

**19th Northwest Territories
Legislative Assembly**

**Moving Forward:
Recommendations for the
Incoming 20th Assembly**

**Report of the
Special Committee on
Transition Matters**

Chair: Rocky Simpson

**MEMBERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
TRANSITION MATTERS**

Rocky Simpson
MLA Hay River South
Chair

Kevin O'Reilly
MLA Frame Lake

Jane Weyallon-Armstrong
MLA Monfwi

Lesa Semmler
MLA Twin Lakes

R. J. Simpson
MLA Hay River North

Shane Thompson
MLA Nahendeh

COMMITTEE STAFF

Glen Rutland
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

October 4, 2023

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Speaker:

On October 31, 2022, the 19th Legislative Assembly adopted the Terms of Reference for the Special Committee on Transition Matters. The Special Committee was guided by this Terms of Reference in the completion of its work.

The Special Committee was mandated to make recommendations on: the timing, content, and format of the orientation of Members of the 20th Assembly; the timing and approval process for the 20th Assembly's first and subsequent business plans and budget; a process for setting the priorities of the 20th Legislative Assembly, including changes to the Guiding Principles and Process Conventions; the size, structure, and selection process for the Executive Council and Standing Committees of the 20th Assembly; and whether, how and when to conduct mid-term reviews of the priorities of the 20th Assembly and the performance of cabinet and standing committees.

As Committee Chair, I would like to extend thanks to my colleagues for their work and dedication to this Special Committee.

Your Special Committee on Transition Matters is pleased to provide its report, "Moving Forward".



Rocky Simpson,
Chair,
Special Committee on Transition Matters

**“MOVING FORWARD” REPORT OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS**

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“MOVING FORWARD” REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A democratic society relies on the peaceful, coordinated, and timely transition of power from one group of elected leaders to another. Following the Territorial General Election, the Members-elect of the 20th Legislative Assembly will meet in Yellowknife to transition power from one Assembly to another. In our consensus style of government, the incoming Assembly must make important decisions right away. This includes how they will set their priorities and budgets, who will lead the government, and the structure and membership of standing committees.

As Members of the 19th Assembly, we benefited from our predecessors' recommendations. In this report, we make recommendations we hope will benefit our successors. The recommendations and observations in this report are suggestions for improvements to the current system.

We hope Members of the 20th Legislative Assembly find these recommendations useful, and we wish them every success.

2.0 PRIORITY SETTING

The process for priority setting in each Assembly is set out in the Consensus Government Process Conventions, specifically the Priority Setting and Reporting Convention (**Appendix A**). The outcome of that process, the priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly are attached (**Appendix B**).

Committee reflected upon the priorities and mandate development processes employed in the 19th Assembly. The 19th Assembly engaged early with key partners before facilitating the priority setting process. All of this occurred before December. Although Committee agreed on the importance and continuation of engaging with elected Indigenous government and community leaders in the development of priorities, more is required for this process. Priorities were identified at the beginning of the term with minimal ability to adjust the actions and commitments based on new events and developments.

Members noted that the priority setting process may have benefited from a greater understanding of their own roles, the roles of government departments, and the relationship with key partners. Allowing for a more flexible and extended input process to occur between October and January would give more time for all Members to better

understand the operational and budgetary realities of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and still provide an opportunity for fulsome engagement with partners. It would promote a more informed priority setting process.

Although it was noted that this additional time for on-boarding and engagement could delay the implementation of priorities, Committee agreed that ensuring Members are fully aware of all aspects of government and their roles and responsibilities would ensure a more informed priority setting process. This more wholesome understanding would allow Members to shift resources towards established priorities through their budgetary exercises.

Committee agreed that future Assemblies should attempt to limit the number and scope of their priorities to reflect a more strategic vision. Priorities should be high-level in nature and limited in number. A recent example discussed by Committee were the five priorities released by the 6th Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (**Appendix C**). The Priorities should focus on outcomes that the Assembly would like to achieve as opposed to identifying specific actions the GNWT should take. By focusing on outcomes, the Executive and Legislative Branches of government would have the flexibility to work through actions needed to achieve these outcomes and to adapt their actions as necessary.

The additional time taken in priority setting allows Members to make public statements around their own priorities, ensure Members meet with Indigenous Governments and Non-Governmental Organizations, provide Cabinet Members time for departmental briefings, and provide Regular Members time for briefings.

The Committee is making the following recommendation to the 20th Assembly:

Recommendation 1

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the Input Process for Priority Setting occur between October 2023 and January 2024.

Once all Members have a better grasp of their responsibilities, capacity, and other priorities, it is recommended that the 20th Assembly use the February-March sitting to finalize their priorities. Should the 20th Assembly identify the need for a separate mandate document versus mandate letters, this can be completed for the May/June sitting. This additional time will allow Members to better shape their priorities and ensure those priorities are reflected in subsequent business and budget planning processes for the next year and the rest of the 20th Assembly.

The advantage of this delayed priority setting process is that it allows time for Members to become more familiar with their roles, the government, services already offered, and a better sense of what they hope to accomplish together. Members of Cabinet will have been briefed on their departments and Regular Members will have completed a first

budget review of each department. Members should be in a better position to critically assess priorities. They can also reflect on their priorities and the priorities identified by stakeholders when first elected, and how that may be changed by their understanding of how government currently operates.

Committee did consider the disadvantages of a delayed priority setting process. There were concerns that delaying the priority setting process to a time where Members have roles as Cabinet Ministers and Regular Members removes the level playing field of agreeing to priorities before Members know what their role will be. Some Members expressed concern that Ministers may want to maintain a status quo, while Regular Members may want to push for new initiatives. However, Committee believed that the general dissatisfaction with the priority setting process warrants a new approach be tried.

The Committee is making the following recommendation to the 20th Assembly:

Recommendation 2

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the priorities are tabled before the end of the February-March 2024 Sitting to allow for a mandate-style document to be introduced in the May-June sitting.

3.0 ORIENTATION OF MEMBERS

In each Assembly, an independent commission is struck that reviews Members' compensation and benefits. That commission makes recommendations which Members consider in the House as motions. In the 19th Assembly, the Commission considered Members' orientation, and made several recommendations that were adopted by Members of the 19th Legislative Assembly. These recommendations included that initial Member orientation be mandatory and that it be given over a 30-day period.

The enclosed Orientation Schedule for the 20th Legislative Assembly was prepared with these recommendations in mind (**Appendix D**). The schedule had to be reworked once the election date was changed following the wildfires and evacuations in communities across the Northwest Territories. In this schedule orientation will continue into January and February.

