

NWT Transportation Strategy 2015-2040

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Report

February, 2015



Northwest Territories Transportation Strategy

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2015-2040

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Next Steps	2
Appendix A: Transportation to 2040 – Interviews with Political & Aboriginal Leaders.....	3
Appendix B: Online Survey Metrics.....	11
Appendix C: Summary of Stakeholders Meetings	24

Introduction

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) Department of Transportation (DOT) is updating the Northwest Territories (NWT) Transportation Strategy, to help guide the planning and implementation of transportation improvements across the NWT over the next 25 years. Seeking public and transportation stakeholder input on priorities is important to ensure that the strategy reflects the growing needs and aspirations of the user community.

The NWT’s first comprehensive transportation strategy was released in 1990, and focused on some key themes, several of which are still relevant today. These included: Improving What We Have; Pushing Back Economic Frontiers; and Excellence in Transportation Programs. Over the past 25 years, DOT has delivered significant improvements to the transportation system. However, persistent effort will be required in the future to adequately maintain our existing system and to improve and expand transportation infrastructure, programs, and services.

To inform the update of the NWT Transportation Strategy 2015-2040, DOT engaged political leaders, key transportation stakeholders, and the public to capture their transportation perspectives and to ensure that the updated strategy comprehensively reflects the priorities and aspirations of the various users of our transportation system. It was also important to

communicate what DOT and its partners have accomplished over the past 25 years and to define current transportation challenges and opportunities.

DOT's engagement process followed a multi-pronged approach:

- Interviews were conducted by a DOT representative with Members of the Northwest Territories' 17th Legislative Assembly, NWT Aboriginal Leaders, and the Member of Parliament for the Western Arctic. The highlights of these interviews are presented in Appendix A.
- An online transportation survey was developed, launched on the department's website (www.dot.gov.nt.ca), and widely promoted. Residents' interest in transportation issues was evident from the strong level of participation, with 513 residents/stakeholders responding to the survey. The survey results are presented in Appendix B.
- The Department invited transportation stakeholder groups and industry associations to meet to review the status of our transportation system, to discuss challenges and opportunities, and to discuss future priorities. The key outcomes of these stakeholder discussions are presented in Appendix C.

This report summarizes what we heard during the 2014 public engagement process. Upon review of input received, DOT identified the following overarching key themes:

- continue to maintain and improve our existing highways, winter roads and airports to enhance the level of service and improve transportation safety;
- expand the transportation system into new areas of the NWT to better connect our communities and support resource development potential; and
- continue to improve the way we do business by modernizing transportation policy and regulations, by better communicating with the public to improve awareness and safety, by embracing new technologies, and by adapting the system to the effects of climate change

Next Steps

DOT is currently drafting the NWT Transportation Strategy (2015 - 2040) and related Implementation Plan. The next step in the engagement process is to schedule public information sessions in our regional centers in Spring 2015 to discuss what we heard with residents and transportation stakeholders, and to confirm priorities for improving the NWT transportation system over the next 25 years.

Appendix A - Transportation Interviews with NWT Leadership

The following report summarizes the transportation-related perspectives of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Member of Parliament (MP), and Aboriginal Leaders from interviews conducted by a DOT consultant in May - July 2014.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES, PRIORITIES, AND CHALLENGES

Thirty-four individual leaders were consulted between June 17 and August 5, 2014. MLAs and regional Aboriginal Leaders showed considerable interest in providing advice on the proposed 25-year Transportation Strategy. No one expressed disagreement with the consultation process. As expected, responses from the political leaders interviewed were initially focused toward their regional/community interests, but everyone engaged in territorial priorities and strategic interests. The following represent the main themes that emerged from these interviews:

Climate Change

At the top of most leaders agenda was the impact of climate change. Almost everyone raised this issue as a major consideration in designing, building, and maintaining our transportation network. While climate change cannot be predicted with certainty it was felt that over the next 25 years we can expect a warming trend and less predictability in weather patterns. The dependability of ice and winter roads within the tree line is risky today and will get worse over the next 25 years and into the future. Building and maintaining permanent roads over discontinuous permafrost conditions will require the consideration of new engineering techniques.

Road Improvements and Extensions

Road improvements and extensions are clearly the priority of most MLAs and Aboriginal Leaders. Many expressed concern that there was no obvious consistent plan for completion of projects that have been worked on for a number of years (ie. chip sealing Highway 5 toward Fort Smith, rebuilding and chip sealing Highway 1 toward Fort Simpson, Highway 6 to Fort Resolution etc.). The consensus was that the GNWT needs to get some of these finished and off the agenda.

Connecting communities is seen as important for serving the needs of revenue generating industries. Comments included “Everything is connected” and “All communities have a right to a road wherever possible”.

Leaders interviewed emphasized that the community access road program funding should be doubled. These roads are a source of economic support for communities for everything from access to gravel, firewood, hunting, fishing, berry picking, tourism, recreation, and fur harvesting. Often these activities were rated more important to communities than are highways.

Six Major Projects

Six priority major projects were identified for completion:

- extend the all-weather Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley to Norman Wells to support communities, tourism, and oil & gas development;
- construct an all-weather road into the Slave Geological Province to support sustainable mineral development;
- construct an all-weather road from Highway 3 to Whati to improve access to Tłı̄chǫ communities and support the development of Fortune Minerals’ proposed NICO Mine;
- improve the condition of Highway 7 to support tourism and the development of Canadian Zinc’s proposed Prairie Creek Mine project;
- encourage Canada to dredge Hay River Harbour to improve marine safety; and
- develop a deep water port facility at or near Tuktoyaktuk

There was no consensus on the order of priority for development of the above six projects except for almost unanimous agreement that the extension of the Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley to at least Norman Wells should be high on the priority list.

