

# Mackenzie Valley Highway

Department of Infrastructure  
February 2019



Government of  
Northwest Territories

# Purpose

To provide an update on the development of the Mackenzie Valley Highway between Wrigley and Norman Wells, and next steps for completing the Environmental Assessment.



# History

- Mackenzie Valley Highway has been proposed for many years
  - Part of federal Roads to Resources Program in 1960/70's
  - Included in 1990 Transportation Strategy
  - Work undertaken under 1999 Highway Strategy and Investing in Roads
  - 2012 partnered on preparation of Project Description Reports
  - Also considered under current economic opportunities and mineral development strategies
- All strategies involved levels of public and Indigenous engagement



# Transportation Strategy: Connecting Us



- In 2015 a new strategic document, *Connecting Us – the GNWT's 25-year Transportation Strategy*, was released
- Proposed advancement of Mackenzie Valley Highway to Capture Opportunities
- Comprehensive public engagement process undertaken to develop Strategy



# Mandate of the 18th Legislative Assembly

Secure funding to pursue development of three new transportation corridors:

- Tłįchǫ All-season Road
- Mackenzie Valley Highway
- Slave Geological Province Corridor



# MVH Specific Benefits



- Connect communities to new social opportunities
- Increased resiliency to impacts of climate change
- Reduce cost of living
- Increase land access for mineral and petroleum resources industries
- Support development of strong northern workforce and economic opportunities through construction and operation
- Create tourism opportunities



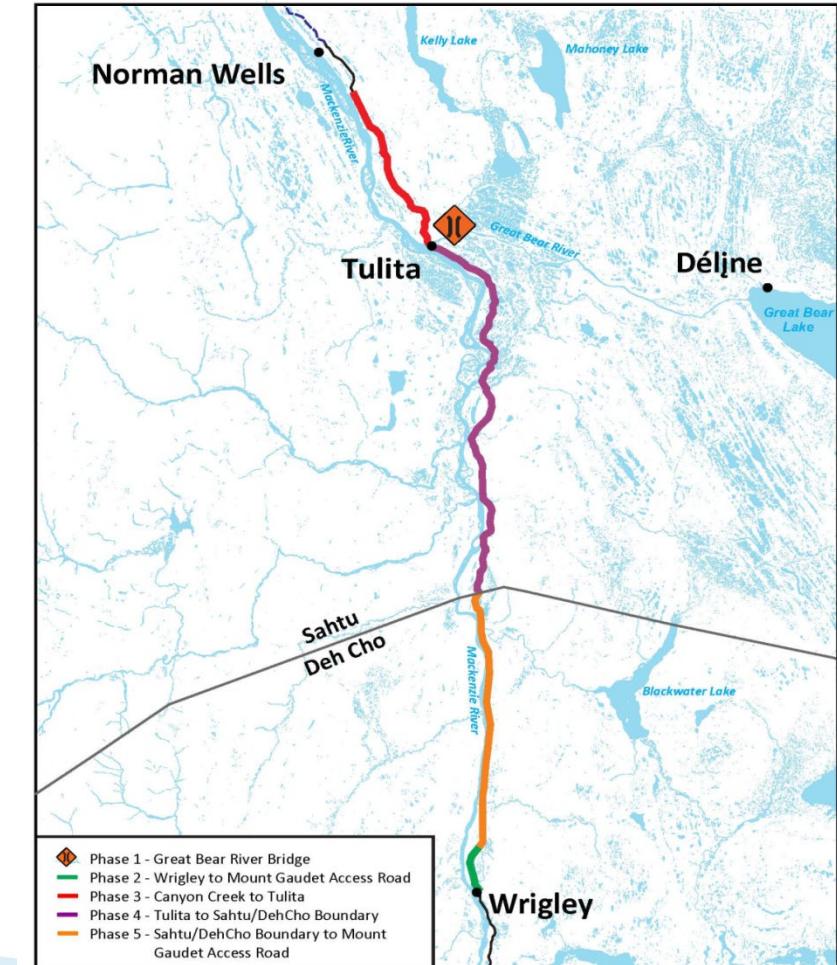
# MVH Investments To Date

- Governments have invested over \$145 million in MVH since year 2000 (not including the ITH)
- 39 of 40 permanent bridges at stream crossings have been constructed
- Inuvik Tuktoyaktuk Highway
  - Opened November 2017
  - 15,000 travellers in first year
  - Increased tourism
  - Permafrost research
- Canyon Creek Access Road
  - Opened November 2018
  - 14 kilometre access road south from Norman Wells along MVH alignment
  - Increased capacity for residents to take advantage of future construction of Mackenzie Valley Highway