Committee recommended to the Office of the Clerk that the orientation focus on providing information that Members need to know when they need it. For example, understanding roles and responsibilities is the focus prior to selection of a Cabinet. Orientation to committees and the legislative process is later, when they will be facing their first sitting.

4.0 REVISED BUDGET CYCLE

Committee identified that the current budget cycle has several disadvantages from a timing and communications perspective. A key issue under the current regime is that Business Plans are developed approximately four months prior to the Main Estimates. This timing creates financial schedules that do not align between these documents. This also creates a duplication of staff efforts in creating two financial schedules leading to a less efficient process and unclear financial statements.

In addition to this, during an election year, the current budgetary process would have new MLAs approve two business plans in their first year in government (December/January and September). This again duplicates work, creates complications in financial reporting between Business Plans and Main Estimates, and most importantly limits the ability of MLAs to ensure their priorities are reflected in the first full Budget of the new Assembly.

Combining Business Plans and Main Estimates would create a more succinct and clearer financial schedule that allows Members and the public to better understand, articulate, and influence the budgetary cycle. Committee noted both the Members' and public's frustration at the lack of transparency in the business plan review process and encourages Members of the 20th Assembly to consider new approaches to increase transparency. It is hoped that releasing Business Plans and Main Estimates at the same time improves transparency.

The Special Committee on Transition Matters makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 3

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the development of Business Plans and Main Estimates, in non-election years, are completed concurrently to allow for release and review by standing committees in December/January.

Under the *Financial Administration Act*, the Government is required to have an operating plan in place by April 1 of each year. As a result, departments are called upon to develop interim operating plans in an election year, until full business plans are developed.

The Committee agreed that given the recommendations involving the Priority Setting Process discussed in Section 2 of this Report, it is important that the budget processes have an opportunity to reflect the Priorities of the 20th Assembly.

An Interim Budget for an election year gives ability for Members to have a comprehensive understanding of the work of departments while developing their Priorities. It further gives

room for flexibility to determine how funding should be allocated towards the established priorities for the 20th Assembly.

The Special Committee on Transition Matters makes the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that, after the election, an interim budget that provides supply through the Spring of 2024 is presented followed by a full budget in the first May-June sitting of the 20th Assembly.

5.0 CABINET SELECTION

The selection and structure of Cabinet is decided by each Assembly at the commencement of its term. There is nothing in legislation that determines the size and composition of Cabinet, or the process used to recommend the appointment of the Premier and individual Ministers. The Territorial Leadership Committee, consisting of all 19 members, has historically met to determine these positions through a public forum.

Committee considered a discussion paper on options for cabinet selection (Appendix E). Since Division, the Cabinet has consisted of six Members, each representing a distinct geographical region of the Territory: two from those constituencies north of Great Slave Lake, two from those south of Great Slave Lake, and two from Yellowknife. This system has come to be known as the 2-2-2 structure. Nominations are accepted for each of the three distinct regions. Each nominee is then called upon to deliver a ten-minute speech before a series of ballots are held for each of the three regions until two nominees from each attain a majority of support.

Committee agreed that the advantages of the 2-2-2 system outweighed any advantages discussed in other potential Cabinet criteria systems. The 2-2-2 system helps to limit the ability of a single region or urban centre to dominate cabinet; provides acceptable levels of small and medium community representation; and is well understood by the public and new Members.

It was through these considerations that Committee agreed to recommend the following:

Recommendation 5

The Special Committee on Transition Matters encourages the 20th Assembly consider options for selecting Cabinet but Committee recommends maintaining the 2-2-2 system of selecting Cabinet.

6.0 MID-TERM REVIEW

The 19th Legislative Assembly did not conduct a mid-term review of Cabinet. It was determined that the performance of Members of Cabinet would be reviewed as needed by way of a motion without the need for a formal, scheduled review.

The 19th Assembly did conduct a mid-term review of the mandate. The Government would table an annual update on progress on implementation of the mandate. The second annual update on the mandate was referred to Committee of the Whole. The Premier and the Secretary to Cabinet appeared as witnesses and answered questions related to mandate items within each priority. Members had 10 minutes to make comments or ask questions on each priority, not individual mandate items.

The 19th Assembly did not conduct a mid-term review of the Premier and Cabinet's performance. It was felt by Members that the mid-term Cabinet review in the 18th Assembly was time-consuming and did not produce results. At times the process was divisive. Committee believes the Regular Members should conduct regular assessments of Ministerial performance and engage with the Premier and Ministers early and often to address concerns as they arise.

Committee suggests Regular Members may want to consider developing a process that escalates Members' concerns through a series of more progressive interventions, leading up to and including removal from the Executive Council by a motion of the House. Committee noted that some other interventions include fireside chats with the Premier and/or Minister, relationship-building with Ministers, and a motion of censure, reprimanding a Minister rather than removal.

It was through these considerations that Committee agreed to recommend the following:

Recommendation 6

The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the 20th Assembly not hold a mid-term review on the performance of Members of Cabinet but address their performance through other measures.