Three political leaders mentioned that achieving any of these priority projects over the next decade would require committing a large portion of DOT’s capital budget to one particular region for several years. In their view, this would be a change from the current efforts to distribute some funding to each region or constituency, providing employment and business opportunities across the NWT, and improving safety and addressing priority deficiencies in key areas across the transportation system.

Concern was expressed that the Federal Government was not living up to the agreement to fully fund new transportation infrastructure that was agreed to at the time transportation system responsibilities were transferred to the GNWT in the late 1980s. No one suggested that the GNWT should sit back and wait for Federal funding for all new transportation, or even insist on

the Federal Government fully funding all new infrastructure, since this would mean that, rather than the GNWT, the Federal Government would set all priorities and the amount of funding for new transportation infrastructure. Instead, most leaders indicated that the present arrangement of cost sharing capital projects seemed to be the better approach. Several leaders recommended that a cost sharing formula(s) be developed and respected.

General agreement was that the GNWT should lobby to increase its borrowing limit to at least one billion dollars if it is to significantly extend road systems. Federal cost sharing of major projects should be over and above the funds available through an increased borrowing limit over the next 25 years. No one felt that an increased borrowing limit of one billion dollars, plus Federal cost sharing dollars, would fully fund all major transportation projects over the next 25 years, but additional dollars are necessary to be able to make a significant difference in the NWT transportation infrastructure deficit.

There was agreement that industry should pay full costs for roads specifically built for industry purposes, unless the GNWT has an agreement with the Federal Government and industry which clearly shows significant net benefits to the NWT from the industry (royalties, employment for NWT residents, fuel taxes, etc.).

Considerable concern was expressed about industry transportation impacts on public highway infrastructure. Further, most interviewees felt that some form of industry contribution should be made towards new public highway construction, re-building, and the maintenance of existing public highways.

Industry financial contributions should be based on calculated impact and could be in the form of up-front financial contributions, lease arrangements, or tolls based on usage.

Transportation Infrastructure Has Improved Over the Past 25 Years

Everyone interviewed agreed public transportation infrastructure has improved over the past 25 years. Most noted infrastructure improvements were on road transportation systems. Up-grading and chip sealing of Highways 1, 3, 5, and the Deh Cho Bridge were the most mentioned improvements in the southern regions of the Northwest Territories. In the northern regions, commitments for extension of the Dempster Highway to Tuktoyaktuk and current construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk Highway were seen as the most significant improvement in many years. Praise for this project was tempered with notice that DOT inspectors/supervisors should more carefully check the suitability of material used to build the road (perception was that too much sand was being used for the road base) and the need for more northern employment and contracting. Work done over the past several years in widening the Dempster Highway has made that highway much safer. Leaders in this region also noted the need for the GNWT to be more successful in getting the Yukon to do better maintenance and rebuilding on their side of the border. More brush clearing on the Dempster Highway should be done both to save the road bed and for increased safety of travellers.

Work on the Mackenzie Valley Highway (mainly bridging stream crossings on the current winter road) and public commitments by the Minister of Transportation that completion of the Mackenzie Valley Highway from Wrigley to Norman Wells will be the next big project was viewed positively by all leaders interviewed. Several suggested that extension of this highway should be considered as more than a highway. As the highway is extended, a long term vision has to consider this route as an “energy corridor” to include road transportation, but also make provisions for transmission lines for fiber optics, oil and gas, and hydro power.

How to pay for the ongoing new construction, re-building, and maintenance of existing highways was seen as a major challenge.

Air, Marine and Rail Infrastructure

Air, marine and rail infrastructure were seen as in need of maintenance, upgrades, and extensions but generally of lower priority than road system improvements.

Airport infrastructure has generally been seen as adequate for now but may be in need of upgrades and runway extensions in the future. Most often mentioned was extension of the runway(s) in Yellowknife to enable direct overseas air transportation, mainly for tourism.

While not likely to be at the top of the list for at least the next decade, smaller community runway hard surfacing was promoted as was extension of runways in communities such as Deline to accommodate 737 jet aircraft traffic. Many interviewees also noted that needs of “next generation” aircraft must be considered in a 25 year transportation strategy. No details were offered on what these aircraft might be.

Fort Simpson was also mentioned as a possible site for a Mackenzie River port, Coast Guard center, and marine school for training ferry and tug boat captains and crew.

All interviewees identified the need to build and maintain industry barging and shipping ports at the south and north ends of the Mackenzie River System. Most mentioned were the Port of Hay River and the Tuktoyaktuk Harbour. Both of these locations are in need of dredging today and on an on-going basis if they are to continue as commercial ports. Upgrades to the Hay River site was identified as crucial for both the Great Slave fishing industry and community marine resupply.

Building a deep water port at Tuktoyaktuk was envisaged as the next step to completion of the “Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk” extension of the Dempster Highway. While the Tuktoyaktuk Harbour was promoted as a natural site for a port to support both northern shipping and needs of offshore oil/gas drilling and production, advocates acknowledged that maintenance of a port at this site could have long term maintenance challenges given climate change and ocean currents and storm activity. Another site immediately east of Tuktoyaktuk at McKinley Bay was mentioned as a possible better port site for the region.

One leader, although in agreement with the current need for barging, was of the view that Government should concentrate on road construction instead. This interviewee felt that in the longer term barging will become a thing of the past.

Balancing New Construction and Maintenance Costs

Maintaining a fair balance between the maintenance and up-grading of existing transportation infrastructure, and the construction of new infrastructure was a concern for most interviewees. Generally it was felt that unless there is a long term plan and commitment for maintenance and upgrading, political pressure will result in extensions and new infrastructure that have to be maintained, along with the existing system. Limited dollars could result in gradual deterioration and disintegration of transportation networks to the point where it will be impossible to bring them back to original standards. Lowering speed limits on highways was not seen as the answer, nor was reducing standards for airports.

