



Community Access Program Policy

Department of Infrastructure

1. Statement of Policy

The Community Access Program is an application-based program intended to provide financial contributions and technical assistance to community governments and Indigenous government organizations in the Northwest Territories for projects to improve community access roads and marine facilities.

2. Principles

The Department of Infrastructure will adhere to the following principles when implementing this Policy:

- (1) To the maximum extent possible, development of local community transportation infrastructure should be initiated by the community, and supported through the provision of funding or equity in kind;
- (2) Community governments and residents should be involved in decisions affecting the development of community access roads and marine facilities;
- (3) Local and northern residents should have the opportunity to benefit directly from employment, skills development, and construction material supply or equipment rental opportunities from public dollars spent in their community;
- (4) Community access road and marine facility projects should provide indirect benefits to community residents, such as access to traditional harvesting or recreation areas; enhancing the economic development and tourism sectors of the local economy; lowering the cost of living; and improving health and educational outcomes;
- (5) Community access road and marine facility projects should be provided at a reasonable price; and
- (6) Ongoing responsibility and resources for the care and custody of such facilities should be assumed by the community.

3. Scope

This Policy guides the allocation of funding to eligible community governments and Indigenous government organizations for projects to improve community access to roads and marine facilities.



4. Definitions

The following terms apply to this Policy:

Community Access Road - a public road or trail, including all-weather or seasonal, that extends residents' access beyond the community boundaries and connects residents to public locations including but not limited to: timber and wood stands for fire wood for home heating; fishing, hunting, and on-the-land food gathering resources; tourism opportunities; recreational sites; and camps.

Community Government – a corporation established under or continued by the *Charter Communities Act*, the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, the *Hamlets Act*, the *Tłı̨chǫ Community Government Act*, or First Nations as defined by the *Indian Act* and recognized by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs as the Designated Authority responsible for the provision of municipal services. The Délı̨nę Got'ı̨nę Government is also included in this definition.

Indigenous Government Organization (IGO) – a local Indigenous government organization (including, for example, First Nations, Dene Bands, and Métis Locals) that is not the Designated Authority.

Community Marine Facility - marine infrastructure used by the community for the loading, unloading, protection or repair of vessels and float aircraft, including but not limited to wharves, docks, breakwaters, or landings.

5. Authority and Accountability

(1) General

This Policy is issued in accordance with Financial Management Board direction to delegate to Ministers the authority to establish contribution programs. Authority and accountability is further defined as follows:

(a) Minister

The Minister of Infrastructure (the Minister) is accountable to the Financial Management Board for the implementation of this Policy.



(b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Infrastructure (the Deputy Minister) is accountable to the Minister and is responsible for the administration of this Policy.

(2) Specific

(a) Minister

The Minister of Infrastructure may:

- (i) approve changes to this Policy;
- (ii) delegate authority to the Deputy Minister to approve contributions up to \$250,000 for eligible projects in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in this Policy; and
- (iii) approve contributions over \$250,000 for eligible projects in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in this Policy.

(b) Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister of Infrastructure:

- (i) may approve contributions for eligible projects up to \$250,000 in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in this Policy as delegated by the Minister;
- (ii) may refer project applications that may qualify for funding under a different program to other departments;
- (iii) shall publicly release an annual report of the projects undertaken under the Policy during that fiscal year;
- (iv) shall conduct periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of the Policy.



6. Provisions

(1) Eligibility

- (a) The following types of community transportation infrastructure projects are eligible for contributions under this Policy:
 - (i) Community access roads; and
 - (ii) Community marine facilities.
- (b) Community Public Infrastructure projects that would be eligible for funding under the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs' Community Public Infrastructure Funding Policy are not eligible for contributions under this Policy.
- (c) Community governments and IGOs in all communities of the Northwest Territories are eligible to apply for funding under this Policy; however, preference will be given to projects in smaller (non-tax-based) communities.
- (d) IGOs applying for funding under this Policy must include a letter of support from the relevant community government.
- (e) Community governments and IGOs applying for contributions must ensure that:
 - (i) planning and development of the project is undertaken in accordance with applicable environmental legislation, including consultation with all necessary regulatory agencies and referral organizations, and acquisition of any permits, licenses and/or authorizations required;
 - (ii) access provisions in any relevant Aboriginal rights agreements are adhered to in the planning and development of any project undertaken under this policy; and
 - (iii) the necessary insurance coverage and Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission registration are in place.



(2) Application Process

- (a) The Department of Infrastructure may establish one or more deadline(s) for the intake of applications for each fiscal year, which will be communicated to potential applicants well in advance.
- (b) Only applications that are submitted in the format established by the Department of Infrastructure and that include all required information shall be considered.
- (c) Applications received by the application deadline set by the Department of Infrastructure shall receive priority consideration.
- (d) If there is funding remaining after consideration of the applications received by the application deadline, those applications received after the deadline may be considered on a case-by-case.

(3) Assessment Criteria

The Department of Infrastructure will assess applications for contribution funding according to the following criteria:

- (a) Direct economic benefits to the community, including construction material purchases or heavy equipment rentals made with local contractors and suppliers;
- (b) Direct employment and skills development opportunities for community residents (or other local and northern residents) included in the proposed project;
- (c) Anticipated indirect benefits to the community that will result from completion of the proposed project (e.g. estimated economic development impact, increased tourism potential, reduction in the cost of living, or improved health and educational outcomes);
- (d) Financial and/or in-kind contributions provided by the community government, IGO, or other third-party funding source(s) for the project; and
- (e) Capacity and/or ability of the community government or IGO to manage the construction, operation and ongoing maintenance work associated with the project.



(4) Eligible Expenses

- (a) Eligible costs include:
 - (i) capital construction costs;
 - (ii) labour costs; and
 - (iii) employee training costs (e.g. safety and first aid, heavy equipment operation).
- (b) All expenses must be directly related to the construction project for which funding has been approved.
- (c) Administration costs are not eligible for funding.

(5) Reporting Requirements

A community government or IGO that receives a contribution shall, upon completion of the project:

- (a) Provide a brief report on the construction work undertaken including construction goals and milestones accomplished;
- (b) Provide an employment report listing the number of people employed, positions, hours/days worked, etc.;
- (c) Provide a report of training received to prepare for the construction work;
- (d) Provide photographs (and video if possible) of the project work in progress and when completed;
- (e) Provide complete financial documentation for the project, including numbered invoices and other financial substantiation necessary to obtain progress and final payments associated with the approved contribution; and
- (f) Allow inspection and auditing of the recipient community government's or IGO's financial records and accounts by the Department of Infrastructure if requested.



7. Financial Resources

Financial resources required under this Policy are conditional upon approval of funds in the Main Estimates of the Legislative Assembly, and there being sufficient unencumbered balance in the appropriate activity for the fiscal year in which the funds would be required.

8. Prerogative of Minister

Nothing in this Policy shall in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Minister to make decisions or take actions respecting transportation infrastructure contributions outside the provisions of this Policy.

A blue ink signature of the name "Katrina Nokleby".

Honourable Katrina Nokleby, P.Eng.
Minister of Infrastructure