Recommendation 7

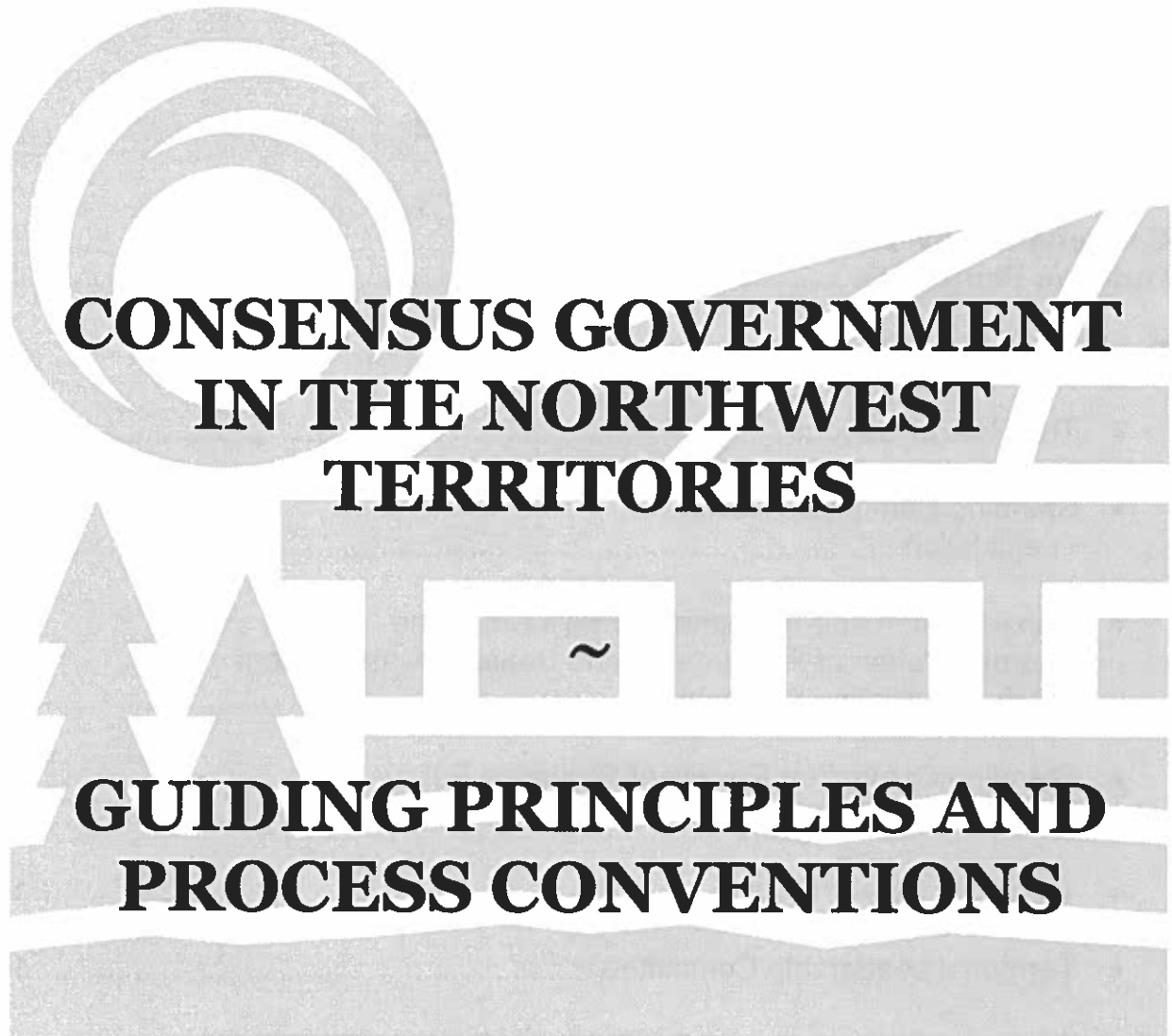
The Special Committee on Transition Matters recommends that the 20th Assembly determine a method for reviewing the Government's progress on the mandate after a mandate document has been identified.

7.0 CONCLUSION

The recommendations included in this report were drafted to provide the members of the next Assembly with practical advice that will support their efforts to shape what Government focuses on, how it operates, and how cabinet is selected. Consensus government is a unique and ever-evolving system of parliamentary democracy. This report was written to give the next Assembly a platform to better operate and implement key priorities important to them. It was done with the best intentions of supporting their efforts and their goals.

The Committee wishes to extend its very best wishes to all elected Members of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

APPENDIX A



**CONSENSUS GOVERNMENT
IN THE NORTHWEST
TERRITORIES**

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND
PROCESS CONVENTIONS**

PROCESS CONVENTION

Priority Setting and Reporting

Preamble

The priorities determined at the beginning of a Legislative Assembly guide the work of all Members over the term of an Assembly. Although each Legislative Assembly builds on the legacy of previous assemblies as reflected in existing laws, policies, programs, and services, no Assembly can be bound by the decisions of a previous Assembly.

Consensus government is a form of responsible government. The Executive Council provides overall leadership and direction, and is responsible to the Legislative Assembly for its decisions. Regular Members of the Legislative Assembly review and monitor these decisions in order to hold the government to account. The Executive Council must maintain the confidence of the Legislative Assembly. This is the essence of responsible government.

Guiding Principles 6, 7, 8 and 10

Authority

This Process Convention is established under the authority of Caucus, the Executive Council and the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight and may be amended at any time by the agreement of all parties.

Process

Priority Setting

1. At the beginning of a Legislative Assembly, after the orientation of Members-elect, each Member shall be invited by the Clerk to make a public statement about what the Member believes should be the priorities for the forthcoming legislative term. These statements shall be transcribed and the transcriptions made public.
2. Following a public statement of priorities by each individual Member, the Clerk shall convene a meeting of Caucus in order for the Caucus to establish a collective statement of priorities for the forthcoming legislative term. In establishing this collective statement of priorities, Caucus shall take into account the transcribed statements of all members of the current Assembly as well as the Report of the Special Committee on Transition Matters tabled during the last sitting of the previous Assembly.
3. The Caucus statement of priorities will be tabled in the first session of the Legislative Assembly.

Establishing a Mandate

4. Following the conclusion of the Territorial Leadership Committee and the swearing-in of Members of the Executive Council, the Premier shall promptly convene a meeting of the Executive Council to discuss a draft mandate for the forthcoming legislative term. This discussion shall take into account the stated priorities of all Members of the current

Assembly as well as the Report of the Special Committee on Transition Matters tabled during the last sitting of the previous Assembly.

1. The Premier shall request that the Chair of Caucus convene a meeting of Caucus so that the Executive Council may present to Caucus a draft mandate for the forthcoming legislative terms and to solicit feedback from all Members on the draft mandate.
2. The Premier shall schedule a subsequent meeting of the Executive Council to consider feedback from all Members expressed in Caucus and to discuss possible amendments to the draft mandate.
3. Caucus and/or the Executive Council may meet as often as is necessary before the Executive Council is satisfied that the draft mandate is sufficiently responsive to the stated priorities of all Members and sufficiently feasible for implementation by government.
4. The mandate shall form the basis for the Commissioner's Address made at the opening of the second session of a Legislative Assembly.
5. The mandate of the Executive Council shall be tabled by the Premier during the second session of a Legislative Assembly.
6. Once tabled, the mandate of the Executive Council shall be referred to Committee of the Whole and debated, prior to adoption by the Legislative Assembly.