Some interviewees ventured that somewhere between 25% and 50% of the Department of Transportation highways and airports budgets should be reserved for maintenance and improvements to existing infrastructure. Most simply raised the need to budget sufficient resources for maintenance and reconstruction, as new funding is required to maintain the new infrastructure added to the system.

Determining priority for new infrastructure must take into consideration the economic return. Given our small population in a huge geographical area, economic return becomes even more important than basic community interests and lowered cost of living. At minimum, interviewees felt that whenever new construction is considered, a full cost/benefit analysis over a 25 year period be used as a basis for determining when projects will proceed.

Consideration should be given to using a "Hire North" policy for all construction projects. Unlike the Business Incentive Program, a new approach, not based primarily on northern ownership, but rather based on projected northern economic benefits be utilized, with a final adjustment made at the end phase of a project. Northern benefits include employment, contracting, procurement, use of northern owned equipment, and training. It was noted emphatically by one leader that the GNWT needs to be careful not to create or enable companies that are totally dependent on government subsidies and continually need to be "supported".

When making decisions on which projects should proceed, a comprehensive economic cost/benefit analysis must be completed first, especially when the main purpose of the infrastructure is to support industry (mining, oil and gas, hydro etc.). Projects should then proceed on the basis of that analysis as well as the readiness of the project to proceed.

Upgrades of the rail system to the NWT were seen as essential to support the continuance of Hay River as a marine transportation hub. Rail system upgrades were viewed as a private sector and federal responsibility and it was noted that most of the system is south of the NWT.

Extending the rail system to Fort Providence was mentioned as essential if the proposal to build a “barging port” in the Fort Providence area was to become a reality. Advocates of a port in this area explained that a significant number of river barging days could be added each year by not having to wait for the ice break up on Great Slave Lake. Extension of the rail system north to Yellowknife was mentioned by one interviewee as something that should be kept as a long term vision.

Tourism Potential

Tourism was identified as an economic activity that is sustainable and has tremendous potential for the NWT, but better infrastructure is needed to support growth. Tourists who fly to the NWT are fairly well accommodated in terms of their travel needs to the major destinations, but more should be done to provide less costly fares to smaller communities. Raising landing and other operational fees for airports in smaller communities, with no other form of transportation available, is seen as a disincentive for tourism and general economic growth. Airports must be well maintained and the public assured of safe travel by the airlines and at the airports.

Road tourists like travelling in a path that minimizes returning on the same route. As well as good roads we need to build loops that reduce backtracking. The proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway will achieve this in the long term (25 years if we start now). An alternate loop at less expense and in need only of upgrading and maintenance is the Deh Cho Trail. This route was identified as a quick win at manageable cost.

The loop through Wood Buffalo National Park (Highway 5) and into the Alberta highway network can only be done with a lot of Alberta assistance – a challenge because of the limited economic return to Alberta.

The possibility of rebuilding the Canol Trail Road, from Norman Wells to the Yukon border, was also mentioned as an interesting new route that should be explored as a potential road for tourists and industry.

Safety

Not enough is known about toxic or dangerous loads carried by trucks using the public highway system and more of these kinds of material will be transported in the future as mines and oil and gas sites are reclaimed. Anecdotal information is shared in communities along the routes about liquid and solid contents being spilled. Most commonly referred to are spills on the Mackenzie

Valley winter road. One was referred to as “just water” being hauled south from Norman Wells area and another that was “just dirt” being hauled from the same area.

Information on load contents for all forms of transportation was described as rudimentary. Publically available reports are needed on all hazardous loads and commercial transportation spills and incidents.

Placards on trucks don't mean much to the travelling public who for the most part don't know what they specifically mean and tend to not even notice them. More information could be made available by DOT when dangerous goods are being hauled on public highways.

Very little is known or reported about loads carried by barges and rail.

Signage and information on road conditions is considered very good. Real time information is as good as can be expected.

Speed limits are viewed as generally appropriate.

Some public roads are not designed or built to any particular standards resulting in potential rock slides, steep shoulder slopes, exposed culverts etc. which could be dangerous to the travelling public.

The Northwest Territories should develop its own industrial waste treatment capacity rather than transporting all sorts of “nasty stuff” down our highways at great expense and risk to the travelling public and environment.

Airports in the communities would be much safer if weather and airport conditions were monitored and reported by local operators.

More airline and airport inspectors are needed to ensure compliance with safe operational standards.

The minimum runway length in every one of our communities should be 3000 feet.

There has to be a plan and schedule adopted for the transition to double hulled barges on our river system. Up to 20 years was suggested as a possibly reasonable timeframe.

Work has to be undertaken with other jurisdictions to develop more consistent trucking regulations from one jurisdiction to another. For example regulations for hauling wide loads are different in Alberta than in the NWT, the understanding being that restrictions on hauling wide loads at night were different.

More patrols and tracking of traffic should be done on winter roads.

Emergency shelters should be built and maintained along winter roads particularly at historical trouble spots (hills, overflow locations).

The Merv Hardy ferry should be relocated at the Bear River.

Web sites and notices need to be continually updated.

Efficiencies and Environmental Responsibilities

Community-specific public transportation needs must be considered in this strategy.

Several of the leaders interviewed expressed concern that the limited resources of the Department of Transportation are only focused on tried and true policies and engineering approaches and there is a need to think more “outside the box”. It was felt that adverse climate effects may result in lost opportunities to become leaders in arctic transportation.

Use of locally available energy sources could reduce the need for transporting a lot of fossil fuels.

Research should be considered on the economics of light rail to communities instead of highways.

Very little attention is being paid to the potential of lighter than air vehicles for transporting freight to mines and oil and gas sites. We need to know more about this potential.

More use could be made of electric vehicles by the GNWT and municipal governments.

EK35 treatments should be applied on all gravel runways in the NWT every year.

