YZF.	<p>Public release of YZF Strategic Plan.</p> <p>Meet milestones related to site selection.</p>	<p>Strategic Plan released in 2024-25.</p> <p>Site selected for new ATB 2025-26.</p>

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, the GNWT will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Develop and launch a new highway conditions map and reporting system (Drive NWT) that links the travelling public with real time information on highway conditions, including cameras, traffic counters and environmental and weather information.	# of responsible employees trained in use of system.	100% of required staff trained by Q4 2024-25.
		Availability of system.	Drive NWT launched in 2024.
		# of visitors to the site.	Drive NWT is trusted source of truth for travelling public.
		Tone and sentiment of social media coverage.	
	Continue to invest in and undertake highway, ferry and airport maintenance and rehabilitation projects to ensure a safe, reliable transportation system.	# of bridges inspected annually.	All bridges inspected on 3-year cycle.
		# of bridges maintained in good – very good condition.	95% of bridges to be maintained in good-very good condition (per Bridge Condition Index).
		# of km's of chipseal completed annually.	150 kms of chipseal completed per year.
		# of airport runway inspected annually.	All runways inspected on a 3-year cycle.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Update INF Business Continuity Plan, INF Emergency Plan and list of essential employees and businesses.	% of Senior Management staff with ICS training. # of emergency preparedness exercises conducted annually. Frequency of updates to plans.	95% of Senior Management staff with ICS training. 4 of emergency preparedness exercises conducted annually. Plans reviewed and updated annually.
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Research, assess and undertake feasibility studies for innovative, emerging technological solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	# of technologies assessed and/or tested in the context of the NWT.	Three technological solutions assessed and/or tested by Q4 2027-28.
Invest in robust and redundant community, energy, telecommunications and transportation infrastructure.	Complete extension, modernization and rehabilitation of Inuvik runway to be more resilient to the effects of climate change and to support a multimodal transportation system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work package (WP) 3 Embankment and WP 4 Drainage. • WP5A Advanced electrical. • WP6A Advanced paving. • Paving and Electrical. 	# of project milestones met.	WP 3 and 4 complete in FY 2024-25 WP5A – complete in FY 2024-25. WP6A – complete in FY 2024-25. Paving and electrical – tender in 2025. Completion of runway extension by 2027.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Advance planning and construction of transmission lines to expand existing hydro grids, including Fort Providence and Whatì transmission lines.	# of project milestones met.	Fort Providence Transmission Line construction completed 2027-28. Regulatory application submitted for Whatì Transmission Line within the life of this Assembly.
	Advance planning and design of Taltson Hydro Expansion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select preferred Transmission Route File EA Initiation Package with MVEIRB Sign Memorandum of Intent signed between the business entities that wish to partner. 	# of project milestones met.	Selection of preferred transmission route by Q1 2024-25. EA Initiation Package filed by Q4 2025-26. MOI signed by Q4 2024-25.
	Support electrification of transportation by developing electric vehicles charging infrastructure.	# of Installations of level-2 and level-3 electric vehicles chargers.	
	Undertake design and construction of Dehk'è Frank Channel Bridge, in cooperation with the Tłıchq Government.	# of project milestones met. #/% of Tłıchq involvement in project.	Construction complete and open to the public three years after award of DB contract. Meet or exceed the requirements outlined in the Tłıchq Infrastructure Cooperation Agreement for economic and employment benefits achieved for Tłıchq citizens and businesses.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Build redundancy and improve condition of fuel storage facilities in remote communities to mitigate the non-delivery of fuel.	% of project completed. Volume of additional storage added.	Storage capacity in communities is double annual consumption by 2030.
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.	Work with MACA and Housing NWT to undertake policy, research and scoping to bring forward FMB Submission seeking funding to support the creation of an <i>NWT Building Standards Act</i> .	# of project milestones met.	Project planning developed in 2024-25. FMB submission for project support submit ed in 2024-25. Legislative Proposal advanced 2026-27.
	Implement an online application and processing system for gas, electrical, and boiler pressure vessel permits to reduce the wait time for approval.	Applicants can access permits online. % improvement in permit application processing.	Online system launched in 2025-26. 75% improvement annually.
	Work with MACA to continue Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment for GNWT Assets.	# milestones met in framework development. % of major INF managed assets evaluated.	Framework completed in 2024-25. 50% of major INF-managed assets evaluated annually.
	Further development of the framework used to evaluate assets. Evaluate assets using that framework.		

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, the GNWT will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.	Develop and implement a new Safe Driving Campaign as part of interagency efforts under the NWT Alcohol Strategy, to increase awareness of risks of impaired driving.	# of project milestones met. # of website hits, social media impressions, ads.	Campaign developed and launched in 2024-25.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The infrastructure system in the NWT is largely underdeveloped compared to southern Canada, contributing to a higher cost of living and doing business. Only 20 of the NWT's 33 communities are accessible by an all-season road, with nine communities accessible by winter road or air, and four only accessible by marine or air transportation. Twenty-five NWT communities rely on imported diesel fuel for their primary source of power generation. The NWT's transportation system is vulnerable to disruptions related to external factors, such as weather and climate change, and to unexpected events such as evacuations.

Extreme weather events along with the availability of funding pose the greatest challenges to the department's ability to fulfill the GNWT's mandate commitments.

Extreme Weather

The increasing occurrence of extreme weather events like floods and forest fires requires financial and human resources to be temporarily diverted away from day-to-day activities and towards emergency response activities. This was required on several occasions during the last Legislative Assembly, and if this trend continues, it is reasonable to assume emergency response activities could substantially affect the department's ability to fulfill the actions laid out in its Business Plan within the planned timeframes. As the department responsible for the NWT public transportation network, departmental priorities shift dramatically during emergencies to protect the safety and security of the travelling public and maintain local supply chains.

The Fuel Services Division operates the Petroleum Products Program which executes fuel resupply for communities not served by the private sector. Extreme weather, low water events, public emergencies, and prolonged highway disruptions in recent years have caused significant logistical challenges to maintaining these critical links in the territory's supply chain. Freight deliveries by Marine Transportation Services have also been affected by some of these same factors. To mitigate against this, INF has been looking to increase fuel storage facilities in remote communities, setting early cargo drop off dates, shipping fuel by road and over the top via fuel tanker to service the Beaufort Delta region.

Funding

The GNWT is reliant on funding contributions from the federal government, and this is particularly true when it comes to funding public infrastructure projects in the NWT. The 2023 federal budget provided relatively little funding for infrastructure projects, and existing infrastructure funding programs (namely the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program) are not anticipated to receive new dollars. Transportation Ministers have called on the federal government to replenish and enhance the National Trade Corridors Fund (NTCF) currently set to sunset in 2027-28. There is need for predictable, flexible, long-term funding to help with rehabilitation and upgrades required for roads, bridges, airports, and aging electricity

infrastructure. There is an additional funding need to support efforts to adapt to a changing climate and lessen reliance on fossil fuels for energy generation.

The Northwest Territories still requires much of the basic infrastructure that already exists in southern jurisdictions. Strategic infrastructure projects that promote development, economic activity and connect residents to each other and the rest of Canada are lacking in the North. This has implications for cost of living, quality of life and economic growth. A long-term approach focused on development of infrastructure and the funding to make that a reality is critical to bridge the gap and promote economic development.

The Department will work with all GNWT departments under a renewed Federal Engagement Strategy to leverage federal funding to strategically invest in public infrastructure projects that will improve resiliency of the NWT transportation network and stimulate economic growth. Committed ongoing support by government and sustained long-term federal funding is needed to carry through with these transformative projects.

Inflationary and Supply Chain Pressures

As a department heavily reliant on materials and commodities to undertake its business activities, supply chain disruptions could also impact INF's ability to deliver this business plan. Increased costs for building materials and labour shortages pose additional challenges to project budgets and timelines. The Department of Infrastructure continues to make strategic decisions and perform due diligence in planning work; however, like many jurisdictions in Canada, the GNWT faces material prices in key supply sectors that remain volatile and difficult to predict due to the changing financial environment.

Aging Infrastructure

Most GNWT building and facility infrastructure assets are nearing the end of their 30- to 40-year lifecycle and are aging faster than the GNWT's ability to fund rehabilitation and replacement. Major building assets are inspected on a rotating five-year basis, major bridge assets are inspected on a rotating three-year basis, and major highway assets are inspected annually, to inform capital planning and decision making. The Department also works closely with the Northwest Territories Power Corporation regarding the replacement or modernization of aging electricity infrastructure assets.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department of Infrastructure is prepared to support the Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly through the implementation of increased internal controls. The Department holds responsibility, and therefore the budget, for the management of all leasing arrangements and the payment of all utilities for GNWT facilities. These two items alone are equal to \$64M, or 21% of the department's total budget, and are subject to consistent increases due to forced growth.

Through the Deferred Maintenance program and the Capital Asset Retrofit Fund (CARF), the Department performs utility monitoring and initiates projects to increase the energy efficiency of GNWT assets, with an objective to reduce utility costs and greenhouse gas emissions for the government.

The Department will also undertake activities to further support the Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly through two initiatives:

- **Fleet Consolidation Initiative:** Each GNWT department currently owns a separate fleet of vehicles to support their activities, and consolidating the fleet for the whole government could potentially result in a reduction in expenditures through efficiencies and economies of scale related to procurement costs, consistent maintenance, and the establishment of an evergreening program. To understand the cost-benefit of implementing a system such as this, INF will lead an Interdepartmental Working Group.
- **Optimizing Office Space Usage:** The government continues to have a growing footprint, which has resulted in an increased demand for leased spaces. INF will work with other departments to explore opportunities to reduce the need for office space through options such as coworking spaces and adherence to the Office Space Standards.

Other ways that INF is supporting the Fiscal Strategy is by reviewing and increasing fees, continuing to seek federal funding, and at 100% of project costs where possible. Additionally, INF is evaluating programs and services across the department to ensure program objectives are being met and limited resources are being used effectively. In the 2024-25 fiscal year, INF is undertaking reviews of the Deferred Maintenance program and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing program.

Departmental Highlights

Much of the work undertaken within the Department centres around the core business of maintaining and improving public infrastructure, as well as delivering essential programs and services like marine shipping, fuel services, compliance and licensing, and electrical/mechanical permitting and inspections.

Several segments of INF's core business which are not outlined elsewhere in this document but will support the priorities and mandate commitments of the 20th Assembly of the NWT include:

Marine Transportation Services Governance Review and Implementation

INF is conducting a comprehensive, independent review of the governance and operating models for Marine Transportation Services (MTS). It is expected the review will be concluded by Fall 2024. This work seeks to establish an operating model for the organization which will support a strong economic foundation and a resilient transportation network essential for community resupply activities.

Hay River Harbour Restoration

The Hay River Harbour is an essential hub for marine resupply activities which impact the entire Northwest Territories. The Department is currently engaged in a project to remove a build-up of sediment in the harbour to open an emergency-sized navigable channel to allow vessels to access Great Slave Lake. While emergency works are underway, INF is also proceeding with planning studies to seek funding and to inform a long-term, multi-year dredging project to restore full usability of the channel.

Inuvialuit Energy Security Project

INF and ITI are supporting the Inuvialuit Energy Security Project Ltd (IESPL). The IESPL could go into production by 2025 and would be the first project of its kind in the territory, where petroleum is produced and refined domestically for local use.

While bringing the IESPL into production is not an INF project, the success of this project could have a direct impact on the INF Fuel Services Division, and could improve the economic foundation of the NWT, and improve the resiliency of the territory's supply chain to the impacts of climate change, as it would greatly reduce the distance fuel needs to travel to reach ISR communities and the NWT Power Corporation operations in the BDR.

Support for this project would strengthen the GNWT and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation's government-to-government relationship, which supports the relationship building priority of the 20th Assembly.

INF's Role in Public Emergencies and Managing Prolonged Supply Chain Disruptions

During public emergencies, the importance of transportation access – both by air and road – becomes paramount. INF staff play a crucial role in the efforts to respond to public emergencies like fires and floods to maintain essential services.

Following damage to communities or other infrastructure, INF staff work with the Office of the NWT Fire Marshal to inspect buildings for electrical and mechanical safety before residents can safely return.

Other essential services provided by INF include fuel delivery and liaising with transportation industry partners to maintain supply lines of essential goods.