Reporting

1. The Executive Council will be held to account for its progress implementing the mandate through the debate of its budgets, oral questions, meetings of legislative committees, and meetings between the Premier and Regular Members.
2. The Executive Council shall maintain a report on progress on the implementation of the mandate and provide that report to the Standing Committee on Accountability and Oversight not less than once every 12 months. The same progress report shall also be made available to the public in a timely manner.
3. At the mid-point of a legislative term, the Legislative Assembly will be prorogued to allow for Caucus to discuss the priorities, the mandate and progress made towards implementation.
4. The Legislative Assembly will resume with a Commissioner's Address that will reflect any adjustments to the priorities or the mandate.
5. Not less than four months before the dissolution of an Assembly, the Legislative Assembly should establish, by motion, a joint Special Committee on Transition Matters to prepare a report with recommendations on the transition process and major priorities for consideration by the next Assembly.
6. Prior to the last sitting before dissolution of an Assembly, the Executive Council shall provide to Caucus a report on the actions undertaken to implement the mandate. This report will be tabled in the final sitting of a Legislative Assembly.
7. The report of a Special Committee on Transition Matters will be tabled in the final sitting of a Legislative Assembly.



Chair, Caucus

March 2, 2021

Date



Chair, Executive Council

March 2, 2021

Date



Chair, Standing Committee on
Accountability and Oversight

02 MARCH 2021

Date

APPENDIX B

Priorities of the 19th Legislative Assembly

The 19th Legislative Assembly directs the Cabinet to work in partnership with Indigenous and Community governments to implement the following priorities for the benefit of the people of the Northwest Territories:

- Settle and implement treaty, land, resources, and self-government agreements.
- Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Improve early childhood development indicators for all children.
- Advance universal child care by increasing availability and affordability.
- Increase student education outcomes to the same level as the rest of Canada.
- Create a Polytechnic University.
- Increase regional decision-making authority.
- Reduce the municipal funding gap.
- Increase employment in small communities.
- Increase the number of affordable homes and reduce core housing need.
- Make strategic infrastructure investments that connect communities, expand the economy or reduce the cost of living, including the Mackenzie Valley Highway, the Slave Geological Corridor and the Taltson Hydro Project.
- Increase economic diversification by supporting growth in non-extractive sectors and setting regional diversification targets.
- Increase resource exploration and development.
- Reduce the cost of power and increase the use of alternative and renewable energy.
- Ensure government procurement and contracting maximizes benefits to residents and businesses.
- Adopt a benefit retention approach to economic development.
- Increase the number of resident health care professionals by at least 20 per cent.
- Increase the number and variety of culturally respectful, community-based mental health and addictions programs, including aftercare.
- Enable seniors to age in place with dignity.
- Strengthen the government's leadership and authority on climate change.
- Ensure climate change impacts are specifically considered when making government decisions.
- Increase food security through locally produced, harvested, and affordable food.

APPENDIX C



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 Building *Nunavut* Together
Nunavu liuqatigiingniq
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

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Aging with dignity in Nunavut

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Strategic outcomes

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- Improvement in daily life for Nunavummiut who are aging
- Enhancements to long-term care facilities and supports for independent living
- Fewer Inuit Elders relocated from their home communities
- More Inuit employed as caregivers for Elders
- Better mental health, physical health, and well-being for those who are aging
- Enduring partnerships with Inuit organizations, communities, and the non-profit sector to enable Nunavummiut to age with dignity and care

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Actions to make progress towards these outcomes

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We will:

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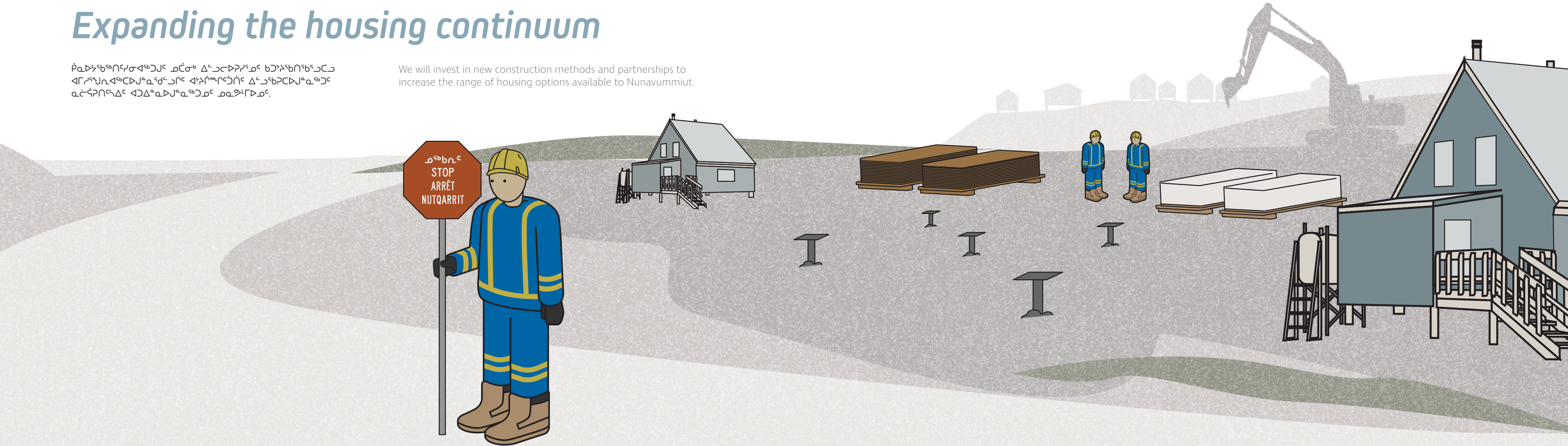
- Develop a comprehensive Elder and senior care strategy and implementation plan with broad input from Elders, families, communities, and partners
- Expedite the construction of regional long-term care facilities with capabilities to meet the needs of Nunavummiut with complex care needs
- Expand and/or renovate existing continuing care facilities
- Provide culturally- and linguistically-relevant training for staff working in continuing care facilities
- Enhance supports to improve daily life in continuing care facilities
- Encourage community-based initiatives to provide Elders/seniors programming and supports for independent or assisted living
- Enable Elders to access more country food

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Expanding the housing continuum

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We will invest in new construction methods and partnerships to increase the range of housing options available to Nunavummiut.