# MVH – Currently Funded Projects

- \$140 million announced June 2018
  - Great Bear River Bridge
  - Mount Gaudet Access Road
  - MVH Environmental Assessment and Engineering (Wrigley to Norman Wells)
- Other funded projects
  - Oscar Creek Bridge
  - Hodgson Creek Bridge (to be included in Mount Gaudet Access Road project)
- Opportunity for additional funding for future highway construction under Investing in Canada Plan



# Status of MVH EA

Year	Milestone
2012	GNWT prepared Project Description Report (PDR) in partnership with land claimant groups for sections of MVH from Wrigley to the Dempster Highway
2013	Project re-scope to focus on section of proposed highway from Wrigley to Norman Wells
2015	MVH Project referred to MVEIRB to begin the Environmental Assessment process
2015	MVEIRB released Terms of Reference to complete the Developer's Assessment Report (DAR)
2018	Federal government and GNWT announced funding to complete the Environmental Assessment.



# Next Steps – MVH EA

- Developer's Assessment Report
  - Completion of the DAR is next major step for the MVH EA
  - Scope and timing of research required to complete the DAR to be determined
  - Preliminary target date for completing DAR is late 2021
- Technical studies required to complete the DAR include:
  - Traditional knowledge
  - Socio economic
  - Environmental
  - Archaeological
  - Land use
  - Engineering



# Next Steps - MVH EA cont'd

- Environmental and engineering studies to support the EA will start in 2019
- Environmental Studies
  - Require establishment of baseline environmental conditions, such as wildlife populations and habitat use
  - Up to 2 years of baseline data collection could be required
  - Scope and timing of the studies will vary according to the environmental components being researched
- Engineering
  - Final details on route alignment will be based on technical requirements (i.e., access to granular, avoiding wet areas, permafrost, etc.), along with input from Indigenous governments and communities on traditional and cultural areas



# MVH Construction

Construction for the major sections of the MVH between Wrigley and Norman Wells will occur when:

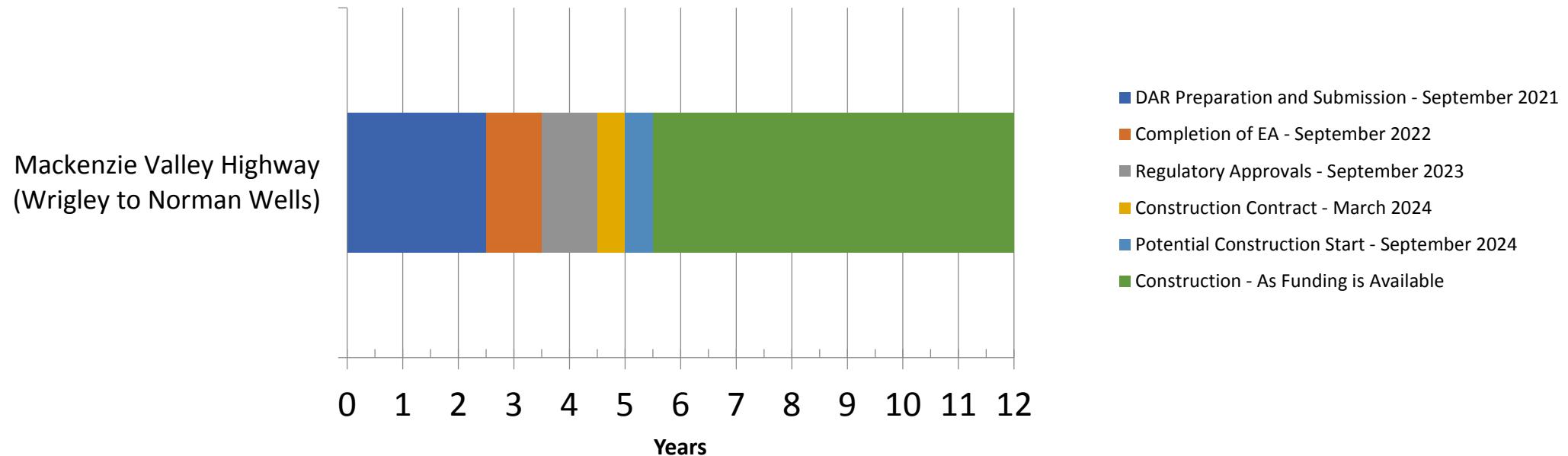
- EA has been completed
- Land access/tenure has been secured in accordance with *Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*
- All regulatory authorizations have been obtained
- Funding for construction has been secured