Human Resource Initiatives

The Department of Infrastructure's employees are its greatest asset. As one of the most decentralized GNWT departments, INF has staff in all regions and most communities in the territory. Outside of standard recruitment and retention programs necessary for maintaining safe and effective day-to-day operations, the Department has undertaken several initiatives focused on employee satisfaction and development, as well as inspiring and training the next generation of INF employees.

Human Resources Implementation Plan Progress

The Department of Infrastructure Human Resources Implementation Plan was developed to support the GNWT *2022-2025 Human Resources Strategic Plan*. While work is ongoing to finalize the INF plan, some actions were implemented in 2023-24 including: the creation and implementation of a Deputy Minister award and recognition program, setting internal targets and benchmarks, and developing an internal communications approach.

In February 2024, INF hosted its first annual Deputy Minister Awards, recognizing the outstanding achievements of staff, as nominated by their peers. The INF DM also sends monthly Shout Out messages to all staff, specifically naming and recognizing staff for their accomplishments.

Recruitment Strategies for INF Positions

The Department continues to have difficulty recruiting for professional and technical positions, especially engineers. INF uses the summer student employment program and the internship program to provide successive developmental opportunities for NWT students and to prepare them to take on junior engineering and project management positions upon graduation.

INF also sponsors math and science awards for schools throughout the Northwest Territories to encourage students to continue with these subjects, which are required in engineering and architecture post-secondary programs.

The shortage of skilled tradespeople in the NWT and across Canada remains a challenge and is a contributing factor in rising construction costs and project delivery timelines. INF uses apprentice positions as a way of training and developing tradespeople in smaller communities while at the same time helping to advance departmental projects and core business.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

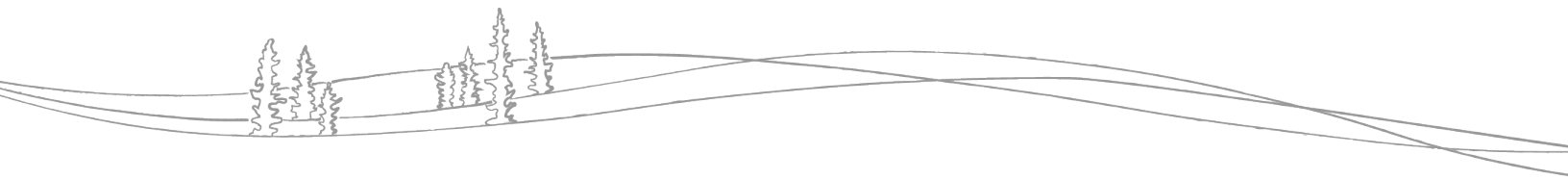
#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Motor Vehicles Act (MVA)</i>	Subject: Information Sharing. Amendments will expand use of information collected for driver's licenses to support consumer protection initiatives, voters registry, NWT Bureau of Statistics and enable related amendments to the Driver's Licence Regulations regarding photos for Driver's licences.	2023-24 Q4	2024-25 Oct-Nov Session
2	<i>Boilers and Pressure Vessels Act</i>	The Act will be repealed and replaced to reflect modern operations and to address public safety considerations. The Act is currently too broad, allows for unskilled individuals to replace equipment such as propane tanks, and puts INF (government) at risk.	2024-25 Q1	2025-26 Oct-Nov Session
3	<i>Gas Protection Act</i>	The Act will be repealed and replaced to address broader public safety issues.	2024-25	2025-26
4	<i>Electrical Protection Act</i>	The Act will be repealed and replaced to address broader public safety issues.	2025-26	2026-27
5	<i>Motor Vehicles Act</i>	Subject: Dangerous Driving. This amendment will modernize ticketing requirements and review minimum licence restrictions after Criminal Code conviction.	2025-26	

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
6	<i>Motor Vehicles Act</i>	Subject: Traffic Rules. To align with the rest of Canada, INF will move the “Rules of the Road” into regulation. Moving this significant portion of content to regulation will make the Act easier to apply and amend and will modernize rules of the road.	2025-26	
7	<i>Public Highways Act</i>	The Act will be amended to allow control of pedestrians outside of Municipalities.	2026-27	
8	<i>Motor Vehicles Act</i>	Subject: Dealer Plates. Review use of dealer and rental plates.	2027-28	

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Summary Conviction Procedures Regulation	Amendments to the Hours-of-Service Regulation in May 2023 created offenses; the SCPR need to be consequentially amended to reflect that list.	2024-25 Q1
2	MVA – Vehicle Registration Regulations	Amendments will move requirements for proof of ownership from program policy to regulations. These amendments must be made prior to developing abandoned vehicle regulations. INF will also update the numeric sequencing for Veterans plates.	2024-25 Q1
3	Gas Protection Regulations	Amendments will address public safety issues including inspector powers and restricting exemptions which currently allow a person who does not hold a gas fitter licence to engage in gas fitter work.	2024-25 Q1
4	MVA – Driver’s Licence Regulations	This amendment will address two issues: Medical exams: it will provide more detail around submission of medical examinations and correct errors regarding medical examination requirements for specific drivers’ licences including code and standard references. V-Class Licences: End a requirement for INF to endorse licences for extended length trailers and require the employee/company to manage this endorsement.	2024-25 Q1
5	MVA – Large Vehicle Regulations	Updates required to technical standards.	2024-25 Q3
6	Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act Regulations	Updates will address changes to legislation.	2025-26
7	MVA – Abandoned and Worthless Vehicle Regulation	This new regulation will define ownership of vehicles and establish a program so that they can be disposed of.	2025-26
8	Gas Protection Regulations	Updates to reflect changes to the legislation.	2026-27
9	MVA – Drivers Licence Regulations	Remove outdated classes, change definitions align with other jurisdictions.	2026-27

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Disposal of Improved Real Property Policy (DIRPP)	Amendments to this policy will address new departmental responsibilities for INF and ECC and add Indigenous Governments as a priority interest group for the sale of surplus property. This will include moving some provisions to a new Ministerial policy. These projects will be advanced simultaneously and will involve engagement with Indigenous and community governments.	Estimated Timeline: Cabinet review by December 31, 2024
2	Building Standards Framework	INF will work with MACA to form a multidepartment team to undertake policy, research and scoping to bring forward a business case for funding and resources to support the creation of an NWT Building Standards Act.	Estimated Timeline: FMB review by December 2024
3	Policy direction to the NWT Public Utilities Board	Work with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs to assess and provide policy direction to the PUB on electricity system issues.	Estimated timeline: Direction provided by Q3 2024-25

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

2024-25 to 2027-28

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The Minister and the Department of Justice (the Department) have the mandate for the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories (NWT), including policing and corrections. This mandate is carried out in a manner which respects community and Indigenous values and encourages communities to assume increasing responsibilities. The Department also ensures that the government's administration of public affairs accords with the law, and by virtue of holding the responsibility of the Attorney General for the NWT, we are entrusted with the powers and duties outlined in the *Department of Justice Act*.

To achieve this mandate, the Department's responsibilities fall into the following eight key activities and associated business functions:

Activity	Business functions supported
Community Justice and Policing	Provides support to communities to develop and implement sustainable local justice programming in the areas of restorative justice, victim services, community policing, and crime prevention. This includes formal diversions from the traditional justice system and support for the use of alternative measures for adults and youth. The Division also provides support under the <i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i> and works closely with the RCMP on policing priorities and community safety initiatives.
Corrections Service	Provides safe custody and supervision of adult and youth offenders through the operation of correctional facilities, the supervision of offenders sentenced to community-based orders and delivers culturally relevant programs to support offender rehabilitation and reintegration back into their home communities.
Court Services	Provides administrative support to the courts through the Court Registry and the Sheriff's Office to ensure they are accessible, impartial and timely. The Division is also responsible for family law services.
Legal Aid Services	Provides legal services for legal aid outreach, most criminal and family law matters, and some civil cases unrelated to family law through the Legal Aid Commission, which also determines eligibility for legal aid in accordance with the parameters established by the <i>Legal Aid Act</i> and the <i>Legal Aid Regulations</i> . The Commission is also responsible for the court worker program, public legal education, and the provision of administrative supervision to the Office of the Children's Lawyer.
Office of the Regulator of Oil and Gas Operations (OROGO)	Regulates onshore oil and gas operations in the NWT, outside of federal areas and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, for the primary purpose of ensuring safety, environmental protection and the conservation of oil and gas resources. OROGO reports administratively through the Department of Justice but because of its arms-length status it develops and reports on planned activities, goals and

	performance measures outside of the Departmental Business Plan.
Policing Services	The RCMP provides policing services for NWT communities through an agreement between the GNWT and the Government of Canada. Cost-sharing agreements also exist with Public Safety Canada to support First Nation and Inuit Policing Program positions.
Services to Government	Legal Division provides legal advice as well as legal representation to GNWT Departments and specified public agencies. Legislation Division also provides legislative drafting services to GNWT Departments, which includes the preparation of bills and regulations and legal translations for French versions of these instruments. The GNWT Access and Privacy Office also provides advice and information to public bodies on <i>the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> while supporting access to information requests and Information and Privacy Commissioner reviews for GNWT Departments.
Services to the Public	Provides accessible justice-related programs and services to all NWT residents, including the Office of the Public Trustee; Coroner Service; Legal Registries; Maintenance Enforcement Office; and the Rental Office.

Detailed descriptions of the Department’s programs and services can be found on our website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

There are systemic issues that drive crime, including poverty, substance use, low educational attainment, the legacy of colonialism and residential schools. All of these challenges require long-term solutions and must be addressed across governments and with other key partners. At the same time, escalating violence has been noted in front line service delivery, the prevalence of illicit drugs, increasing gun seizures and the presence of southern-based gang and drug actors, are all causing harm in NWT communities and affecting residents' perceptions of community safety.

Multifaceted approaches are needed to address these complex problems and include effective enforcement, supporting persons at risk to prevent them from becoming victims and/or offenders, disrupting and deterring criminal activity and facilitating close partnerships with Indigenous governments, communities, non-governmental organizations and individuals to combat crime.

Many of the issues dealt with by the justice system are the same as those addressed by other social envelope departments such as the lack of affordable and safe housing, mental health challenges, alcohol or drug use, and cognitive disabilities. Addressing these issues is a complex undertaking that requires a broad response. We know that service integration is one of the most effective ways to address and prevent complex social issues.

Activities of the Department are most reflected under the 20th Legislative Assembly priority of "Safe residents and Communities" and steps are being taken to address this priority through ongoing efforts together with new initiatives that will enhance public safety. This includes actions that support crime reduction and prevention, reducing the impacts of illicit drugs and alcohol, and ensuring that solutions are person-centered and community driven, among others. Activities of the Department will also support other identified Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

The Department provides support to communities to develop and implement sustainable local justice programming. Through Community Justice and Policing, the development of Community Justice Committees are supported, providing community service options and crime prevention programs that reflect the unique cultural context of each community. There are Community Justice Committee agreements in place across the NWT annually, supporting the diversion of youth and adult offenders from the formal justice system for minor offences. The process is guided by the *Criminal Code* as well as through a protocol agreement between the Department, the Crown and the RCMP ("G" Division).

The Department works collaboratively with the RCMP to ensure there are appropriate resources necessary to maintain an effective level of policing and to establish NWT specific policing priorities for the territory, while at the same time ensuring that the independence of the RCMP is maintained in performing their duties.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> .	Assess legislative initiatives for consistency with the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act</i> .	# of statements of consistency drafted.	All legislative initiatives that are advanced are reviewed in this manner.
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Develop Missing Persons legislation to provide support to RCMP in conducting missing persons investigations.	Not applicable- specific measures to be established with coming into force of legislation.	2023-2024 Q4.