The new “online” registration of vehicles is an excellent initiative that saves time and dollars.

A system now needs to be implemented to make it easier for holders of community restricted drivers licenses to be able to easily upgrade to regular Class 5 licenses.

There is a need to do a full cost/benefit analysis of investing in hydro development as a way of cutting down on highway maintenance by reducing the transportation of millions of liters of fuel to communities and industrial sites. This analysis might generate useful input for a macro strategy which would take into consideration all economic and cost of living factors.

Online shopping (goods, travel arrangements banking, communication etc.) has changed our demands for transportation infrastructure. We need to take this trend into consideration as a 25 year strategy is developed.

Regulation and Policy Changes Recommended

We need a policy on cost sharing transportation infrastructure with industry and the Federal government. Treating each new project as a “one off” isn’t sustainable and gives little certainty or guidance to industry as they develop their projects.

Ignoring policies such as the use of northern airlines by GNWT employees travelling on business as priority over southern-based carriers is not the right thing to do. The GNWT’s

priority use of airlines that provide the most northern economic benefits should be developed into a new policy.

GNWT use of travel agencies costs a lot and brings no measurable value. Best information on travel schedules and best prices can now be quickly obtained online without use of travel agents.

We need a formula for balancing our expenditures on new transportation infrastructure and maintaining and upgrading existing systems.

Toll rates for use of the Deh Cho Bridge by smaller multi-axle vehicles is seen as unfair. A one ton truck with a commercial license plate pulling a tandem axle trailer pays much more per weight unit than does a larger transport vehicle. Users circumvent the system by re-registering their vehicles with private license plates. The toll structure needs to be revised.

BIP is more and more often waived. It is time for it to be replaced by a benefits policy that is based on comprehensive Northern benefits rather than ownership.

Government needs to begin negotiating a better devolution deal. Without a better deal on industrial benefits and royalties the GNWT and Aboriginal governments will be forced to continually go to the Federal Government for increased borrowing limits and “handouts”.

Appendix B

The following presents the responses received from the 513 individuals who responded to DOT’s “NWT Transportation Strategy Online Survey”, which was available to the public, in English and French, on the Department’s website (www.dot.gov.nt.ca) from June - October 2014. Please note that some respondents did not respond to every question.

Question 1:

How long have you lived and/or worked in the NWT?

Depuis combien de temps vivez-vous ou travaillez-vous aux TNO?

	# of Responses	Percentage of Total Response
Not Applicable	11	2.5%
5 Years or Less	74	16.7%
6-10 Years	56	12.6%
11-24 Years	111	25.1%
25+ Years	167	37.7%
Other	24	5.4%
Total	443	100%

Question 2:

Do you work in the transportation sector?

Travaillez-vous dans le domaine des transports?

	# of Responses
Road (Public)	69
Marine (Public)	27
Air (Public)	79
Road Construction and Maintenance (Private)	25
Bus Services (Private)	1
Commercial Trucking (Private)	28
Tug and Barge Services (Private)	3
Aviation (Private)	15
Rail (Private)	2
N/A	334
Total	498

Question 3:

Approximately how often do you use the following NWT transportation services?

À quelle fréquence, à peu près, avez-vous recours aux services de transport énumérés ci-dessous, aux Territoires du Nord-Ouest?

	Never	Infrequently (1-5 times/year)	Frequently (6-10 times/year)	Very Frequently (11+ times/year)	Total	Weighted Average
Public Highways	2.33% 9	24.87% 96	21.76% 84	51.04% 197	386	3.22
Public Winter Roads	13.21% 51	43.52% 168	20.73% 80	22.54% 87	386	2.53
Public Marine Ferries	45.60% 176	41.71% 161	6.99% 27	5.70% 22	386	1.73

Public Airports	3.89% 15	32.64% 126	29.02% 112	34.46% 133	386	2.94
Scheduled Air Services	9.33% 36	30.83% 119	28.76% 111	31.09% 120	386	2.82
Chartered Air Services	43.01% 166	37.82% 146	6.48% 25	12.69% 49	386	1.89
Private Winter Roads	64.51% 249	22.54% 87	5.44% 21	7.51% 29	386	1.56
Private Bus Services	87.82% 339	9.07% 35	1.04% 4	2.07% 8	386	1.17
Private Tug & Barge Services	87.82% 339	9.07% 35	1.55% 6	1.55% 6	386	1.17
Private Airports	82.90% 320	10.36% 40	3.37% 13	3.37% 13	386	1.27
Private Railway Services	96.37% 372	2.07% 8	0.00% 0	1.55% 6	386	1.07

Question 4:

How could transportation infrastructure be improved to better serve NWT communities, residents, and businesses (e.g. more highways, longer winter road seasons, upgrades to local access roads, larger airports, upgraded marine facilities, and expanded rail system)?

Selon vous, comment les infrastructures de transports pourraient-elles être améliorées pour mieux répondre aux besoins des résidents, des collectivités et des entreprises des Territoires du Nord-Ouest? (p. ex., davantage de routes, allongement de la période de disponibilité des routes d'hiver, amélioration des routes donnant accès aux diverses localités, agrandissement des aéroports, amélioration des installations des transport maritime, expansion du réseau ferroviaire)

Most Frequent Responses:

- more frequent and improved maintenance and upgrades across the NWT highway system;
- expansion of the all-weather highway system, particularly through the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, to connect communities, and extend into resource rich areas;

- investigating options to expand rail service in the NWT;
- longer operating season for winter roads;
- an expanded airport in Yellowknife;
- improved road geometry, wider shoulders, better guardrails, an increased number pull-offs and bathroom facilities at roadsides; and
- extended runway lengths at community airports

Question 5:

How could transportation services be improved to better serve you, your business, and your community?

Comment les services de transport pourraient-ils être améliorés pour mieux répondre à vos besoins comme résident des TNO, aux besoins de votre collectivité ou aux besoins de votre entreprise?