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Expanding the housing continuum

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Strategic outcomes

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- Reduced homelessness
- More family violence shelters, youth shelters, and transitional housing
- At least 1,000 units of all types added to the stock of affordable housing and continuum of housing options
- More Nunavummiut renting or purchasing their own homes
- Increased employment of Inuit in local housing construction and maintenance
- Enduring partnerships with Inuit organizations, the private sector, and other levels of government to expand the housing continuum

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Actions to make progress towards these outcomes

ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ:

We will:

- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
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- ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ ᓂᓃᑦᓂᑦ
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- Identify options for housing those without homes in collaboration with communities and partners in poverty reduction
- Improve the process for allocating social housing units to Nunavummiut
- Review and improve the delivery of Government of Nunavut staff housing
- Prioritize actions to encourage residents to move from Government of Nunavut staff housing and social housing into affordable rental units or homes of their own
- Improve and reinvest in home ownership assistance programs
- Renovate or repurpose existing buildings for use in the housing continuum
- Incentivize the use of Inuit labour in housing construction and maintenance
- Prioritize projects and contracting methods that involve partners, support local businesses, add to community economies, and customize approaches in response to local capabilities and needs



ᑕᓂᓂᑦᓃᓂᑦᑕᑦᑕᓂᑦᑕᓂᓃᑦ ᑕᓂᓂᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᓂᑦ ᑕᓂᓂᑦᑕᑦᑕᓂᑦᑕᓂᓃᑦ ᓂᐅᑦᑕᐅᓃᑦ

Enabling health and healing

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Strategic outcomes

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- Inuit-specific mental health programs and services
- More Inuktitut-speaking counsellors
- More Inuit employed in delivering healthcare, mental health, and addictions programs and services
- Better health and mental health outcomes over time
- Enduring partnerships with Inuit organizations, the non-profit sector, and other levels of government to improve health and mental health programs, services and outcomes for Nunavummiut

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Actions to make progress towards these outcomes

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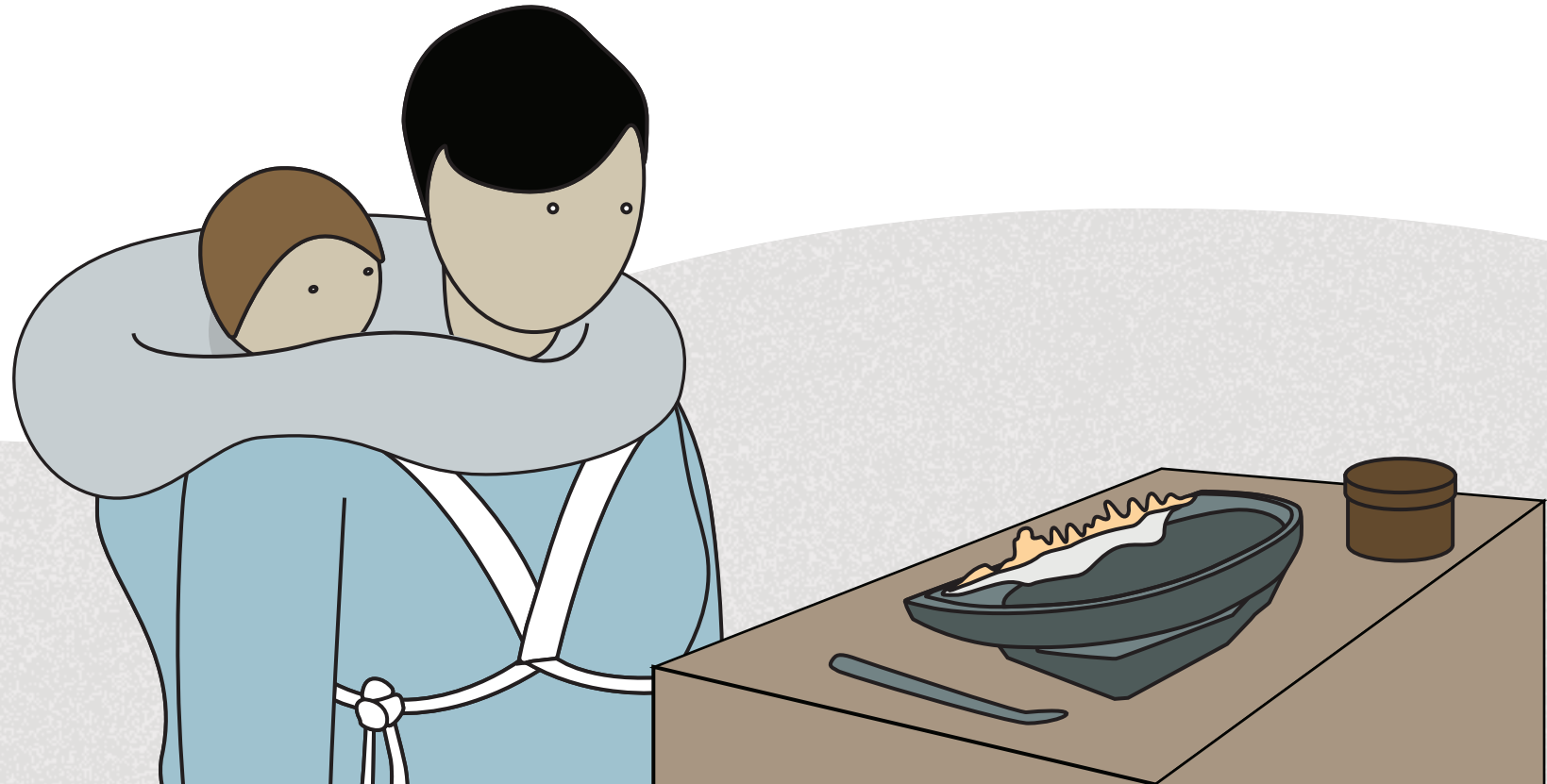
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We will:

- Investigate and implement trauma-informed practices in healthcare and education
- Encourage and support models of wellness and well-being that are grounded in Inuit identity
- Expand education and training programs that provide Nunavummiut with the necessary qualifications for professional and paraprofessional work in healthcare, mental health, and addictions treatment
- Expand opportunities, training, and formal recognition for Inuit to provide culturally- and linguistically-relevant mental health and well-being programs and services
- Engage and recognize more Elders and other community members as advisors, local counsellors for Inuit, and in programming on the land
- Promote and provide long-term core funding to support and expand effective models for community-led programs and services

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- Work with communities and partners to extend the hours that mental health services are available
- Reinvest in suicide prevention and postvention programs with our partners, with an emphasis on those that address root causes such as child sexual abuse, trauma, bullying, and discrimination
- Reinvigorate health and mental health promotions programs



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Actions that are already underway:

We will:

- Develop a long-term mental health and addictions strategy to guide and support phased implementation of the new Mental Health Act;
- Build the planned trauma and addictions treatment centre in Iqaluit with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) and federal funding partners;
- Continue to expand the use of technology for virtual health care and virtual mental health support; and
- Implement planned workplace wellness programs and supports for Government of Nunavut employees.