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Honour the GNWT’s commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Access to information requests are responded to in a timely manner.	% of ATIPP requests processed within a 30, 60, 90 and over 90 day timeline.	Time to process ATIPP requests is reduced, and within legislated timeframes.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Corrections programming supports offender rehabilitation and reintegration back into their home communities.	# of offenders completing criminogenic programming: sentenced, non-sentenced, dual.	Accessible and high-quality programs offered to attract participants.
	Continued delivery of a therapeutic community model within the South Mackenzie Correctional Center and will undertake an evaluation.	# of participants, and completion of phases in the program.	Continued delivery of the Therapeutic Model, with an evaluation to be completed in 2027.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Support Indigenous governments and other partners to develop and deliver culturally appropriate, northern and regional trauma treatment, mental wellness and addictions programming by removing administrative barriers and streamlining supports.	Development of a treatment program approval policy for offenders to at end approved treatment programs prior to sentencing.	# of programs evaluated and approved under the policy.	Treatment program approval policy in place and being implemented.
	Support communities to deliver community-led approaches to men's healing programming as a preventative approach to address family, intimate partner, and gender-based violence through the Men's Healing Fund.	# of budgets fully expended annually. # and type of community partnerships and community collaboration. # of participants program supports. # of cultural appropriate healing activities. Participant and community feedback- cultural competency and significant changes reported by participants.	100% of funding being offered through this initiative is utilized by communities, supporting lowered rates of family, intimate partner, and gender-based violence.
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Provide a proactive, sustainable, trauma-informed, holistic approach to community safety, and bridge the gap between community safety needs and the role of the RCMP through the Community Safety Officer pilot program.	# of calls for support to the program. # of calls for service to RCMP.	Evaluation of the program to occur in 2026-2027.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

No specific actions under this commitment

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with law enforcement, governments, communities and across departments to create and strengthen tools that can be used to disrupt and combat the drug trade and associated criminal activity.	Support the establishment of a new Territorial Crime Reduction Unit within the RCMP “G” Division to disrupt illicit drug supply and enhance enforcement targeting criminal networks.	<p># of drug and organized crime investigations undertaken.</p> <p># of people charged with drug trafficking and violent crime.</p> <p># and type of weapon seized linked to organized crime by type.</p>	Territorial Crime Reduction Unit is established within the RCMP “G” Division and reduction in # and severity of police reported crimes.
	Develop Safer Communities and Neighbourhoods legislation to address premises being used to support illegal activities.	Not applicable- specific measures to be established with coming into force of legislation.	Bill introduced in 2025-2026 Q3.
	Develop Civil Forfeiture legislation to discourage illegal activity by providing the power to seize goods obtained through the proceeds of crime.	Not applicable- specific measures to be established with coming into force of legislation.	Bill introduced in 2025-2026 Q4.
	Develop Trespass legislation to deter criminal behaviour or inadvertent damage that trespassers may cause.	Not applicable- specific measures to be established with coming into force of legislation.	Bill introduced in 2025-2026 Q1.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Leverage existing partnerships with the RCMP to provide opportunities for training, awareness and information sharing on the deterrence of illicit drugs.	# of training and information sharing events. # of partnership activities.	Enhanced awareness to aid crime prevention and help to combat the distribution of illicit drugs.
	Assess prolific offender monitoring and strategic interventions to support public safety.	# of prolific offenders baseline established.	Prolific offender profile defined, and data reporting on this established to help identify appropriate interventions.
	Develop enhanced guidance and tools for GNWT departments and agencies to enable efficient information sharing with law enforcement.	# of training and supporting resources developed for use at appropriate levels.	Data collection and sharing amongst justice system partners is enhanced.
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery and community driven solutions.	Expansion of First Nations and Inuit Policing Program (FNIPP) (federally funded).	# of additional FNIPP funded positions. # of Leaders of Collaboration. # of communities with policing priorities.	Communities guide the delivery of policing services.
	Funding directed to community-based crime prevention and interventions, targeting youth and young men.	# of interventions supported.	Community-based interventions support local needs, cultures, and traditions.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Continue diversions to restorative justice options and advancing restorative justice approaches to service delivery.	# of communities funded to establish a Community Justice Committee.	100% of Communities have funding and support available to establish a CJC if they choose.
		# of training sessions.	
		# of referrals, confirmed, and completed.	100% of Diversions are referred, tracked, confirmed, and completed.
	# of cases diverted from criminal justice system.		
	Enhance reintegration supports through partnerships, training, navigation, and case management.	# of supports and programs established.	Improved supports to navigate criminal justice system and reintegrate.
		# of individuals supported.	
Enhance public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their connection to crime in the NWT.	Continued RCMP reporting and measurement on policing priorities.	# of established performance measures reported on.	Data helps to inform policing approaches and improved outcomes, with increased public awareness of work in this area.
	Working with partners, including the RCMP, to support public education and awareness of drugs and alcohol and their link to crime.	# of public information sessions on drugs and alcohol and their link to crime.	Policing information improves actions and awareness of crime prevention with communities.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The Department works to administer a justice system for the people of the NWT that is reflective of the people it serves and is carried out in a manner which respects community and Indigenous values, and encourages communities to assume increasing responsibilities.

Crime rates for the NWT continue to be high compared to the rest of Canada, as are the incarceration rates of Indigenous peoples. There also continues to be a variety of complex social and demographic factors that are linked to our high crime rates including substance use and low educational attainment. As the rates of crime rise, so too does the demand on justice services, especially policing services, the Legal Aid Commission, Court Services, and Corrections Services.

The Department must regularly adjust legislation, programs and services, with associated cost implications, to ensure alignment with federal initiatives, while also ensuring the unique requirements of regional centres as well as smaller communities are met. These considerations will continue to be applied as public safety and other Mandate commitments are advanced.

Progress made in advancing Mandate commitments will be a result of collaboration and better service integration with Departments, agencies and Indigenous governments, communities and organizations.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department is committed to the Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative assembly and is intent on ensuring the GNWT is spending its money in the most efficient and effective manner possible. The Department has committed to reducing its expenditures and increasing its revenues to support this work over the next four years. Prior to seeking additional funds, the Department determines whether additional resources required can be managed from within Departmental appropriations, thereby limiting forced growth and initiative funding requests.

Financial mitigation factors will consistently be reviewed throughout the four year business plan to ensure credibility, accuracy and alignment with the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly. The Department operates within a heavily legislated and mandated environment given its activities of Court Services, Corrections Service, Legal Aid and Policing. The Department will continue its efforts to find cost savings within these legislated and mandated environments.

Some of the work that the Department has underway will introduce efficiencies such as the courts modernization project, which will streamline processes for the public and Court Services. The Department regularly works with each area within the Department including the RCMP to determine if efficiencies can be gained through reallocation of resources, scheduling, and the use of technology.

Through the fiscal sustainability plan, the Department determined that approximately 88% of the Department's operating budget is directly tied to legislated requirements and 7% is directly tied to mandated requirements, leaving only 5% of the budget, the majority of which supports mandated and legislated work the Department carries out.

The Department will be reducing \$2,897,000 in expenditures for 2024/2025 and \$2,942,000 ongoing. For new revenue generating opportunities the Department is looking to increase revenue generation by an estimated \$637,000 in 2024/2025 and \$849,000 in 2025/2026.

The Department will continue to work with its key stakeholders, business partners, federal and community governments to explore all potential efficiencies and opportunities to minimize the impact on services that the Department provides. The Department will report on its fiscal strategy progress to Ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly as part of the regular budget process.

Departmental Highlights

In addition to actions that will directly support Mandate commitments, the Department continues to provide services and supports to residents and communities through key activities.

Corrections Service

Community Advisory Boards (CABs) have been established to help in the delivery of holistic services in a safe environment and in preparation for offenders' rehabilitation and reintegration into their communities. It is intended that CABs be representative of Indigenous peoples of the NWT as a way to build stronger links between correctional facilities and communities.

The Investigations and Standards Office which investigates matters respecting the administration of the *Corrections Act*, conducts periodic inspections of correctional centres, establishes and maintains a system of review of inmate disciplinary measures, and handles complaints made by persons in custody or under supervision of the Corrections Service in the community.

Key current and planned programming enhancements include:

- A new Change Management Maintenance program will be rolled out to the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre (SMCC) and probation offices. This program aims to consolidate self-knowledge and personal change that offenders gained from participation in core programming.
- The Northern Sessions program works with the core criminogenic programming being delivered and addresses the specific background and needs of Indigenous inmates. Traditional Counsellor and Liaison Officers play a vital role in the delivery of the Northern Sessions.
- The North Slave Correctional Complex will again be offering the Corrections Service Canada (CSC) sex offender program.
- Introduction of the 'Courage to Change' interactive journaling curriculum will be offered to both incarcerated youth and youth under community supervision orders.

Court Services

The Department works to improve access to justice for residents, to pursue innovative approaches to crime reduction, and to support families at risk. The Court Services Division is supporting this work through:

- The establishment and evaluation of Specialized Courts;
- The delivery of Family Law programs, including the remote delivery of the Family Law Mediation Program and the online delivery of the Parenting after Separation Program, and the Child Support Recalculation Service; and

- Improved access to Court Services through technology.

On behalf of the Territorial Court, the Department continues to work with the RCMP to install videoconference equipment in all RCMP detachments outside of Yellowknife. This is intended to facilitate video calls for Bail Court so that accused persons only have to be transported to Yellowknife once their hearing has been completed and the Justice of the Peace has determined that it is necessary to remand the person in custody.

Legal Aid Services

Services in criminal, family and child protection law are delivered through a mixed model of staff lawyers and private bar lawyers. The Executive Director determines whether or not legal aid will be granted in accordance with financial and legal eligibility criteria.

Regardless of economic status, all NWT residents are entitled to fairness and the opportunity to protect their legal rights. The Legal Aid Commission operates an “Outreach” program providing legal information services to the public without requiring a legal aid application, including community visits, presentations and publications.

Through the Office of the Children’s Lawyer, the interests of children are represented and a voice for children in child protection and custody cases is provided. The Office also works to enhance civil legal services available for children in the NWT, through the training and education of legal counsel.

Services to Government

The Department works to modernize legislation to better align with legislative changes federally and in other provinces and territories, to meet the priorities of the Legislative Assembly as identified, and to address identified gaps that exist within NWT legislation.

Staff lawyers provide a wide range of legal services to the GNWT and act as the government’s full-service law firm. Through the Department’s Attorney General responsibilities, support is provided to other departments to achieve the GNWT Mandate.

The Access and Privacy Office (APO) processes access to information requests for all government departments and Housing Northwest Territories, while continuing to provide advice and assistance to the 22 public bodies subject to the *ATIPPA Act*. The APO supports the implementation of the GNWT privacy management program and provides corporate support through the development and delivery of access and privacy training to ensure staff have the knowledge base to meet program responsibilities.

The Department actively supports the official languages of the NWT, including the provision of materials, services and website in French. The Department also works with the Francophone Affairs Secretariat to establish an annual Operating Plan.

Services to the Public

Services provided to residents are offered by the following divisions or offices as outlined in the applicable legislation:

- **Office of the Public Trustee:** Operates independently and administers trusts for minors and estates for people who die without wills or lack the required mental competency to make a will.
- **Coroner Service:** Investigates sudden and unexpected deaths using a multi-disciplinary approach, and can make recommendations to prevent future deaths in similar circumstances. Coroners are independent medical-legal investigators appointed by the Minister of Justice on the recommendation of the Chief Coroner. The Coroner Service is responsible for the support, training and supervision of approximately 35 Relief Coroners across the NWT.
- **Legal Registries:** Registers corporate entities, various commercial documents, securities (both dealers and issuers) and interests in land. Almost all records are public documents and members of the public can view them or receive copies.
- **Maintenance Enforcement Office:** Enforces payment of child and spousal support orders by collecting and electronically depositing child and spousal support. Maintenance Enforcement Program (MEP) staff play a neutral role. They cannot change the amount a judge has ordered a person to pay, nor can they change the amount owed. MEP has reciprocal enforcement agreements with all other Canadian territories and provinces, all American states, and many other countries.
- **Rental Office:** Provides information and set les disputes between landlords and tenants. The Rental Officer is an independent, quasi-judicial officer who hears and resolves disputes between residential landlords and tenants. The Rental Officer also provides information to landlords and tenants respecting tenancy matters and investigates alleged contraventions of the Act or the Regulations.

Human Resource Initiatives

Services are delivered by the Department in 22 of the 33 communities, and through those 22 communities support is provided to the remaining 11 communities. This includes justices of the peace, coroners, community court workers, probation officers and RCMP officers.

As of April 1, 2024, the Department employed 561 staff, including 451 approved positions. The difference in the totals for approved positions versus employees is due to a large number of Corrections relief positions that are required for 24/7 operations. These positions (approximately 116) are not included as approved positions.