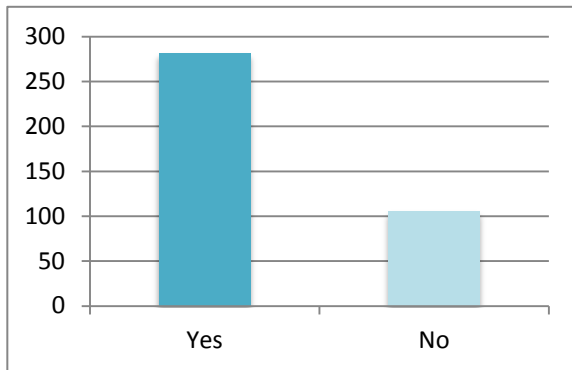
Most Frequent Responses:

- more frequent and improved maintenance and upgrades across the NWT highway system;
- expansion of the all-weather highway system, particularly through the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, to connect communities, and extend into resource rich areas;
- investigating options to expand rail service in the NWT;
- improved road geometry, wider shoulders, better guardrails, an increased number of pull-offs and bathroom facilities at roadsides;
- less costly airfare for residents travelling within and beyond the NWT; and
- lowering or removing the toll from Deh Cho Bridge in order to lower the cost of freight

Question 6:

Does the Department do enough to protect the environment? (e.g. wildlife, water, soil, air quality)

Le ministère des Transports en fait-il assez pour protéger l'environnement? (p. ex., faune et flore, eau, sol, qualité de l'air)



Yes	281
No	105
Total	386

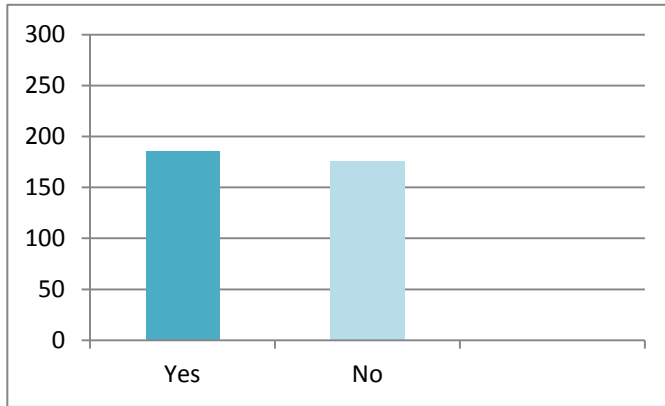
Most Frequent Responses:

- many respondents are unsure what DOT's environmental responsibilities are or what the Department does to protect the environment;
- some respondents believe there are already excessive environmental regulations which impede development; and
- respondents see climate change as one the most significant environmental challenges over the next 25 years

Question 7:

Does the Department do enough to support economic development? If not, what can the Department do to further encourage economic growth? (e.g. increase access to remote areas with resource potential, change commercial trucking regulations, infrastructure improvements to reduce operating costs, improved partnership with industry)

Le ministère des Transports en fait-il assez pour soutenir le développement économique? Si ce n'est pas le cas, que pourrait faire le ministère pour favoriser encore davantage la croissance économique? (p. ex., accroître l'accès aux régions éloignées dotes d'un potentiel de ressources exploitables, modifier la réglementation concernant le transport routier commercial, améliorer les infrastructures en vue de réduire les frais de fonctionnement, améliorer ses partenariats avec l'industrie)



Yes	186
No	176
Total	362

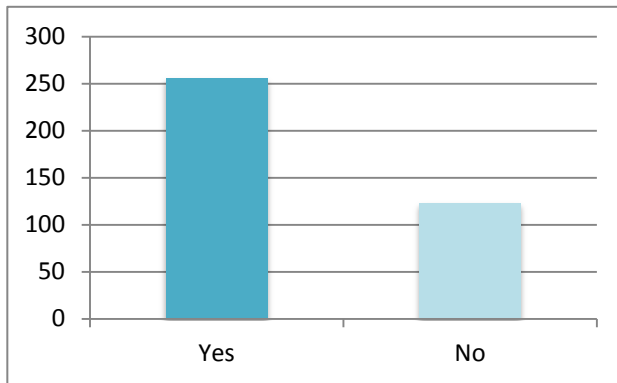
Most Frequent Responses:

- increase access into remote areas to connect communities to markets and support industry exploration and development activities that will boost economic development in the NWT; and
- transportation investments are best made toward supporting the mining industry, the oil and gas industry through construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway, and by supporting tourism

Question 8

Does the Department of Transportation do enough to promote safe transportation and ensure the safety of the travelling public?

Le ministère des Transports en fait-il assez pour favoriser des transports sécuritaires et optimiser la sécurité du public voyageur?



Yes	256
No	123
Total	379

Most Frequent Responses:

- highway conditions greatly affect safety on NWT highways;
- there needs to be a greater presence of law enforcement on highways and winter roads; and
- there is a need for expanded availability of cell service or a wider availability of emergency phones

Question 9:

How do you currently access NWT transportation information, such as weather conditions, environmental conditions, construction notices, road weight restrictions, road closures, and ferry/ice crossing schedules? (check all that apply)

Comment vous informez-vous à propos de sujets en lien avec les transports aux TNO? Citons par exemple les conditions météorologiques ou environnementales, les avis de travaux en cours, les fermetures de route, les restrictions de poids des véhicules et les horaires des traversiers ou des routes de glace. (Cochez toutes les réponses pertinentes)

	Responses
DOT Website	329
Social Media: Facebook	83
Social Media: Twitter	74
Newspaper	99
Radio	169

Television	63
Highway Signs	200
Word of Mouth	207
Other	54
Total	387

Question 10:

How could the Department of Transportation better inform the public about potentially hazardous conditions, weather conditions, environmental conditions, construction notices, road weight restrictions, road closures, and ferry/ice crossing schedules?