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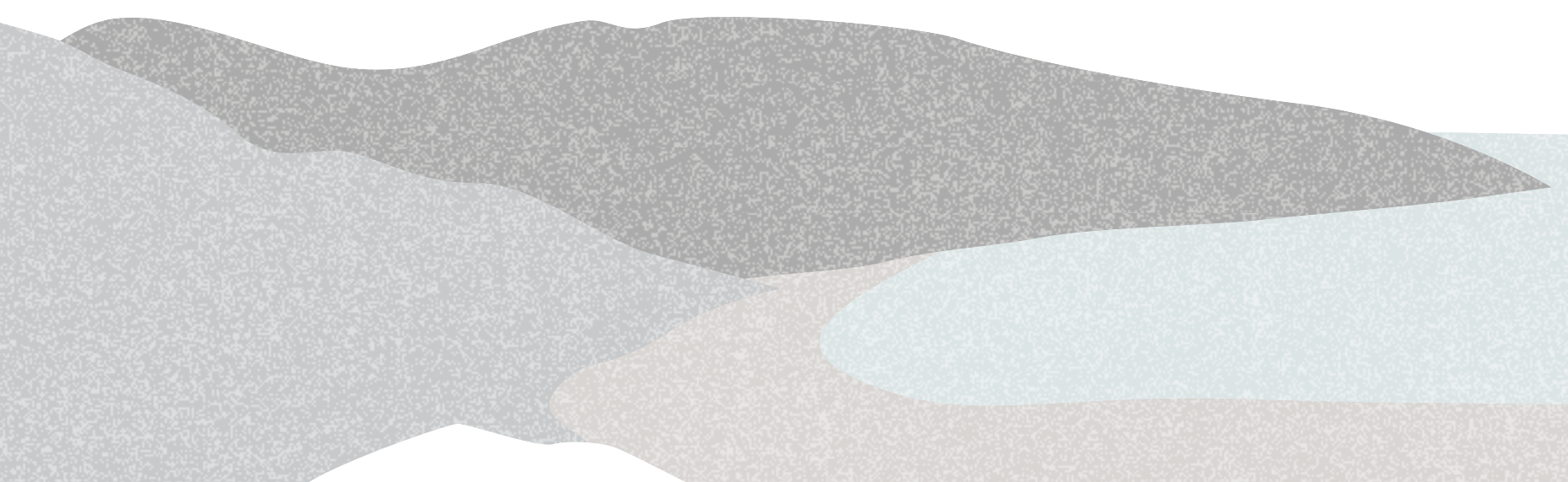
Diversifying our local economies

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Strategic outcomes

- More communities benefitting from the fishing, harvesting, and tourism sectors
- More local jobs and small businesses
- Increased manufacturing activity in Nunavut
- Increased employment of Inuit in mining and mine-related services
- Increased revenue to artists and craftspeople
- Enduring partnerships with Inuit organizations, the private sector, and other levels of government in economic and labour market development



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Actions to make progress towards these outcomes

We will:

- Refresh strategic plans for sustainable economic development and diversification in all sectors
- Increase training for employment in sectors such as mining, arts and crafts, tourism, and small business in partnership with Inuit organizations and the private sector
- Identify and promote opportunities for new local businesses and services
- Investigate the potential for alternative building technologies to be used and manufactured in Nunavut, with an emphasis on energy-efficient and climate-friendly construction
- Repatriate fisheries licences and purchase more fishing quota
- Enhance supports for harvesters
- Create an online marketplace for Nunavut arts and crafts
- Review and improve Government of Nunavut organizational structures to meet increasing demand for programs and services and to identify opportunities for further decentralization





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Government of Nunavut
Nunavut Kavamanga
Gouvernement du Nunavut

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APPENDIX D



20th Assembly Draft Orientation Schedule

Tuesday November 14, 2023

- Election Day

WEEK ONE

Monday November 20, 2023

- Travel day to Yellowknife for out-of-town Members-Elect

Tuesday November 21, 2023

- Welcome to Assembly
- Overview of Orientation Program for Members-Elect
- Review of 19th Assembly Transition Committee Report
- Consensus Government 101 Presentation
- Adoption of Orientation Program

Wednesday November 22, 2023

- Introduction to Government and Governance
 - Government Structure and Decision Making
 - Roles and Responsibilities
- Administrative Documentation - Onboarding of Members-Elect

Thursday November 23, 2023

- Presentation on GNWT Finances and Funding Sources
- Presentation on Members' Code of Conduct
- Welcome Dinner (Members-Elect and Guests)

Friday November 24, 2023

- Group and Individual Photos
- Swearing-in Ceremony for Members-Elect
- Reception for Members-Elect, Guests, hosted by the Commissioner of the NWT

WEEK TWO

Monday November 27, 2023

- Members' Speeches
- Recommendations for Territorial Leadership Committee
- Adoption of Territorial Leadership Guidelines

Tuesday November 28, 2023

- Meeting with Indigenous Governments and Organizations

Wednesday November 29, 2023

- Meeting with NWT Association of Communities and NGOs re: Priorities

Thursday November 30, 2023

- AM - TLC - Nominations for Premier
- PM - Media Training - (Northern Members +5)

Friday December 1, 2023

- AM - Media Training - (Nine Members)
- Travel Day to Home

WEEK THREE

Tuesday December 5, 2023

- Travel Day to Yellowknife

Wednesday December 6, 2023

- Media Breakfast
- Panel Discussion - Being an Effective MLA
 - Representation
 - Advocacy
 - Setting up and Staffing Your Office

Thursday December 7, 2023

- TLC - Election of a Speaker
- TLC - Election of a Premier
- TLC - Election of a Cabinet

Friday December 8, 2023

- Initial Cabinet/AOC Meetings
- Opening Day of the 20th Assembly
- Swearing-In Ceremony for Executive Council Members

WEEK FOUR

Monday December 11 2023

- RMLAs - Committee Orientation
- Cabinet - Cabinet Orientation

Tuesday December 12, 2023

- All MLAs
 - Working with Ministers' Offices
 - Privacy and Consent Forms
 - Tools and Tricks for MLAs