With the exception of Corrections, the Department workforce is composed of relatively small units. 62% of Justice employees work in the Corrections Service. Justice headquarters positions represent 16% of the overall Justice workforce and are located in Yellowknife. They provide program, policy and specialized administrative and technical support services to the Department, including areas such as finance, policy and legislation development, communications, and corporate and strategic planning. Legal and legislative services and policy advice on access/privacy matters are provided to all GNWT departments.

Recruitment and Retention

The Department requires specialized professionals in a number of areas. The Department has faced challenges to recruit and retain professional and specialized positions in the smaller remote communities, as well as in some of the regional centers.

The Corrections Northern Recruit Training Program was established to ensure northerners interested in a corrections career have the appropriate training required to perform the duties of the job.

Succession Planning

Succession planning is important for the Department. This is especially true given that 33% of employees are 50 or over and 14% of senior managers are eligible to retire currently or in the next five years.

Senior management within the Department is responsible for succession planning in their divisions. Aside from replacing retiring employees, plans also need to consider how best to encourage the transfer of knowledge, including possible developmental transfer assignments that help advance the career goals of existing employees and encourage retention.

Affirmative Action

The Department supports the application of the Affirmative Action policy in our hiring and has implemented department level hiring directives ensuring that our workforce is representative of the

people we serve. The Department is also implementing our Indigenous Employment Plan that is aimed to increase Indigenous Aboriginal staff in all positions.

The hiring of priority candidates also continues to be pursued through the application of available programs from the Department of Finance such as the Indigenous Career Gateway Program and the Indigenous Management Development and Training Program.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>Missing Persons Act</i>	The purpose of this legislation is to assist police in locating a missing person where no criminal investigation is underway. This will allow police officers to request information contained in client records with an urgent demand, an order for the production of records or a search warrant.	2023-24 Q4	2023-24 Q4
2	<i>Legislation Act</i>	Replacing the <i>Statutory Instruments Act</i> with a more modern <i>Legislation Act</i> which sets out the territorial regulatory process as well as provisions related to the making of statutes. The Public Printing Act, which authorizes the publication of the Northwest Territories Gazette and provides for the appointment of the Territorial Printer, would also be subsumed by the new Act.	2023-24 Q4	2024-25 Q1
3	<i>Protection Against Family Violence Act</i>	Consideration of who is included in the definition of applicant under the <i>Act</i> as there have been issues with not everyone being captured. Further amendments also to be considered.	2024-25 Q1	2024-25 Q3
4	<i>Business Day Statutes Amendment Act</i>	In 2017 the <i>Interpretation Act</i> was repealed and replaced. The definition of “holiday” changed, and a Sunday is no longer a holiday under the new <i>Act</i> . Consequential amendments are required to some Acts to ensure Sunday is not recognized as a day when an office must be open (if it is in fact not open).	2024-25 Q1	2024-25 Q3

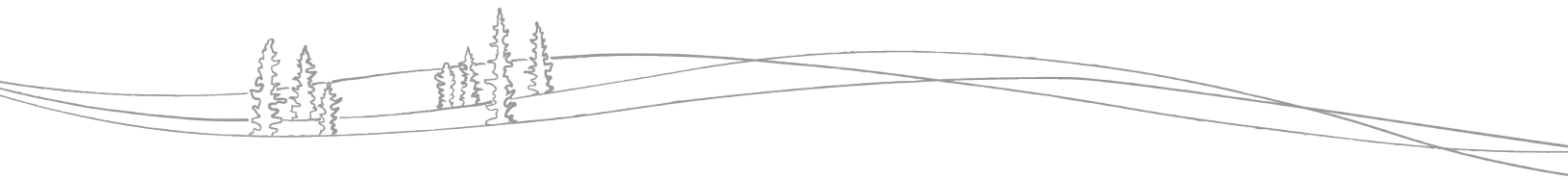
#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
5	<i>Children's Law Act</i>	Amendments to bring territorial legislation in line with changes brought forward by federal Bill C-78 (<i>Divorce Act</i> amendments).	2024-25 Q2	2024-25 Q3
6	<i>Family Law Act</i>	Amendments to bring territorial legislation in line with changes brought forward by federal Bill C-78 (<i>Divorce Act</i> amendments).	2024-25 Q2	2024-25 Q3
7	<i>Wills Act</i>	Amendments to the <i>Wills Act</i> and other Acts to facilitate the use of electronic wills to align with recent changes to the <i>Evidence Act</i> (Canada), <i>Evidence Act</i> respecting electronic document evidence, and also the practice of other jurisdictions.	2024-25 Q2	2024-25 Q4
8	<i>Land Titles Act</i>	The <i>Land Titles Act</i> is amended every few years, as issues are identified, and practices change. Amendments will create operational efficiencies and better record management practices in the Land Titles Office, as well as codifying existing practices into the legislation.	2024-25 Q3	2025-26 Q1
9	<i>Trespass Act</i>	Trespass laws are intended to protect landowners from trespassers, including by deterring potentially criminal behaviour or inadvertent damages that trespassers may cause. While trespassing at night is forbidden by the Criminal Code (s. 177), most provinces have separate trespass legislation.	2024-25 Q4	2025-26 Q1

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
10	<i>Notaries Public and Commissioner for Oaths Act</i>	The purpose of this legislation is to follow the practice in most other jurisdictions to remove these legal systems from within the <i>Evidence Act</i> to its own stand-alone legislation, reducing administrative burden and red-tape. Canada has also acceded to the Apostille Convention, and as a result, the NWT will be sharing data with the federal government, which makes structural and procedural changes to these legal systems timely.	2025-26 Q1	2025-26 Q3
11	<i>Business Corporations Act</i>	The purpose of this <i>Act</i> is to adopt many of the beneficial ownership requirements being imposed on business corporations nationally to enable Canada to meet its international commitments to address the misuse of corporate registries for criminal purposes. The <i>Act</i> will create new obligations that require NWT business corporations to ascertain and maintain records of beneficial ownership.	2025-26 Q1	2025-26 Q3
12	<i>Coroners Act</i>	The existing regime in the <i>Coroners Act</i> reflects the previous system of contracting community coroners. Coroners are now unionized relief employees. The <i>Act</i> should reflect this with further amendments also to be contemplated.	2025-26 Q1	2025-26 Q3
13	<i>Safer Communities and Neighborhoods Act</i>	SCAN legislation works to allow residents to make confidential complaints to investigators where possible illegal activity is taking place. Investigators work to determine if the complaint is founded, and may issue warnings, or work with property owners to evict persons involved in illegal activity.	2025-26 Q1	2025-26 Q3
14	<i>Civil Forfeiture Act</i>	Civil forfeiture is a remedial statutory device designed to recover the property used to facilitate crime.	2025-26 Q2	2025-26 Q4

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Builders' Lien Regulations	In 2023, the <i>Builders' Lien Act</i> was enacted to replace the <i>Mechanics Lien Act</i> . The new legislation was put in place to address modern construction practices and sets out the legal processes, systems, rights, and remedies for parties involved in construction disputes. The Department is working to develop the regulations needed to bring the <i>Builders' Lien Act</i> into force. These regulations will establish standard forms for workers and organizations that rely upon this legal system. The regulations will also set out the various financial limits and thresholds for various provisions of the <i>Act</i> .	2024-25 Q2
2	Missing Persons Regulations	Regulations are anticipated to include additional details of what is required for inclusion in the Annual Report, the process for providing notice to individuals whose information has been accessed, and standardized forms for requesting information that must be used.	Dependant on assent of <i>Missing Persons Act</i>

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Review of the <i>Fine Option Act</i>	Consideration of approaches to better support the administration of fine option programming.	2024-25 Q3
2	Review of the <i>Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i>	The <i>ATIPP Act</i> must be reviewed within 18 months of the beginning of the 20 th Legislative Assembly.	2025-26 Q1
3	Review of the <i>Residential Tenancies Act</i>	The Chief Rental Officer has raised a number of areas for consideration regarding amendments in their annual reports. The Department will undertake further analysis and has committed to reviewing The <i>Act</i> during the 20 th Legislative Assembly.	2025-26 Q1

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BUSINESS PLAN

DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

2024-25 to 2027-28



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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA or the Department) is responsible for the development and maintenance of community governments, responsive and responsible to the residents, with sufficient legal authority and resources to carry out community responsibilities, to provide public programs and services essential to good community life, and to deal effectively with other government organizations.

The Department accomplishes this mandate through supporting capable, accountable, and self-directed community governments in providing a safe, sustainable, and healthy environment for community residents.

MACA is divided into eight divisions, each of which is responsible for the design and development of policies and programs that support the Department's larger mandate from within their respective area. In addition, the Department has regional offices located in five regions – Dehcho, Inuvik, North Slave, Sahtú, and South Slave.

Activity	Business functions supported
Community Governance	Community Governance coordinates many of the functions that support the planning and management of community governments. The activity provides planning and governance advice to the Department's regional offices and community governments. This activity is also responsible for the assessment of all land and improvements in the Northwest Territories.
Community Government Learning and Development	Community Government Learning and Development (CGLD) supports community government capacity building for community elected officials and community government staff. The CGLD provides training, development opportunities and resources in broad areas of community government responsibilities. The CGLD provides an integrated approach to local governance capacity building through partnerships with government Departments, Indigenous governments and territorial organizations, professional associations, and educational institutes.
Community Operations	Community Operations coordinates many of the functions that support the operations and administration of community governments. The activity provides planning and technical advice to the Department's regional offices and community governments as well as representing the interests of community governments on regulatory requirements and standards related to financial reporting and asset management.
Directorate	The Directorate is responsible for the overall management of the Department, managing human and financial resources and providing overall direction and planning. The Directorate also coordinates the development and the implementation of the Department's strategies with the senior management team and links the Department's activity to the goals of the Minister and government. Regional Management oversees operations in the regional offices.

Activity	Business functions supported
Emergency Management	Emergency Management supports community governments in preparing for and responding to emergencies. The Division oversees the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT's) emergency management activities, which include mitigation and prevention, planning and preparedness, response, and recovery and administration of agreements for the delivery of federal emergency management programs.
Public Safety	Public Safety coordinates key regulatory programs and services within the Department that support the safety and protection of residents of the Northwest Territories. This includes the Office of the Fire Marshal, Northwest Territories (NWT) 9-1-1 and Consumer Affairs.
Regional Operations	Regional Operations is responsible for the coordination, implementation and delivery of most of the Department's programs and services to community governments and other stake holders at the regional level. Regional staff provide advice and support to community governments on a range of issues and topics and are responsible for the delivery of federal infrastructure programs. They have a key role as the primary contact working with community governments to support them in developing good governance and operational practices, while also working with other government agencies.
Sport, Recreation and Youth	<p>Sport and Recreation provides advice and assistance regarding sport, physical activity and recreation initiatives with community governments and other non-government organization stakeholders. The activity also coordinates volunteer recognition and development programs and promotes and supports youth initiatives including youth tours and the Youth Ambassadors Program.</p> <p>The NWT Lottery Commission manages and operates the Western Canada Lottery Program in the NWT and operates the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund.</p>

Detailed descriptions of the Department's programs and services can be found at Departments' website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs is committed to supporting the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly by aligning its strategies, programs, and services with the GNWT's Mandate Commitments.

The Department's key activity areas work closely with community and Indigenous governments, non-government organizations (NGOs), other key stakeholders and the public to ensure programming reflects the values of NWT residents, communities and regions.

MACA supports the development of housing in the NWT by assisting community governments with their community public infrastructure, community planning to identify land requirements, and completing plan reviews to ensure buildings meet fire codes.

The Department is committed to establishing a strong economic foundation through the provision of stable, predictable funding to community governments. This contributes to sustainable and prosperous communities and provides them with the resources needed to deliver the programs and services desirable to their residents. MACA also provides training and development opportunities to community governments and their staff in order to enhance their capacity to deliver municipal services in their communities.

Through the provision of 9-1-1 services, MACA facilitates access to health care, and connects residents with police and fire services. The department also provides funding to community governments, sports and recreation organizations, and youth serving organizations to deliver programs and services that give youth and young adults opportunities to develop life skills, make healthy personal choices and help mitigate the effects of trauma.