- Possible exceptions – community road extensions along MVH alignment (e.g. Mount Gaudet, others)



# Anticipated Timeline – MVH EA



# Community Road Extension Projects

- Short road extensions from communities along MVH alignment
- Capacity building projects to ensure residents can take full advantage of future construction of the MVH
- Potential to advance separately from the MVH EA
- Would require community support and approval of regulatory boards
- Projects could advance quicker and ahead of the EA
- Permitting processes and funding availability for these projects will determine potential start dates for construction
  - E.g. Mount Gaudet Access Road could obtain regulatory authorizations by late 2019 with potential construction start in late 2020.

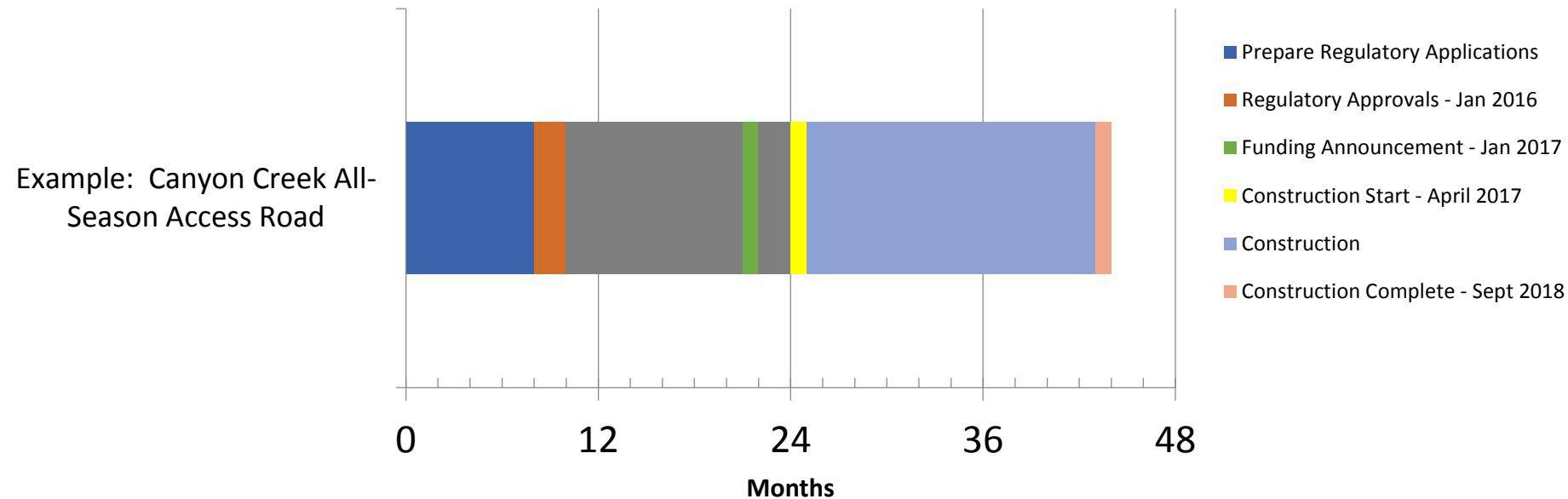


# Next Steps – Community Projects

- Communities need to identify/confirm support for proposed projects
  - Wrigley to Mount Gaudet
    - Construction of approximately 15 kilometres of all-weather road
  - Four Mile Creek Road
    - Upgrade winter access road to all-weather road
    - Considering in relation to Great Bear River Bridge project
  - Canyon Creek extension to Prohibition Creek
    - Construction of approximately 14 kilometres of all-weather road



# Anticipated Timeline – Community Projects



# Participation

- Developing formal working relationships through MOUs with SSI and PKFN
- Section 35 consultation
- Public/community engagement
- Opportunities for public debate through Environmental Assessment and permitting processes
- MVH@gov.nt.ca



# Questions and Comments?

## Thank you

MVH@gov.nt.ca

<https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/mackenzie-valley-highway-project>