Comment le ministère des Transports pourrait-il mieux informer la population au sujet de conditions routières, météorologiques ou environnementales potentiellement dangereuses, d'avis de travaux en cours, des fermetures de route, des restrictions de poids des véhicules et des horaires des traversiers ou des routes de glace?

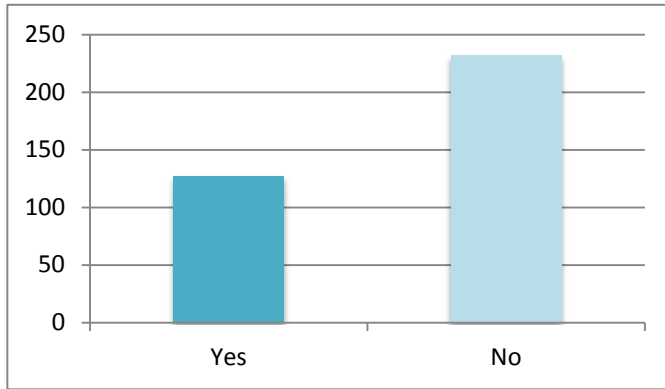
Most Frequent Responses:

- more frequent updates to the Department's website;
- an increased presence on social media;
- more electronic signage along highways and around communities; and
- frequent updates to radio and a 1-800 number for highway conditions are critical to those without access to Internet

Question 11:

Do you see a need for government to improve certain transportation rules (i.e. policies or regulations) to improve service levels or safety across the NWT?

Considérez-vous que le gouvernement devrait revoir certaines politiques ou règlements (ou les deux) en matière de transport, en vue d'améliorer la sécurité et les niveaux de service aux TNO?



Yes	127
No	232
Total	359

Most Frequent Responses:

- some respondents felt that stronger enforcement of existing regulations is needed over the creation of new regulations;
- some respondents felt there are too many regulations already; and
- some respondents felt that there needs to be a greater emphasis on educating the general public about safe driving behaviours

Question 12:

What do you see as the major transportation challenges our territory may face over the next 25 years?

D'après vous, quels sont les principaux défis en matière de transports auxquels notre territoire pourrait être confronté au cours des 25 prochaines années?

Most Frequent Responses:

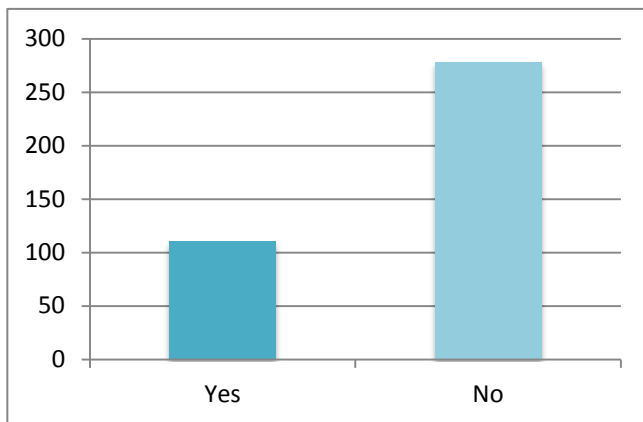
- maintaining and improving existing infrastructure over the next 25 years while developing new roads and increasing economic activity;
- obtaining enough funding to carry out construction of new infrastructure supporting development of the north and balancing that funding with maintenance needs;
- climate change affecting operations across the transportation system and accelerating the breakdown of infrastructure;
- building roads to resource rich areas in support of industry exploration and development, therefore providing a reliable source for economic growth in the territory; and

- roads connecting remote communities to the highway system, southern markets, and economic opportunities

Question 13:

The Department of Transportation’s mission is: *“To provide for the safe, secure, accessible and reliable movement of people and goods to serve the social, economic, and political needs and aspirations of the people of the Northwest Territories.”* Is there anything you think should be changed or added to this mission statement?

La mission du ministère des Transports est la suivante: *“Assurer le déplacement sécuritaire, accessible et fiable des personnes et des marchandises afin de répondre aux besoins sociaux, économiques et politiques ainsi qu’aux aspirations des Ténos.”* Y a-t-il quelque chose qui, selon vous, devrait être modifié ou ajouté dans cet énoncé de mission?



Yes	110
No	278
Total	388

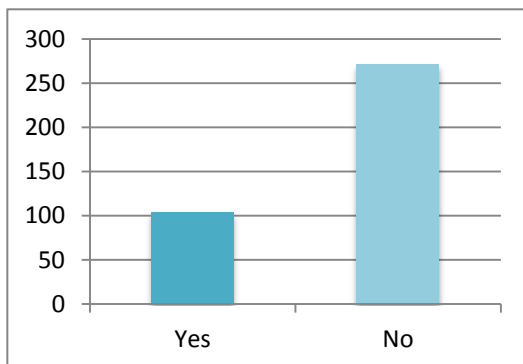
Most Frequent Responses:

- remove reference to “political needs”;
- add some mention of DOT’s commitment to environmental responsibilities;
- add some reference to economic and affordable transportation services and development; and
- need some way for Department to be accountable to its mission

Question 14:

The Department of Transportation’s vision is for: *“1. Safe, secure, affordable, reliable, and accessible personal mobility; 2. A higher standard of living for the territory and its communities through the more efficient and lower cost of freight; 3. Sustained economic growth and prosperity through better development access to the territory’s renewable and non-renewable resources.”* Is there anything you think should be changed or added to this vision statement?

La vision du ministère des Transports est la suivante: *“1) Faciliter les déplacements des personnes d’une façon sécuritaire, abordable, accessible et fiable. 2) Favoriser un niveau de vie plus élevés et à une exploitation plus efficace. 3) Favoriser une croissance économique durable et la prospérité grâce à un meilleur accès pour l’exploitation des ressources renouvelables et non renouvelables de notre territoire.”* Y a-t-il quelque chose qui, selon vous, devrait être modifié ou ajouté dans cet énoncé de la vision du ministère?