MACA works closely with community governments and other partners to ensure that public safety and emergency management are prioritized to keep residents safe and help communities thrive. This work includes fire prevention, consumer protection, and emergency management. MACA assists community governments in land use planning that considers hazards and climate change impacts while also acquiring and maintaining public infrastructure that supports safe drinking water and other amenities. In order to address the increasing frequency and severity of emergency events, MACA is actively working to strengthen and improve the NWT emergency management system in line with other jurisdictions across Canada.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all Priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Collaborate with Indigenous governments and residents to achieve the objectives of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i> .	Develop a model for incorporating Indigenous Governments in emergency planning, response and recovery.	Level of implementation of a model to incorporate Indigenous Governments in emergency planning, response and recovery.	2023 After Action Review recommendations received in the Fall 2024. Model developed and implemented by the end of 2025-26.

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs, the following commitments will guide the implementation of the mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Make programs and services more accessible and integrated through enhanced collaboration across government.	Development of common or integrated programming for the sharing of information across departments to reduce administrative burdens and benefit public clients.	% of identified common or integrated program opportunities fulfilled in accordance with ATIPP Act requirements.	100% of identified programs developed as per established timelines.
Honour the GNWT’s commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Engage regularly with the NWTAC and LGANT on key community government-related issues.	# of official-level and/or Elected-level meetings between MACA and NWTAC per year.	3 meetings per year.

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility, and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with Indigenous, federal, and community governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to secure sustainable funding for housing now and into the future.	Support community governments through the capital planning process to identify land development needs identified in the Territorial Housing Needs Assessment to reduce barriers to housing development.	% of interested community governments supported with capital plan updates.	100% of interested community governments supported in updating capital plans.

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Grow and enhance the northern workforce by investing in skill development and by attracting skilled workers to the NWT.	Implementation of the Community Government Learning and Development Strategic Plan.	% of Strategic Plan actions implemented.	100% of actions implemented by 2027-2028.
	Creation of property assessor positions to support northern employment and ensure that properties across the NWT are accurately assessed to ensure a sustainable property tax revenue stream and support northern employment.	# of junior assessors meeting requirements for accreditation through education and experience as laid out in the GNWT performance management guidelines.	Three junior assessor positions filled by 2027-28.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Develop and deliver a competency-based occupational certification program for Water Treatment Plant Operators that reduces barriers to certification.	Level of completion of occupational certification program.	Program fully developed and provided to Educational Culture and Employment (ECE) for approval by 2026.
Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.	Develop a Community Planning Framework and associated guides that support community governments to implement best practices and meet public needs.	% of community governments provided with approved framework and guides. % of submitted community plans reviewed during the Business Planning Cycle.	100% of community governments provided with approved framework and guides. 100% of submitted community plans reviewed.

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Deliver equitable access to sustainable primary care in all NWT communities.	Ensure NWT 9-1-1 is meeting a sustainable standard of care.	Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the 9-1-1 program as per the evaluation framework.	Annual report developed and tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Implementation of the evaluation framework by the end of 2024-25. Evaluation conducted by end of 2027-2028.

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Review the sport and recreation system in the context of the Active Living Framework (ALF).	Level of implementation of the ALF Action Plan and the ALF monitoring and evaluation framework.	100% of actions implemented by defined target dates as outlined in the ALF Action Plan. 100% of reporting requirements met as outlined in the ALF monitoring and evaluation framework.

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	Ensure that the NWT emergency management system remains relevant and effective.	Alignment of GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy (DAP) with federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA).	GNWT DAP reviewed and updated in 2024-25 following anticipated DFAA updates in 2025.
		% of emergency events after which an after-action review was conducted.	After-action review conducted after 100% of emergency events.
		% of recommendations from after-action reviews implemented.	100% of recommendations considered and implemented where possible.
		% of GNWT staff trained on Incident Command System (ICS) by 2027-28.	10% of GNWT staff trained on ICS by 2027-2028.
		% of community governments provided with support to develop or update emergency plans.	100% of community governments requiring updates/plans contacted annually. Increase in the # of community governments with up-to-date Local Emergency Plans.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Continue to support the 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework and the 2025-2029 Action Plan.	% of MACA led actions completed within timeframes established in the 2025-2029 action plan.	100% of actions completed within established timeframes.
	Update and deliver climate change training to community governments.	# of community government represented by participants.	10 community governments have employees participating in the course.
		% of post-course surveys indicating increased awareness of climate change.	75% of those that complete the course indicate increased awareness of climate change impacts.
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.	Support compliance with the <i>Fire Prevention Act and Regulations</i> through ensuring an efficient plan review process.	Communicate the plan review process including legislative updates.	Revised Guidelines made available to public by end of 2024-2025.
		Average processing time of plan review reports (# of business days).	Plan review reports processed and issued within an average of 10 business days from submission.
		Average # of days from hearing to decision being communicated to the applicant.	Decision communicated within an average of 30 days from the hearing.
	Continue supporting the implementation of the NWT Waste Resources Management Strategy through the Clean-Up/Clean Start program.	% of community governments that have removed hazardous waste stockpiles.	50% of NWT communities governments remove hazardous waste materials from their landfills by March 2028.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Support compliance with the <i>Fire Prevention Act</i> and regulations through increased regulatory activities by the Office of the Fire Marshal by increased inspections capacity.	% increase in average annual regulatory inspections as compared to the previous Business Planning Cycle.	An overall increase of 25% regulatory inspections completed by the end of 2027-2028.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with law enforcement, governments, communities and across departments to create and strengthen tools that can be used to disrupt and combat the drug trade and associated criminal activity.	Assist community governments in implementing bylaws supporting public safety.	% of interested community governments provided with resources and support.	100% of interested community governments provided with resources and support by 2027-28.
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions.	Develop an NWT Youth Strategy.	Level of completion of Youth Strategy.	Strategy fully complete by 2027-28.

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The Department's small staffing complement has the potential to create challenges in delivering programs and services.

Prioritization of initiatives and sound project planning will be critical to ensuring that the Department's programs and services align with the priorities of the Legislative Assembly. By taking this approach, lower priority initiatives may be deferred or cancelled if/when resource constraints arise. Retaining existing staff will be prioritized to ensure service levels are maintained. This will be achieved by monitoring the results of employee engagement surveys and ensuring that actions are taken to remedy identified weaknesses. Ongoing performance management processes will also contribute to retention, as managers will be encouraged to support staff development to improve engagement.

While some of MACA's programs have a general public benefit without requiring direct involvement, others require active engagement from the target audience to deliver value. Low program uptake by community governments and other stakeholders reduces the public value generated in relation to program funding and indicates issues with awareness of program benefits and/or program design issues by community governments or the public. To support program uptake, MACA will ensure that its programs and services are promoted appropriately to target audiences, while highlighting the potential benefits. This will be achieved through communications campaigns, regular contact between program staff and key stakeholders, social media, and other marketing tactics.

Although some MACA's programs (disaster assistance, infrastructure funding, sport and recreation) are closely tied to federal funding arrangements. Changes to agreements originating with the federal government have the potential to compromise the level of service delivery. This may happen due to political shifts resulting in high-level policy and/or funding changes which would be outside of the GNWT's control. The Department will minimize the impact of any changes to federal programs and funding arrangements by continuing to engage with federal partners to advocate for federal programs that recognize the unique challenges and characteristics of community governments in the NWT. The Department will manage the impact of any federal changes on residents by communicating regularly and proactively with community governments and Indigenous governments to collaborate, leverage funding to achieve shared priorities, and identify opportunities and efficiencies as they arise.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

MACA commits to supporting the GNWT's fiscal strategy by increasing revenues and reducing expenditures in a way that minimizes impacts on critical programs and services. In doing so, MACA will adhere to the GNWT's *Financial Administration Act* and Manual, with a focus on improved accountability toward program targets and finding cost efficiencies where possible.

As part of this work, MACA took steps to decrease funding that was infrequently accessed in the following key activity areas: community and regional operations, community government learning and development, as well as sport, recreation and youth programming.

In 2024-25, MACA has committed to reviewing both the Community Government Learning and Development training programs as well as the Office of the Fire Marshall's fire inspections as part of the Government Renewal Initiative (GRI). A review of these program areas will identify the level of effectiveness and efficiency that exists in each program area and provide recommendations for program improvements in both areas. While not part of the GRI, MACA is also committed to establishing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the community government funding policies in 2024-25 and using that framework to measure the effectiveness and efficiencies of that funding.

Extreme weather events across the NWT have resulted in several natural disasters that have threatened property and lives of northerners. The cost of responding to these events are largely subsidized by several disaster relief programs offered by the Government of Canada. While it can take the GNWT several years post event to recover these costs from the Government of Canada, the financial management processes, and active dialogue that MACA maintains with the Government of Canada, has allowed the GNWT to receive advance funding to eligible levels, thereby mitigating the GNWT's borrowing pressures to the extent possible.

Departmental Highlights

The NWT faced unprecedented flooding in both 2021 and 2022 that negatively impacted several communities prior to the 2023 wildfires. Recent updates to the NWT Emergency Plan reflect immediate lessons learned through these events and further updates will likely result from the extensive after-action reviews currently underway. In addition, the process to recover from widespread disasters is lengthy and MACA continues to work closely with community governments, Public Safety Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, and Indigenous Services Canada to ensure that the GNWT maximizes federal disaster assistance programs.

To improve the efficiency and accessibility of its services, MACA launched an online portal for community governments to access emergency management tools and templates, is moving more training to online platforms, and is launching an online eServices business licensing portal. The Department will continue to explore opportunities to extend online services.

MACA provides funding support to Team Northwest Territories (Team NT) at major multi-sport games events. The Sport North Federation and the Aboriginal Sport Circle are funded for each of the multi-sport games they administer through the Physical Activity, Sport and Recreation Fund. A significant amount of work is underway to prepare for several multi-sport games and hosting opportunities including the Arctic Winter Games, Canada Summer Games, Canada Winter Games and North American Indigenous Games.

In addition to MACA's legislative initiatives listed below, the Department is working on additional legislative or regulatory reviews including the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act*. MACA is also supporting the department of Infrastructure with the creation of a building standards framework in the NWT.

Human Resource Initiatives

MACA ensures that all employees complete mandatory training by monitoring completion rates, arranging for teams to take mandatory training together in groups, and by following up directly with divisions and/or staff directly as necessary. The Department also actively encourages managers at all levels to distribute acting opportunities among direct reports and supports staff to take credentialed courses and other professional development training upon request, and where relevant to their job function.

MACA fosters a culture of continuous learning across community governments by regularly sharing community government targeted courses being offered by Community Government Learning and Development, and across departmental staff (including the regions) by promoting opportunities featured on Bearnet or the Human Resources Enterprise Learning Management System and creating group learning opportunities for staff with shared interests.