Wednesday December 13, 2023

- All MLAs
 - Cultural Awareness & Safety Training - Day 1 of 2

Thursday December 14, 2023

- All MLAs
 - Cultural Awareness & Safety Training - Day 2 of 2

Friday December 15, 2023

- Travel to Home

WEEK FIVE & SIX

Monday January 8, 2024

- Travel Day to Yellowknife

Tuesday January 9, 2024

- All MLAs
 - Legislation, Regulation, Policies and Procedures

Wednesday January 10, 2024

- RMLAs - Supports and Services to Regular Members
- Cabinet - To be determined

Thursday January 11, 2024

- RMLAs - Government Budgets/Budget Cycle
- Cabinet - To be determined

Friday January 12, 2024 – Friday January 19, 2024

- RMLAs - review of Interim Budget

Saturday January 20, 2024

- Travel to Home

WEEK NINE

Sunday February 4, 2024

- Travel to Yellowknife

Monday February 5, 2024

- All MLAs – Rules and Procedures
- Caucus

Tuesday February 6 - Friday February 9 2024

- Winter Sitting

Saturday February 10 to Monday February 12, 2024

- Priority Setting Exercise

Tuesday February 13- Thursday February 15, 2024

- Winter sitting resumes

Friday February 14, 2024

- Travel Day to Home

Monday February 19, 2024

- Travel Day to Yellowknife

Tuesday February 20, 2024 – Thursday February 29, 2024

- Winter Sitting

APPENDIX E



Kîwêtinohk Pahkisimotahk Askîwinohk

Kîci Okimänähk Mämawapowin

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSITION MATTERS

DISCUSSION PAPER: APPROACHES TO CABINET MAKING IN THE NWT

ISSUE

Few parliamentary democracies select cabinets solely based on merit. There is an element of politics and balance in all cabinet making. The factors to be balanced can include gender, language, regional representation, etc. In the Northwest Territories, cabinet selection has always been based on geography.

Some Members have questioned whether geography drives politics in the Territory? Does geography ignore other factors that define politics in the NWT such as race, community size, representation by population and the centralization of power and resources in Yellowknife? If Members agree that geography is not the best approach, is there a more effective way to structure cabinet selection and still maximize the appointment of qualified and experienced members?

This discussion paper examines other way of structuring cabinet and their effect on this delicate balance.

BACKGROUND

Prior to Division, an eight-member Cabinet was structured along geographic lines. Once a Premier was selected, the region from which the Premier came was entitled to another three Cabinet members and the remaining region four members. Neither East nor West was overrepresented on Cabinet by virtue of having a Premier from their region. This ensured a balanced Cabinet and eliminated strategic voting (see Note 1) for the position of premier. Cabinet members from each region were appointed at large. In other words, the four cabinet seats for the Western Arctic were not allocated to any specific region or community. All Western Arctic MLAs were eligible for available cabinet appointments.

Following Division, the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly was increased from 14 to 19 Members. After many rounds of consultation, the 14th Assembly agreed that Cabinet would be structured along geographic lines as well. Two Cabinet seats were reserved for Yellowknife Members and two each for Members representing constituencies roughly south and north of the capital.

Selecting Region	Seats on Cabinet	# of Ridings in Region	Population 2022 estimates	Residents per MLA
North	2 (29%)	6 (32%)	12,622 (28%)	2,103
South	2 (29%)	6 (32%)	11,279 (25%)	1,879
Yellowknife	2 (29%)	7 (36%)	21,3704 (47%)	3,100

The selection of the premier did not reduce the number of cabinet seats available in that geographic region. Currently, the region from which the premier is selected enjoys increased representation on cabinet (see Note 2). This system has remained in place, virtually without change. A roll call of each cabinet since Division is provided in Table 1. Table 2 provides an analysis of the representativeness of each cabinet from the perspectives of race, community size and gender.

Advantages of the status quo (2-2-2):

1. Limits the ability of a single region or urban centre to dominate cabinet;
2. Has provided acceptable levels of small and medium community representation on cabinet without guarantees; and
3. Is well understood by Members and the public.

Disadvantages of the status quo (2-2-2):

1. Encourages strategic voting for premier (see Note 1);
2. Does not necessarily result in the “most qualified” cabinet (see Note 3);
3. Region from which the premier is selected gets three seats on cabinet;
4. No guarantee of small community representation on cabinet; and
5. Yellowknife constituencies underrepresented on cabinet in terms of population.

Options for Discussion:

No system is perfect and all changes come at a cost. The following options are provided to generate discussion and debate. There are many others. Please note that these are not “either / or” options. Aspects of each can be combined with others.

A) 2-2-2-1: “The Floater”

- 2-2-2 based on current North/South/Yellowknife approach
- Seventh member selected at large from the remaining 12 members. The seventh position, or “floater,” could be used to adjust for a representation deficiency falling out of the 2-2-2, (e.g. no cabinet members from a small community, no women on cabinet) or simply elected from the pool of remaining MLAs.
- Premier selected at the end of the process from amongst the seven appointed cabinet members (premier is still elected by all Members but only those appointed to cabinet under 2-2-2-1 are eligible for nomination)

Advantages:

- Retains existing regional balance
- Reduces strategic voting for premier (see Note 1)
- Allows more flexibility in the composition of cabinet to capture talent and experience
- Allows use of “at large position” to make up for any 2-2-2 deficiencies

Disadvantages:

- Creates the appearance of a “consolation seat” on cabinet
- Limits the pool of eligible nominees for premier

B) A new take on 2-2-2 (Community Size):

- Premier selected first and at large
- 2 members representing small community constituencies (7)
- 2 members representing regional centres (5)
- 2 members representing Yellowknife (7)

Advantages:

- More closely reflects the factors that define politics in the NWT (Note 4)
- Guarantees small community and regional centre representation on cabinet.

Disadvantages:

- Creates possibility that one of the current regions (north or south) is left out of cabinet.
- Yellowknife constituencies underrepresented on cabinet in terms of population.
- Does not necessarily result in the “most qualified” cabinet (see Note 3);

Urban/Rural Character	Seats on Cabinet	# of MLAs	Population 2022 estimate	Residents per MLA
Small Communities	2 (29%)	7 (36%)	14,280 (31%)	2,040
Regional Centres	2 (29%)	5 (28%)	9,621 (21%)	1,924
Yellowknife	2 (29%)	7 (36%)	21,704 (48%)	3,100

C) 2-3-2 (Representation by Population)

- Two (2) from the North; Three (3) from Yellowknife; Two (2) from the South
- Premier selected at the end of the process from amongst the seven appointed cabinet members (Premier is still elected by all Members but only those appointed to cabinet under 2-3-2) are eligible for nomination)

Selecting Region	Seats on Cabinet	# of MLAs	Population 2022 estimate	Residents per MLA
North	2 (29%)	6 (32%)	12,622 (28%)	2,103
South	2 (29%)	6 (32%)	11,279 (25%)	1,879
Yellowknife	3 (42%)	7 (36%)	21,3704 (47%)	3,100

Advantages:

- Addresses Yellowknife's underrepresentation in terms of population
- Reduces strategic voting for Premier (see Note 1)