Yes	104
No	271
Total	375

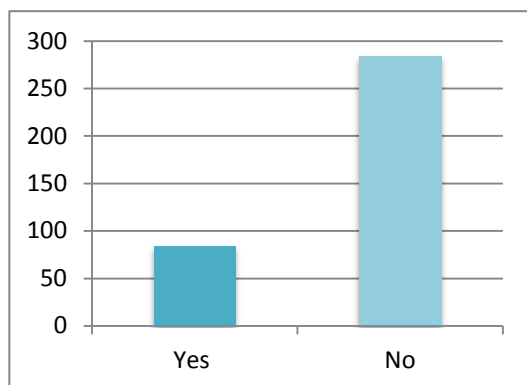
Most Frequent Responses:

- add some mention of DOT’s commitment to environmental responsibilities;
- “Sustained economic growth and prosperity” should be changed to “sustainable” economic growth and development and many respondents wanted the emphasis to be on renewable resources as opposed to non-renewable resources; and
- some respondents required further explanation on how the Department contributes to a higher standard of living and lower cost of freight

Question 15:

The Department of Transportation has set the following operation goals: “1) *The transportation system continues to improve.* 2) *The NWT has an ongoing high level of Northern business and employment opportunities in the public and private transportation sectors.* 3) *The NWT has a safe and secure transportation system in all modes.* 4) *The Department has a high level performance workplace that is adaptable effective, efficient, and innovative in delivering programs and services.* 5) *The Department will continue to ensure that the high quality of the NWT environment is maintained.* 6) *The Department supports local transportation infrastructure.*” Is there anything you think should be changed or added to this list of goals? /

Le ministère des Transports s’est fixé les objectifs opérationnels suivants: “1) *Le système de transport continue de s’améliorer.* 2) *Aux TNO, les possibilités d’emploi et les occasions d’affaires dans le domaine des transports sont élevées et constants, tant dans le secteur public que dans le secteur privé.* 3) *Les TNO disposent d’un système sécuritaire, et ce, pour tous les modes de transport.* 4) *Le ministère est un milieu de travail axé sur le rendement élevé; il se veut souple, efficace et novateur dans la prestation de ses services et de ses programmes.* 5) *Le ministère est un milieu de travail axé sur le rendement élevé; il se veut souple, efficace et novateur dans la prestation de ses services et de ses programmes.* 5) *Le ministère veut continuer à faire en sorte que la grande qualité de l’environnement aux TNO soit maintenue.* 6) *Le ministère soutient les infrastructures de transport locales.*” Y a-t-il quelque chose qui, selon vous, devrait être modifié ou ajouté dans cette liste d’objectifs opérationnels du ministère?



Yes	84
No	284
Total	368

Most Frequent Responses

- the Department needs a way of measuring success and a process for remaining accountable to these goals; and
- some respondents felt community access needed to be better addressed in the operational goals with attention to reducing the isolation of remote communities through all-weather connection

Question 16:

What are the most significant improvements to the transportation system you have noticed in your time living or working in the NWT?

Quelles sont les principales améliorations que vous avez remarquées concernant le système de transport depuis que vous habitez ou travaillez aux TNO?

	Responses	Percentage of Total Responses
Highways	272	89.2%
Winter Roads	165	54.1%
Driver & Motor Vehicle Services	215	70.5%
Ferries	156	51.1%
Marine Facilities	116	38%
Airports	173	56.7%
Railway	118	38.7%
Other	90	29.5%
Total	305	100%

Most Frequent Responses:

Highways

- chipsealing across the highway system has been the most noticeable highway improvement for residents;
- the addition of the Deh Cho Bridge was considered a noticeable improvement by respondents though there were many who expressed that they weren't really sure how effective the addition has been or whether it was really an improvement;

- straightening and reconstruction on Highway 3. However, respondents were critical of the continued maintenance of this highway particularly between Yellowknife and Behchoko; and
- other highways noted for their improvement included, Highway 4, widening of Highway 1, and construction of the Inuvik-Tuktoyaktuk Highway

Winter Roads

- the addition of bridges along the Mackenzie Valley winter road system is seen as having improved travel;
- respondents noted that widening of winter roads has increased the safety and effectiveness of winter roads;
- many respondents noted that safety had generally improved along winter roads; and
- respondents noted that maintenance efforts have improved.

Driver & Motor Vehicle Services

- an overwhelming majority of respondents cited the recent availability of online driver and vehicle registration services IDMV (<https://www.idmv.dot.gov.nt.ca>) as having reduced waiting times and improved overall convenience, as the most significant change over the past 25 years

Ferries

- most respondents cited the replacement of the Merv Hardie ferry at the Mackenzie River crossing near Fort Providence with the Deh Cho Bridge as the most significant improvement. Several commented that they missed or preferred the ferry;
- a few respondents expressed satisfaction with extended ferry services and “on demand” ferry services; and
- some respondents took the time to note that accessibility at ferry landings was still largely unimproved

Marine Facilities

- residents were largely unaware of any significant improvements over the last 25 years so that no overarching response themes could be established

Airports

- respondents most commonly cited the expansion of many community airports, particularly those in Yellowknife, Norman Wells, and Inuvik as the most significant improvement over the last 25 years;
- respondents are largely satisfied with runway extensions that have taken place and feel that they are adequately serving the territory’s needs; and

- increased competition has led to lower air fares for residents

Railway

- most respondents were unaware of the existence of rail in the NWT and were therefore unable to comment. The handful of residents who were aware of its existence mostly noted that they hadn't seen any improvements; and
- some residents reiterated the idea that railway expansion should be considered for the territory

Question 17:

Do you have any further suggestions for the Department of Transportation to better meet transportation needs across the NWT over the next 25 years?