The Department collectively recognizes and celebrates the important contributions of all staff through regularly scheduled events including, but not limited to, the Senior Manager's Breakfast, the Social Committee's Winter Holiday Party, other holiday potlucks, and annual Long Services Awards. Positive working environments are also cultivated through division and unit activities including celebrating work-related milestones.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

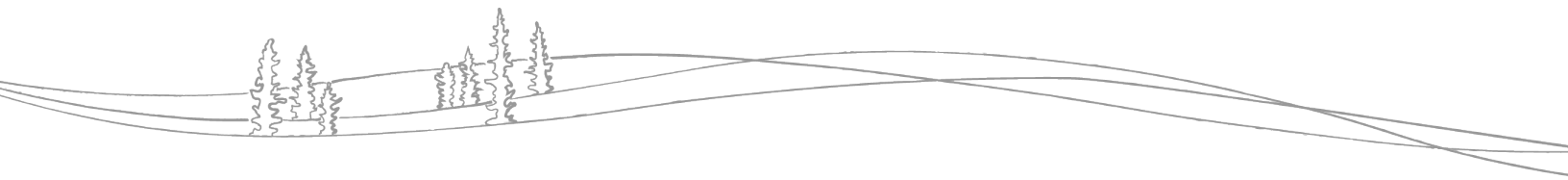
#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	<i>MACA Statutes Amendment Act (Western Canada Lottery Act, NWT 9-1-1 Act and Fire Prevention Act)</i>	The Western Canada Lottery Act, NWT 9-1-1 Act and Fire Prevention Act require the production or tabling of reports withintimelines that are not operationally possible due to the need to validate information from external sources. As such, MACA has identified that minor amendments to the reportingtimelines are required.	2024-2025 Q1	2024-2025 Q4 (Winter session)
2	<i>Real Estate Agents' Licensing Act</i>	This Act has not been comprehensively reviewed since it came into force in 1991. MACA completed its research and engagement in 2023 and released a What We Heard Report in September 2023, which confirmed that the legislation is in need of updates.	2024-2025 Q2	2025-2026 Q1 (Spring Session)
3	<i>Property Assessment and Taxation Act (PATA) – Phase 2</i>	<p>The second phase is intended to address issues related to taxation and electronic publication of the certified assessment roll.</p> <p>An interdepartmental working group is in place with membership from MACA, the Department of Environment and Climate Change, and the Department of Finance to examine these issues and findings as it pertains to their mandates to help inform any consequential amendments that may result from proposed PATA changes.</p>	2025-2026 Q3	2026-2027 Q3 (Fall Session)

#	Regulatory initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Fire Prevention Act Plan Review Appeal Board Regulations	MACA has completed further engagement with specific industry stakeholder organizations on the Plan Review Appeal Board, particularly with respect to composition and appointment processes.	Regulations are expected to be registered in 2024-2025 Q1. Appeal Board is expected to be in force in 2024-2025 Q2.
2	NWT 9-1-1 Regulations	MACA will be seeking cabinet approval to amend the <i>NWT 9-1-1 Regulations</i> to increase the cost recovery fee from \$1.70 per subscriber, per month to \$3.00 per subscriber, per month.	Regulations are expected to be registered in 2024-2025 Q1, pending approval of initiatives funding request.
3	Emergency Management Regulations	An after-action review of the 2023 wildfire season will be undertaken, which may lead to recommendations to amend the <i>Emergency Management Act (EMA Act)</i> and/or its Regulations. MACA has identified potential areas for regulation development, including what should be contained in a community emergency plan and an enforcement mechanism for not meeting requirements.	Timeline to be determined based on after-action review of the 2023 wildfire season.

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Grants-in-Lieu of Property Taxes Policy (GIL policy)	The GIL Policy allows for the payment of grants-in-lieu of property taxes to Municipal Taxation Authorities (MTAs) for GNWT-owned properties located within cities, towns, or villages. The policy has not been substantially amended since it was first implemented in 1989.	Policy review to be conducted in 2024-2025 with implementation projected for 2025-2026.

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
2	Disaster Assistance Policy / Disaster Assistance Funding Policy	A policy review will be conducted of the Disaster Assistance Policy (DAP) and the Disaster Assistance Funding Policy (DAFP), and updates made as necessary to align with changes to the federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements (DFAA).	Policy reviews to occur in 2024-2025 to align with the federal DFAA amendments expected in April 2025. These policies were last updated in 2022.
3	Community Government Funding Policies	Revisions to the Water and Sewer, Operations and Maintenance, and Community Public Infrastructure policies were completed in August 2023 to align with the 2014 community government funding review.	Changes in funding levels are planned for in July 2024, pending approval of the 2024-2025 Main Estimates. Any increases or decreases will be implemented over a 3-year transition period.
4	Ground Ambulance and Highway Rescue Services Funding Policy	MACA and the Department of Health and Social Services will seek direction on whether a renewed approach should be pursued, given the significant financial resources required.	Cabinet direction on a go forward approach will be sought via a joint decision paper by November 2024.
5	Sport and Recreation policy suite review	Review of Sport and Recreation policies to align with the Active Living Framework (ALF).	Scoping of the completed review is targeted by end of 2025-2026. Most Sport and Recreation policies were last updated in 2017.

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BUSINESS PLAN

HOUSING NWT

2024-25 to 2027-28

Government of
Northwest Territories

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Departmental Overview

Mandate of the Department

Housing NWT provides social and market housing programs and services including subsidized rental and homeownership programs (including purchase and repairs), and unsubsidized (market) rental housing in rural and remote communities. Policy and program development play a key role in creating appropriate programs to address the core housing need of Northwest Territories (NWT) residents and promote self-reliance. Housing NWT incorporates energy-efficient technologies in its housing design and in the retrofitting of housing to improve its sustainability and energy efficiency.

Housing NWT also works in partnership with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to cost share the development and improvement of housing infrastructure across the NWT. At the community level, Housing NWT partners with 23 Local Housing Organizations (LHOs), municipal and Indigenous governments, to manage and administer community housing services in 32 NWT communities.

Housing NWT is responsible for GNWT's social housing program which includes the operation and administration of approximately 2800 subsidized rental housing units distributed across the Northwest Territories. These 2800 housing units are a critical housing support representing approximately 20% of the Territories' 15,000 residences. Housing NWT's mission is to increase the wellbeing of individuals and communities by providing fair access to quality housing support for those most in need. In addition to providing housing assets through its rental programs, Housing's core programming includes a suite of financial and project management services to support low-income homeowners.

Housing NWT is a decentralized operation with a headquarters in Yellowknife, five district offices, who offer direct support for 23 LHOs. LHOs are distinct organizations that are directed by a local Housing Board and responsible for property management including tenant relations and maintenance services. There is a Community Housing Services Agreement between Housing NWT and each of the LHOs that sets out the expectations for each LHO in exchange for the funding and support offered by Housing NWT. This decentralized approach positions housing support in communities where it is required most.

In addition to the core business of operating subsidized housing units and supporting low-income homeowners, Housing NWT is involved in shelter operations, transitional housing, market housing with approximately 230 units, community housing planning, co-investment and support to community housing projects, and research on climate change impacts on housing, alternative heating technology, and residential building science.

Activity	Business functions supported
Community Housing Services	<p>Housing NWT operates approximately 3,000 rental housing units in 32 communities across the Northwest Territories including subsidized public housing and affordable housing units. The Local Housing Organizations (LHOs) provide, under an agency agreement with Housing NWT, property management services including the allocation of units, the assessment and collection of rents, and the provision of preventative and demand maintenance services. In addition, LHOs provide assistance and support to housing clients in accessing Housing NWT homeownership programs. Each LHO has an advisory board to oversee their operations.</p> <p>The Community Housing Services key activities include resources to operate Housing NWT's rental housing portfolio including LHO contribution funding for administration, maintenance, apprentices, and training and support workshops. Also included in this activity are the cost of utilities, leasing of supplemental housing units and LHO office and warehouse space, LHO audit fees, minor modernization and improvements and property tax and land lease fees that are paid centrally by Housing NWT.</p>
Homelessness	<p>Housing NWT, working in partnership with community-based organizations, delivers a range of programs designed to assist households in addressing homelessness. These programs include Emergency Shelters, Homelessness Assistance Fund, Housing First, Northern Pathways to Housing, Rapid Rehousing, Shelter Enhancements Fund and Small Community Homelessness Fund. This activity remains for 2024-2025 but is expected to change as implementation of the NWT Homelessness Strategy proceeds.</p>
Operations and Support	<p>Housing Operations and Support includes funding for Housing NWT's 105 positions, as described below, and associated operating and maintenance costs involved in the delivery of programs and support service, such as contracts, materials and supplies and travel.</p> <p>The President's Office is responsible for supporting the Minister Responsible for Housing NWT providing overall strategic and operational direction, leading the</p>

senior management team, and managing the human and financial resources of the Corporation.

The **Policy and Planning Division** provides support with regard to long-term strategic direction and planning for Housing NWT. This division is also responsible for strategic and business planning, policy development, qualitative and quantitative research, corporate communications, and homelessness initiatives. This section represents the Housing NWT on a Federal/Provincial/Territorial level, on interdepartmental working groups, and on other committees.

The **Finance and Infrastructure Services Branch** is overseen by the Vice President (VP) - Finance and Infrastructure Services and includes the Finance and Administration Division, Infrastructure Services Division, the Financial Planning Section and the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Section supporting Housing NWT and all Local Housing Organizations (LHOs) on OH&S matters. The Branch is responsible for the overall financial affairs of Housing NWT, including the provision of accounting and advisory services, financial reporting and monitoring, financial planning, treasury services, mortgage administration and the management of own source revenues and federal funding. The Branch is also responsible for the delivery of infrastructure services including the planning, designing, coordinating and implementing the delivery of Housing NWT's capital infrastructure projects including retrofits, new construction, and energy projects: advising on and supporting modernization and improvement projects and homeownership project delivery; securing suitable land for the delivery of housing programs and services; developing and implementing disposal plans; coordinating environmental remediation activities; and the overall maintenance management of the Corporation's housing portfolio.

The **Programs and District Operations Branch** is overseen by the VP- Programs and District Operations. This Branch oversees the development, implementation, monitoring and delivery of programs and services and initiatives that support Housing NWT's responsiveness to housing needs in the NWT. The

	<p>Branch also provides corporate support, training and oversight to Housing NWT's five District Offices for the delivery of housing programs and services in order to ensure a continuity of approach to program delivery. The Branch works closely with District Offices and Local Housing Organizations (LHOs) to ensure compliance with existing program policies and procedures and supports the on-going development of operational policies and procedures to ensure housing programs remain updated and responsive, and to ensure the District Offices and LHOs have the support, training, and capacity required to deliver Housing NWT's programs and services effectively and efficiently. District Operations are responsible for the administration of district capital, program delivery, maintenance training, assisting in land acquisitions and development, and working closely with stakeholders at the community level. In addition, they also work with LHOs and NWT residents to identify options for programming to assist individuals and families in decision making regarding their housing needs. This assistance includes the delivery of a range of Homeownership programs.</p>
Non-Residential Building Operations	<p>Housing NWT continues to own and operate a small number of non-residential buildings within its housing inventory that are being leased to GNWT Departments, and other community-based organizations, to support their program and services delivery. The net cash contributions generated from these housing assets assists in resourcing the public housing program.</p>
Rent Subsidy Program	<p>The Canada-NWT Housing Benefit is a funding program administered by Housing NWT that began on April 1, 2021. The Canada-NWT Housing Benefit program provides financial assistance to eligible applicants, currently up to \$800 per month, who are paying more than 30% of their gross income towards rent.</p>
Unilateral CMHC Programs and Other Programs	<p>In 2023-2024 Housing NWT introduced the Alfred Moses Memorial Scholarship and Tom Williams Memorial Scholarships. These scholarships are awarded to Northwest Territories (NWT) part-time and full-time post-secondary students enrolled in certificate, diploma, degree program or other approved training program related to housing to assist with costs associated with pursuing their education. A total of 12</p>

\$1,000 scholarships are awarded annually, two in each of Housing NWT's Districts (Beaufort-Delta, Nahendeh, North Slave, Sahtu, South Slave) and two in Yellowknife.

Detailed descriptions of the Department's programs and services can be found at Departments' website.

Supporting the 20th Legislative Assembly

Priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly

Housing NWT's mandate aligns with the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

The public housing program and suite of homeownership supports affect the suitability, accessibility and affordability of housing in the NWT for those most in need while the limited market housing program offered provides rental options for higher income earners in communities and expand housing options for healthcare professionals, teachers, and other critical community workers.

Towards increasing the suitability, accessibility and affordability of housing, Housing NWT will develop an in-depth and contemporary needs assessment and infrastructure deficit model, complete a capacity mapping study with housing partners, and establish an NWT housing resource center including an accessible residential design guideline based on research and detailing energy-efficient and climate resilient construction to assist residents, developers, and housing delivery agents in their work.

Housing's core operations, focused on maintaining, renovating, and constructing housing has an immediate impact on the economy of the NWT and continued investments in housing will result in projects distributed across the NWT with a range of contracting opportunities for northern contractors at all scales. Sustained investments in housing maintenance, retrofits, and new construction will contribute to a strong economic foundation for the Northwest Territories. Housing NWT will continue to support the development of building trade apprentices through its Local Housing Organizations (LHO) and new construction projects. Housing is recognized as a social determinant of health and wellbeing, and stable and secure housing is required to enable northerners to heal from historic and ongoing trauma. Housing NWT, in partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services, will pilot a transitional housing model for residents returning from addictions treatment with the objective of supporting recovery towards successful outcomes.