Disadvantages:

- Does not necessarily result in the "most qualified" cabinet (see Note 3);
- Relative increase in Yellowknife's real and perceived power;
- Limits the pool of eligible nominees for Premier;
- No guarantee of small community representation on cabinet;

OBSERVATIONS

- The current 2-2-2 system has been remarkably effective at ensuring aboriginal and small community (with their option of the current Assembly) representation on cabinet despite the absence of structural guarantees.
- One or a combination of the options presented above could improve the overall qualifications and experience of the Members appointed to cabinet and reduce the incidence of strategic voting for the position of Premier.
- Unless the Premier is from Yellowknife, that region is underrepresented on cabinet in terms of its population. Option C addresses this without creating the possibility that one region could ever hold the balance of power on cabinet.
- There do not appear to be structural impediments to the appointment of women to cabinet. Both the 14th and 16th Assemblies had women in cabinet commensurate with the number of women elected to the Assembly (two in the 14th, 15th, 17th, 18th and three in the 16th). In previous Assemblies, the major impediment appeared to be the number of women elected to the Assembly. In the 19th Assembly, a majority of women were elected to the Assembly, and the majority of Cabinet were women.

NOTES

1. In the context of this paper, “strategic voting” refers to the potential motivation that a Member might have to vote for a Premier from his or her own region in order to improve their chances of winning one of the Cabinet seats from that region. In other words, the motivation exists for a Member to cast a vote for Premier based on self-interest as opposed to who they think is best qualified to do the job.
2. It should be emphasized that although the Cabinet selection method currently uses regional categories, a Member, once appointed to Cabinet, is appointed to act on behalf of the territory as a whole. In other words, there are no “Yellowknife”, “North” or “South” members on Cabinet. Cabinet members, once appointed, are expected to put the interests of the territory before the interests of their respective constituency or region.
3. Very few parliamentary democracies select their Cabinets based purely on merit or qualifications. There is an element of politics and balance in all Cabinet making. The point here is that a less qualified or experienced Member **may** be appointed to Cabinet over a more qualified or experienced Member based purely on the geographic region they represent.
4. This paper argues that the factors that define the NWT Legislative Assembly from a political point of view are not predominantly geographic. For example, does a resident of Fort Resolution feel a special kinship with a resident of Trout Lake simply because they live “south of Yellowknife?” Can a resident of Paulatuk take comfort that a Cabinet minister from Whati will protect the interests of his or her community at the Cabinet table simply because they both live “north of Yellowknife?” This paper argues that the predominant factors that define politics in the NWT Legislative Assembly are:
 - Tension between small communities, regional centres and Yellowknife;
 - Race (aboriginal vs. non-aboriginal representation);
 - A desire to limit the centralization of power and resources in Yellowknife;
 - A desire in more populous constituencies for representation by population.

Table 1: Cabinets Since 2-2-2 Convention

14th Assembly

14-1

Kakfwi (P)
 Allen (N)
 Steen (N)
 Ootes (YK)
 Handley (YK)
 Antoine (S)
 Groenewegen (S)

14-2

Kakfwi (P)
 Allen (N)
 Steen (N)
 Ootes (YK)
 Handley (YK)
 Antoine (S)
 Miltenberger (S)

15th Assembly

15-1

Handley (P)
 Roland (N)
 Zoe (N)
 Bell (YK)
 Dent (YK)
 Miltenberger (S)
 M. McLeod (S)

15-2

Handley (P)
 Roland (N)
 Krutko (N)
 Bell (YK)
 Dent (YK)
 Miltenberger (S)
 M. McLeod (S)

15-3

Handley (P)
 Roland (N)
 Krutko (N)
 Bell (YK)
 Dent (YK)
 Menicoche (S)
 M. McLeod (S)

16th Assembly

16-1

Roland (P)
 Lafferty (N)
 Yakeleya (N)
 Lee (YK)
 R. McLeod (YK)
 Miltenberger (S)
 M. McLeod (S)

16-2

Roland (P)
 Lafferty (N)
 R.C. McLeod (N)
 Lee (YK)
 R. McLeod (YK)
 Miltenberger (S)
 M. McLeod (S)

17th Assembly

R. McLeod (P)
 RC McLeod (N)
 Lafferty (N)
 Abernethy (YK)
 Ramsay (YK)
 Beaulieu (S)
 Miltenberger (S)

18th Assembly

R.R. McLeod (P)
R.C. McLeod (N)
A. Moses (N)
Abernethy (YK)
Cochrane (YK)
Schumann (S)
Sebert (S)

19th Assembly

19-1

Cochrane (P)
Archie (N)
Chinna (N)
Nokleby (YK)
Wawzonek (YK)
RJ Simson (S)
Thompson (S)

19-2

Cochrane (P)
Archie (N)
Chinna (N)
Green (YK)
Wawzonek (YK)
RJ Simpson (S)
Thompson (S)

Table 2: Analysis of Post-Division Cabinets

	North	South	Yellowknife	Aboriginal Members	Small Community	Regional Centres	Women
14-1	3	2	2	5 (71%)	3 (43%)	2	1 (14%)
14-2	3	2	2	6 (86%)	3 (43%)	2	0
15-1	2	2	3	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	2	0
15-2	2	2	3	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	2	0
15-3	2	2	3	5 (71%)	3 (43%)	1	0
16-1	3	2	2	6 (86%)	3 (43%)	2	1 (14%)
16-2	3	2	2	6 (86%)	2 (29%)	2	1 (14%)
17-1	2	2	3	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	2	0
18-1	2	2	3	5 (71%)	0 (0%)	4	1 (14%)
19-1	2	2	3	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	2	5 (71%)
19-2	2	2	3	5 (71%)	2 (29%)	2	5 (71%)

Constituencies by Classification

North (6)

Nunakput
 Inuvik Boot Lake
 Inuvik Twin Lakes
 Mackenzie Delta
 Sahtu
 Monfwi

South (6)

Deh Cho
 Hay River North
 Hay River South
 Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh
 Thebacha
 Nahendeh

Yellowknife (7)

Frame Lake
 Kam Lake
 Range Lake
 Yellowknife North
 YK Centre
 YK South
 Great Slave

Small Community (7)

Deh Cho
 Mackenzie Delta
 Monfwi
 Nahendeh
 Nunakput
 Sahtu
 Tu Nedhé-Wiilideh

Reg. Ctrs. (5)

Hay River North
 Hay River South
 Inuvik Twin Lakes
 Inuvik Boot Lake
 Thebacha