Avez-vous d'autres suggestions à transmettre au ministère des Transports, afin que celui-ci puisse mieux répondre aux besoins de la population ténnoise au cours des 25 prochaines années?

Most Frequent Responses:

- a large number of responses indicated residents would prefer to see more funding allocated to the general maintenance of existing highways;
- many felt that DOT could play a stronger role in supporting the mining and tourism industries which are felt to be the basis of economic growth in the future;
- respondents are keen to see the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway in the near future; and
- respondents reiterated their interest in seeing the expansion of the NWT rail system

Appendix C – Stakeholder Meetings

The following summarizes key points from engagements with NWT transportation stakeholders. DOT offered a wide range of transportation companies and stakeholder organizations the opportunity to provide input to the Department on the updated strategy. The Department followed up with stakeholders that indicated an interest in meeting. At each engagement session a presentation was made that assisted in framing discussions on the following topics: the status of all modes of transportation in the NWT (road, air, marine, and rail), DOT accomplishments over the last 25 years, and the challenges and opportunities related to

transportation in the NWT over the next 25 years. Open discussion between DOT staff and the stakeholder group ensued and suggestions were noted.

Stakeholder Engagement Sessions August – November 2014:

Northern Air Transport Association (NATA) – August 26, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- NATA expressed the need to improve electronic aids to navigation at NWT airports to support electronic aids available for use on aircraft;
- there is a need to improve weather monitoring capabilities at NWT airports via technology such as AWOS, CARS, and M-DAR; and
- there is a need to find cost-effective means of improving runway surfaces: i.e. paving or chipsealing gravel runways

Canadian Association of Petroleum Products (CAPP) – August 27, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- the oil and gas exploration and development sector relies extensively on the NWT transportation services (highway, winter road, air, rail, and marine);
- the high cost of transportation limits hydrocarbon development activity in the north;
- Improvements which lengthen operating seasons, and reduce transportation costs, will be an incentive to future hydrocarbon development initiatives; and
- CAPP is interested in the Department's proposal to the federal government to construct the Mackenzie Valley Highway. Current construction of the Inuvik to Tuktoyaktuk highway will benefit future exploration and development in the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Sea.

CN Rail – August 28, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- CN acknowledged that this line is one of their most costly routes to operate in its network and that it is a challenging area to service.
- CN Rail maintains an interest in the NWT rail system noting that high potential exists for future business opportunities resulting from resource development in the territory;
- CN would be willing to partner with Canada on investing in rail improvements if a good business case was presented; and
- the standard of the rail gauge and the condition of the rail bed on permafrost terrain limit train operating speed

Manitoulin Transport – August 28, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- Manitoulin noted that communication with DOT's Road Licensing & Safety Division has been highly effective;
- Continually improving communication between DOT and commercial carriers is essential to the provision of safe and effective trucking services for the North; and
- NWT highway improvements are welcomed by the trucking industry.

Alberta Motor Trucking Association (AMTA) – August 29, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- continuing efforts to harmonize trucking regulations between Alberta, the NWT and other jurisdictions is important and effective communication between jurisdictions is essential to the efficient regulation of the Canadian trucking industry; and
- members suggested that an increase in cellphone coverage between Yellowknife and Fort Providence, implementation of the Partners in Compliance program in the NWT, and an increased number of rest stops and pull outs along NWT highways would benefit driver safety and efficiency

Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce - September 17, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- transportation infrastructure construction projects create important sources of business for northern companies and support industry developments; and
- members indicated that it is important that the GNWT undertakes economic analyses of road project investments before committing funds for new construction

Le Conseil de développement économique des des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (CDETNO) - September 18, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- members of CDETNO expressed interest in the continued improvement and expansion of the NWT transportation system to meet the growing needs of communities, residents, industry and northern businesses; and
- the provision of more transportation-related information in French will be well received by Members

NWT Construction Association (NWTCA) - October 9, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- NWTCA members suggested that the GNWT consider partnering with industry to fund infrastructure projects such as an all-weather road into the Slave Geological Province (or otherwise setting a toll) and for upgraded access along Highway 7 where Canadian Zinc is interested in developing their Prairie Creek Mine;

- NWTCA members noted that a GNWT policy for sole-sourcing needs to be worked out and that sole-sourcing was not an acceptable practice where thriving competition exists;
- Since the Department of Transportation is largely responsible for regulating commercial vehicle traffic on NWT highways, it plays a significant role in ensuring the efficiency and safety of commercial carriers;
- Members would like to see an increased number of pull-outs along northern highways and widening of Highway 1 between Enterprise and the Alberta border to increase trucker safety;
- regulations related to gross vehicle weights need to be consistent between jurisdictions so that drivers don't have to switch their configurations at the border;
- communication between DOT and the trucking industry on regulatory issues needs to be consistent and effective; and
- NWTCA suggested the creation of a lobby group to go to Ottawa to discuss upgrades to the rail line in support of businesses operating in the southern NWT

Northern Transportation Company Ltd. (NTCL) - November 24, 2014

Noted Comments and Suggestions:

- effective partnership between the Government of Canada, DOT and the territory's marine stakeholders is essential to ensure that the needs of residents are being met through a vibrant marine transportation network;
- bringing together marine stakeholders with the GNWT and responsible federal government departments is necessary to ensure effective maintenance and improvements to marine facilities, support programs and regulations
- the trucking industry is a strong competitor to the marine sector and DOT supports the road transport sector through the provision of better and more extensive road infrastructure;
- it is felt that public government support and attention must also be directed to improvements to the marine sector, which provides essential services to remote communities and the NWT resource sector; and
- NTCL proposes that it could be valuable to investigate the effectiveness of investing in marine infrastructure, as well as NWT road infrastructure