Safe housing is also integral to the safety of residents and communities. Housing will continue to work with LHOs to increase the safety of residents and staff through enhanced security measures. Consider security through design principles in new construction, and work with other Government departments to address the root-causes of increased substance abuse and criminality associated with the trade of drugs. Climate change is another threat to the safety of NWT residents. Housing NWT will complete a climate change risk analysis on the public housing portfolio resulting in design guideline recommendations, and recommendations for adaptation of existing infrastructure.

It is realized that continued investments in housing are required to diversify housing options across the housing continuum, address the infrastructure deficit associated with an aging housing stock, enhance the resiliency of housing in the context of a changing climate, reduce reliance on volatile and carbon intensive

fuel sources, and increase the supply of housing across the NWT. Accomplishing this will require good governance and collaboration with Indigenous Governments, the Federal Government, communities, NGOs, private industry, the public, and other housing delivery agents. While it is recognized that no single government will be capable of addressing core housing need in the NWT, neither will an uncoordinated approach. Housing NWT will continue to use the NWT Housing Forum, a number of formal and informal cooperative arrangements established with Indigenous Governments, and relationships with industry and the Federal Government to coordinate efforts towards housing solutions.

Mandate Commitments

Collaborative Governance

The GNWT’s relationship with Indigenous governments is integral to the future prosperity of the NWT and the following commitments will guide the implementation of the Mandate across all priorities.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Strengthen government-to-government relationships with Indigenous governments and work in partnership to jointly engage the federal government to advance issues of shared interest.	Participate as requested at all negotiations table to inform conversations around housing delivery and programming.	Number of engagements with Indigenous governments.	
	Housing will engage on a government-to-government basis to share information on housing and prioritize and partner on projects to support housing initiatives with a long-term view to where each Indigenous Government aspires to be with their housing assets and programs. plans and projects and align objectives in housing.	Number of collaborative agreements developed.	
	Partnerships with Indigenous Governments.	Number of partnership agreements.	
	Use the NWT Housing Forum as a mechanism to discuss issues and priorities to support having Indigenous Governments and GNWT approach Canada together on housing priorities for the north.	Number of meetings held.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Continue implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry Calls to Justice.	Ensure training with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens and that consider the recommendations of the MMIWG and UNDRIP, is available to front line program staff within Housing NWT and to contracted housing providers (i.e., LHO's) to provide services.	Number of staff trained.	

To best support the delivery of programs and services to our residents and the dedicated public servants who deliver those programs the following commitment will guide the implementation of the mandate.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Honour the GNWT's commitments to openness, transparency, and accountability by engaging with our partners, the public, and the public service on decisions that affect their lives.	Housing NWT will be conducting engagement with Indigenous Governments and multiple other housing stakeholders as they complete and update of the Housing NWT Act in the 20 th Assembly.	Number of engagement opportunities.	
	Housing NWT will use the NWT Housing forum as the mechanism for identifying and reviewing additional policy and program changes. This is following on the Strategic Renewal's intention for continuous quality improvement and regular timely review of policies.	Number of engagements on policies.	

Housing

To improve the suitability, accessibility and affordability of housing options in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Increase housing availability for all residents by working with partners to address gaps in the northern housing continuum including more transitional and supportive living options.	<p>Work with partners inside and outside of the GNWT to deliver a suite of programming addressing all aspects of the housing continuum.</p> <p>Examples may include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Indigenous Governments and Non-government Organizations to offer shelter, supportive and transitional housing opportunities in communities. Working with the Department of Education, Culture & Employment to seek short- and long-term solutions to the provision of market housing for teachers to support access to and retention of teachers in our communities and secure quality education for our youth. This objective may also include partnerships with Indigenous Governments or private sector as per their interests. 	<p>Number of agreements/ Partnerships.</p> <p>Number of units.</p> <p>Initiatives of Community Housing.</p>	
	Deliver the CHB program to support private rental affordability.	Number of clients.	Maintain a 200 client base each year.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	<p>Continue the work started by the Strategic Renewal to create process and structures that will clarify roles and responsibilities, foster partnerships and an ability to work together to achieve long term priorities for housing. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the Housing Needs Assessment mentioned in i) to provide a good understanding of the nature of housing needs in each community and region; • Update the Housing NWT Act to enable housing partnerships that take into account self-government and the evolving landscape of housing providers in each region; • Provide an opportunity under the Community Housing Initiative to provide seed funding to build capacity, write business plans or proposals, or otherwise provide opportunities for other housing stakeholders to achieve their goals in provision of housing services or infrastructure. 	<p>Number of applications for CHI funding.</p>	<p>Completed legislation update by the end of the 20th Assembly.</p> <p>Completed housing needs assessment by the March 31, 2026.</p>

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with Indigenous, federal, and community governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to secure sustainable funding for housing now and into the future.	NWT Housing Forum, Federal bilateral Working Group, other bilateral engagement with the Government of Canada as appropriate.	Total Housing investment in the Territory.	
	Develop an updated infrastructure deficit assessment for Housing NWT's owned residential assets to identify current and long-term capital investment needs.	Number of technical reports.	Current housing infrastructure deficit assessment.
	Continue to work with Canada to seek a new, sustainable funding approach to replace the current 1997 Social Housing Agreement and address the declining funding for public housing operations under that agreement.	Number of funding agreements.	Sustainable federal funding agreements in place for the NWT public housing program by March 31, 2027. Our current agreement expires March 31, 2028, and a one-year buffer will allow for appropriate fiscal planning.
	Establish an NWT Housing Resource Hub. Develop a Resource Hub to collect, distil and distribute housing designs, research and best-practices including a housing design guideline developed through stakeholder engagement to guide Housing NWT's capital delivery and support other developers and housing delivery agents.	Number of website visits, link clicks.	Posted by 2027-28.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage private investment in housing by reducing administrative and regulatory barriers to housing development, and by implementing clear processes to increase the amount of land available for housing development in communities.	Develop an in-depth housing needs analysis/assessment that examines current housing waiting lists, assessing demographic data, specific needs, and preferences of those on the list. This initiative will be done for the entire NWT in partnership with the Indigenous governments and municipalities.	Number of technical reports.	Completed housing needs assessment.
	Increase the use of alternative energy systems for housing assets through direct investment and partnership opportunities.	Number of housing units.	150 units
	Increase Housing NWT's portfolio of owned housing units by reducing reliance on third party southern landlords.	Number of units.	110 units
	Invest in Housing NWT infrastructure, including new construction and repairs.	Investment level (\$).	\$120 million over 4 years.
	Develop and implement an integrated asset management program for Housing NWT to continuously improve decision making in areas such as capital investment, maintenance, and the management of operating costs.	Asset Management framework approved and implemented.	Asset Management Program implemented and in use by 2026-27.

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
	Expand the functionality of Housing NWT's Geographical Information System (GIS) to improve the availability of information on housing assets for planning purposes and community engagement activities.	Number of system enhancements.	GIS enhancements fully implemented and in use.
	Design and construct housing units suitable for seniors and persons with limited mobility.	Number of units.	25 units
	As part of the discontinuation of Housing NWT's homeownership entry level program (HELP) and the anticipated transition of 100 of those units to market rental units, explore opportunities to support this transition including the possible utilization of the Canada Housing Benefit program.	Number of units.	100 units
	Demolish Housing NWT owned surplus units that are beyond economic repair. In addition to removing derelict buildings this action also makes land available for housing development.	Number of units.	25 units

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Support residents to gain skills and education in the trades through a range of programs and partnerships.	Develop a Disposal Strategy to guide decision making.	Number of technical reports.	Completed Disposal Strategy by March 31, 2027.
	Identify Housing NWT owned lots that could be made available to other housing interests in communities.	Number of lots.	
	Work with ECC and MACA to take steps to facilitate availability of and access to land for housing construction. These lands may be for any housing stakeholders including Housing NWT, Indigenous Governments or Non-Government Organizations.		
Support residents to gain skills and education in the trades through a range of programs and partnerships.	Determine types of training and facilitate delivery of training for housing stakeholders. Work with ITI to foster the development of innovative approaches to housing construction as well as expanding capacity in both the construction as well as the repair/renovation sectors.	Number of training sessions.	16 sessions
	Work with partners to deliver community-based training to manage and maintain alternative energy solutions at the residential scale.	Number of training sessions.	8 training sessions.

Economy

To strengthen the economic foundation of the NWT, the GNWT will support the development of the private sector and community capacity, encourage a diversity of economic activity across sectors, and reduce the cost of doing business in the NWT. We will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Encourage a diverse range of economic activities by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering research and innovation, building strong partnerships and leveraging opportunities in all regions.	Pilot housing projects that combine modular and stick built construction, an innovative approach that supports local modular manufacturers for key components while helping with training of local workers for the stick-built construction of the rest of the building.	Number of units.	10 units
	Work with partner departments to identify ways to reduce barriers for people in public housing to be entrepreneurs.	Review Public Housing policies around home-based small businesses.	
Support communities to realize economic opportunities by enhancing their ability to access and manage lands within their boundaries.	Work with ECC and MACA to take steps to facilitate availability of and access to land for housing construction. This may include using community housing plans to support local Community Plans. These lands may be for any housing stakeholders including Housing NWT, Indigenous Governments or Non-Government Organizations.	Number of lots provided.	

Access to healthcare

To strengthen preventative measures, public awareness and improve access to trauma-informed, culturally appropriate health care, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on health promotion and preventative care, and disease prevention across all age groups.	Share opportunities for training of front-line staff to any housing provider including, for example, shelter providers, Indigenous Governments, LHO's and other NGO's.	Number of staff trained.	
Train and support Indigenous and local residents to pursue careers in the health professions while also recruiting and retaining qualified health and social services professionals to the NWT.	Support the retention of health and social services professionals by expanding market housing availability through partnerships.	Number of market units through partnerships.	

Address the effects of trauma

To prevent, interrupt and address the effects of trauma, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that policies and programs are designed and renewed with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens that is informed by residents.	Ensure training is available to front line program staff within Housing NWT and to contracted housing providers (i.e., LHO's) to provide services with a trauma-informed, anti-racist and cultural safety lens.	Number of staff trained.	
	Expand the number of northern pathways program participants.	Number of beds.	4 beds

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures		Targets
Enable residents to focus on healing by making programs and services easier to access through an integrated and person-centered service delivery approach and by working in collaboration with Indigenous governments, community governments and other partners.	Support the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy and the interrelationships between Housing NWT/LHO's and their regional ISD units.	Number of client referrals.		
		LHO training.		
		Updating LHO manuals as appropriate.		
Encourage community wellness and self-determination by supporting the development and delivery of community-based wellness programs to address mental wellness, prevention, early intervention, and holistic health.	Work with HSS to implement an approach to eliminate smoking in public housing units including all appropriate communications and education materials to accompany the approach decided on.	Determine and implement appropriate solution.		
		Social Media engagement.		
		Number of beds.	10 beds	
	Pilot a transitional housing model for addictions recovery including appropriate supportive programming in partnership with DHSS.			
	Expand the number of northern pathways program participants.	Number of beds.	4 beds	

Emergency Management

To enhance the safety of residents and communities, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Ensure that emergency management and preparedness initiatives strengthen our capacity to respond to more frequent and severe climate-driven disasters and other emergencies.	As part of the GNWT support to NGO's and other employers, support LHO's, shelter and other supportive housing operators to have emergency plans and Business Continuity Plans to support operations and protecting vulnerable populations during emergencies.	Number of plans.	
Enhance our understanding of climate change-related threats and impacts and support innovative climate change mitigation and adaptation responses.	Climate Change Vulnerability study focused on Housing NWT assets.	Number of technical reports.	
Strengthen regulatory frameworks for emergency management, create territorial building standards, and improve community hazard mapping and monitoring.	Complete a risk analysis of climate change impacts on Housing NWT assets and prepare a mitigation strategy in collaboration with other departments (ECC). Findings will be applicable to homeowners and other housing delivery agents.	Number of technical reports.	Completed risk analysis and mitigation strategy.
	Increase climate resiliency of public housing assets through design and construction by developing a Design Guideline which would also support other developers and housing delivery agents.	Number of technical reports.	Completed Design Guideline.

Public Safety

To promote the safety of residents and communities in the NWT, we will:

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Work with law enforcement, governments, communities and across departments to create and strengthen tools that can be used to disrupt and combat the drug trade and associated criminal activity.	Work with GNWT Departments to identify short- and long-term solutions to address illegal activities in public housing/rental units. This may include both legislative and/or policy solutions.	Develop a Security Measures Strategy and Plan to guide actions.	Number of Buildings having Security Assessments.
	Work with Local Housing Organizations to identify appropriate security measures to implement particular in multi-unit buildings to help protect individual tenants.	Investments in security measures.	Number of evictions.
		Investments in security measures.	

Mandate commitment	Actions to support the mandate commitment	Measures	Targets
Focus on crime prevention through collaborative efforts at early intervention, integrated and person-centered service delivery, and community driven solutions.	Increase communications with public housing tenants on their rights and how to protect themselves when other tenants are not adhering to the terms of their tenancy agreements.	<p>Increase in participants taking the online Tenant Education Modules.</p> <p>Targeted advertising campaigns to promote tenant safety that show increased website visits to the Tenant Handbook, as well as increased views and interactions on the Housing NWT Facebook page.</p> <p>Updating appeal process: decrease in complaints going to Minister.</p> <p>Number of rental offices processes.</p> <p>Number of appeals.</p> <p>Canvas: Number of applicants completing the course, comprehension (based on outcomes of quizzes) and being successful tenants (paying rent on time, being a good neighbor and maintaining unit in good condition).</p> <p>Number of clients supported.</p>	

Risks and Mitigation Activities

The following key, high-level, strategic issues will require departmental focus in the 20th Assembly, and the years ahead. These issues involve fundamental policy questions or critical challenges affecting the government, department and/or residents of the NWT. They are complex in scope and extend beyond the operational level, with significant risk if no action is taken.

Sustainability of Public Housing

The long-term fiscal sustainability of the NWT's public housing program is at risk. A governmental strategy is required to ensure that stable and adequate operating and capital funding is in place for the preservation of the public housing program. The program is facing declining federal social housing operating funding, as well as aging social housing infrastructure.

Without adequate long-term funding to support the operations, maintenance, repairs, and replacement of the assets required to support the public housing program the assets will continue to degrade over time and eventually need to be removed from the portfolio, reducing the number of units available for the program. Based on core housing need indicators, there is already an overall shortage of housing in the NWT, further reducing the number of housing units for the public housing program will have a significant impact and increase the risk of homelessness for residents of the NWT.

These funding uncertainties are particularly troubling in an inflationary operating environment. The Northwest Territories has a small residential construction sector which continues to recover from sectoral pressures introduced at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in a cumulative 51% increase in the cost of residential construction nationally since 2019. This rapid escalation was caused by reduced access to labour, supply-chain disruptions, increased energy costs, volatile construction material markets, and demand pressures. These elevated costs are having the effect of reducing the impact of investments in housing and stagnant growth continues to challenge the ability to deliver construction projects. Housing NWT will continue to support development of the residential construction sector to ensure capacity does not restrict increased investment in housing projects, both renovation and new construction. Increases in these direct public housing operating costs, brought on primarily by uncontrollable rate increases, are becoming increasingly challenging for Housing NWT to resource internally.

Stable increased funding is needed to continue to repair, replace, operate, and maintain existing housing units as they continue to age in addition to supporting additional units to address core housing need.

Transformation of NWT Housing Sector with Distinctions-Based Funding

Housing NWT views the recent increase in distinctions-based funding from Canada to NWT Indigenous governments as a positive, meaningful change to the housing landscape of NWT. Money for housing is

required in the north, regardless of who the money flows to and who owns/operates the housing units. Housing NWT recognizes that its role will change in the future when it comes to the housing landscape in the north, but would like to utilize the opportunities present to partner, share expertise, and work together on priorities and set the stage for each of the 17 Indigenous Governments to determine their views for housing programs and working together with them to determine the role that Housing NWT will have in the housing continuum in future.

The Housing environment is changing. Through partnerships with Indigenous governments - and with a shared vision on housing in the NWT - we can work with Canada for an NWT solution to the housing crisis that exists that reflects the current and future state of governance in the NWT.

In addition to Indigenous governments, there is work to be done with the NGO sector to support their role in operating and potentially owning housing infrastructure to serve the vulnerable population in the NWT.

Climate change

Climate change has undeniably left its mark on the NWT, causing substantial repercussions for Housing NWT's infrastructure and operations.

Climate change weather events including wildfire and flooding along NWT river systems have increased over the past three years, resulting in damaged and destroyed assets, diversion of resources, and disrupted construction plans, with residents facing health risks due to compromised air quality. Mitigating and adapting to climate change risks, such as permafrost thaw, wildfire risk, and increased precipitation requires adaptation of existing infrastructure and climate resilient strategies for new construction, which add project cost and complexity. Not adapting to these rapidly changing conditions presents the risk a shortened service life for Housing assets and risk to tenant safety.

The NWT's winter road and barge systems are also becoming more vulnerable and less reliable. Recent years have seen the shortening of the winter road season and the disruption of barge schedules which has made the movement of construction material, equipment, and modular units tenuous. This has interrupted project schedules resulting in delays of up to a year or in logistical complexity which can have the result of increasing project cost.

There is also an urgent need to adapt existing housing infrastructure to withstand climate-induced threats. Adapting now is not only a matter of safety and continuity for the communities in the NWT but also a cost-effective strategy. The cost of proactively adapting homes and infrastructure pales in comparison to the financial, social, and emotional toll of recovering from climate-related disasters.

Fiscal Strategy of the 20th Legislative Assembly

Housing NWT has supported the Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly by identifying cost saving measures for 2024-2025 totaling \$2.396 million. These adjustments have enabled the GNWT to reduce its annual contribution to Housing NWT in 2024-2025 by approximately 3%. These fiscal adjustments were identified with the aim of minimizing the impact to Housing NWT's core business of delivering the territory's subsidized public housing program.

For the upcoming year, the larger cost savings that Housing NWT is planning to implement include:

- Reduction in lease costs by increasing Housing NWT's portfolio of owned public housing units; This transition is being supported by the acquisition of the Nordic Arms apartment building, the transfer of the federal government's Yellowknife Aspen Apartments building to Housing NWT and the upcoming construction of a new public housing 50-plex in Yellowknife.
- Discontinuation of the Homeownership Entry Level Program (HELP); Housing NWT is no longer accepting applications for HELP and will be working closely with existing tenants under the Homeownership Initiative Program (HIP). Each HELP unit is currently being subsidized by Housing NWT in the amount of approximately \$8,000. Housing NWT is planning to dispose of approximately 50 HELP units this coming year through either the HIP or re-purposing these units for use as public housing replacement units or for use in the market housing program.
- Homeownership Program Modifications: Housing NWT is planning to discontinue the Fuel Tank Replacement for Homeowners. The total number of tanks replaced under the Fuel Tank Replacement Initiative program from 2018 to 2023/24 is 315. Due to the discontinuation of the program, the uptake for 2024/25 is 17 applications. Financial assistance for fuel tank replacements can continue to be provided to clients under the Emergency Repair Program. Housing NWT will continue to offer support through its suite of programming, work in partnership with other organizations providing financing for home repairs, including opportunities such as the Community Housing Support Initiative (CHSI) Program to support IGs with the delivery of targeted homeownership repair programming for their communities. Seed funding provided through the CHSI program to IGs would also help to enable IGs to leverage additional homeownership program funding through federal government program opportunities.

In addition to these shorter term fiscal measures in support of the Fiscal Strategy for the 20th Legislative Assembly, Housing NWT will continue to take proactive measures to manage the operating costs of its housing assets through actions such as: continued investment in alternative energy solutions for its housing stock (e.g. biomass district heating systems), capital project investments to replace aging infrastructure with more energy efficient assets and continued investment in needed repairs and renovations to achieve added energy efficiencies and to help ensure the full operating life of these assets is realized. Housing NWT will also continue to manage overall position growth, recognizing that over the

past 10 years since 2014-2015 the Corporation's total number of funded positions has decreased from 118 to now 105.

Housing NWT will also continue to work closely with the federal government to structure more sustainable federal funding arrangements that will provide greater capital and operating funding certainty over the longer term to ensure the fiscal sustainability of the public housing program to continue to serve our most vulnerable residents.

Finally, Housing NWT will continue to work diligently with its many housing partners, such as IGs, the federal government and community governments, to explore all opportunities to leverage additional housing investment for the NWT wherever possible.

Departmental Highlights

Climate Change Risk Assessment

With support from the department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC), Housing NWT has accessed \$600,000 of funding through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) for a multi-year climate change risk assessment of Housing NWT's asset portfolio. This work will inform Housing NWT's climate change adaptation planning and investment and is intended to result in best-practice recommendations applicable across NWT's homes, public and private.

Energy Management Strategy

Housing NWT continues to implement an Energy Management Strategy tabled during the 19th Legislative Assembly. The Strategy will result in reduced energy intensity of Housing's portfolio, lowered Greenhouse Gas Emissions, and increased use of renewable energy for space heating. This work is complementary to the NWT Energy Management Strategy and Climate Change Framework.

Housing Research

Housing NWT in partnership with the Arctic Energy Alliance is undertaking a cold climate heat pump research project, with heat pumps installed and being monitored on two housing units. The results of this research will inform NWT residents of the applicability of this technology.

Strategic Renewal

Housing NWT intends to continue to build on the success of the Strategic Renewal undertaken in the 19th Assembly and maintain a focus on continuous self-improvement. The NWT Housing Forum will provide an indigenous government perspective on program and policy changes that are required to address issues in the current housing delivery. Remaining items from the initial suite of recommendations that will be completed in the 20th Assembly include updating of Core Need Income thresholds, updating of the rent scale, continued improvements to tenant and LHO education tools, updating the Community Housing Service Agreement, and updates to the Housing NWT legislation.

Human Resource Initiatives

One of the next steps under the Strategic Renewal was to review Housing NWT's organizational structure and ensure that not only were staff resources aligned with the priorities for program and service delivery, but also that staff training was identified and provided to support staff in their roles.

Within the Corporation, management and staff are encouraged to participate in the GNWT's wide range of in-house training and development opportunities, as well specialized professional development training to keep pace with changing technologies and national standards, as well as to maintain professional certifications. Staff development and succession planning outcomes also continue to be supported through transfer assignments, internships and summer student learning opportunities. Housing NWT also provides training to LHO Boards and staff regularly to continue to provide for capacity at the local level to fulfill the requirements of the Community Housing Service Agreement.

Another important area of staff development is health and safety. Housing NWT's Occupational Health and Safety Specialist continues to provide on-going advisory support and training opportunities for Housing NWT's staff as well as the staff of all 23 Local Housing Organizations. When in communities, the OH&S Specialist's training is also open to interested staff from Indigenous and Community Governments, as well as the private sector. The OH&S Specialist also regularly reviews Housing NWT's Safety Program to ensure all staff have ready access to up to date OH&S policies and safe work practices.

Legislative Initiatives

The Department is working on several legislative and policy projects, some of which are being undertaken during the 20th Legislative Assembly, as follows:

#	Legislative initiative	Description of work	Legislative Proposal submission	Bill introduction
1	Revision of the <i>Housing Northwest Territories Act</i>	Review of substantive amendments to <i>Housing Northwest Territories Act</i> with participation of NWT Housing Forum.		
2	Legislated Smoking Ban in Housing NWT administered housing units	Housing NWT will work with the Department of Health and Social Services on legislative change to institute smoking ban in Housing NWT administered housing, consistent with action item arising from Housing NWT renewal strategy.		

#	Policy initiatives	Description of work	Other
1	Emergency Shelter Contribution Policy	Housing NWT has looked internally at the funding model for emergency overnight shelters, but this work now needs to be expanded to include the broader shelter funding discussion with the homelessness unit.	2023-24 and into 24-25.
2	Appeals Policy	Housing NWT will be doing a review of the appeals policy for public housing programming and home repair programming to re-establish and better publicize existing appeals and consider the need for a legislated appeals process.	Confirming decision to proceed with this work by January 2024 and then if supported the work would be done in 2024-25.
3	Mortgage Arrears Forgiveness Policy	Housing NWT will undertake consideration of new programs and policies to assist our mortgage clients and tenants in addressing their arrears to help expedite the repayment of these remaining debts or pursue forgiveness when appropriate.	2024