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Introduction



Every fall, the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) publishes and distributes the MACA Update to community governments. The purpose of the MACA Update is to provide community governments with an indication of the level of funding they can anticipate for the coming year. Please note that the funding projections included in this document are subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly.

The information contained in this document can be very useful for community governments, especially in those cases where the fiscal calendars of the Government of the Northwest Territories and the community government are different. Therefore, MACA strives to include as much information as possible to assist community governments with their planning.

The information provided in the MACA Update also includes information on funding projections, new and existing programs, services and initiatives, and information on MACA policies and legislation that have recently been changed or are currently under review.

I hope that you find this year's MACA Update useful. If you have questions about the information included in this document, please contact your Regional Superintendent for more information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. McLeod". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Honourable Robert C. McLeod
Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs

Financial Projections and Information

MACA adheres to the provisions of the Community Government Funding Policy to allocate funding to community governments for operations and maintenance, water and sewer services, and community public infrastructure. Projected funding for community government in 2011-2012 is not considered final until formal approval has been received by the Legislative Assembly.

In addition to the funding described above, MACA also annually provides community governments with funding to support specific costs; refer to page 4 for projected 2011-2012 funding for the following purposes:

- Mobile Equipment – assists Designated First Nation Authorities with the purchase of mobile equipment.
- Utility Funding – assists Designated First Nation Authorities with the utility costs of the community public infrastructure in their community.
- Seniors/Disabled Property Tax Rebate – support for rebates to ratepayers who are senior citizens or disabled.
- Grants-in-Lieu of Property Taxes – provides a grant-in-lieu of property taxes for Government of the Northwest Territories infrastructure located within cities, towns and villages.
- Property Tax Grant Program – provides a grant to most non-tax-based community governments equivalent to the amount of property taxes actually paid by residents in the prior taxation year.

In addition to the above programs, MACA also administers the Gas Tax Agreement on behalf of the Government of Canada. This Agreement provides all communities with funding for environmentally sustainable municipal infrastructure as well as strengthening the ability of a community government to effectively manage their infrastructure. Please refer to the Gas Tax Agreement at www.maca.gov.nt.ca for additional information and details regarding the Gas Tax Agreement.

Operations and Maintenance Funding⁽¹⁾

Community	Approved 2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Aklavik	1,472,000	1,472,000
Behchoko	1,791,000	1,791,000
Colville Lake	708,000	708,000
Deline	1,389,000	1,389,000
Dettah	481,000	481,000
Enterprise	748,000	748,000
Fort Good Hope	1,392,000	1,392,000
Fort Liard	1,183,000	1,183,000
Fort McPherson	1,466,000	1,466,000
Fort Providence	1,210,000	1,210,000
Fort Resolution	965,000	965,000
Fort Simpson	1,382,000	1,382,000
Fort Smith	1,631,000	1,631,000
Gameti	1,117,000	1,117,000
Hay River	2,113,000	2,113,000
Hay River Reserve	542,000	542,000
Inuvik	2,543,000	2,543,000
Jean Marie River	479,000	479,000
Kakisa	392,000	392,000
Lutselk'e	636,000	636,000
Nahanni Butte	517,000	517,000
Norman Wells	1,112,000	1,112,000
Paulatuk	1,520,000	1,520,000
Sachs Harbour	1,386,000	1,386,000
Trout Lake	510,000	510,000
Tsiigehtchic	1,334,000	1,334,000
Tuktoyaktuk	1,594,000	1,594,000
Tulita	1,567,000	1,567,000
Ulukhaktok	1,504,000	1,504,000
Wekweeti	947,000	947,000
Whati	1,425,000	1,425,000
Wrigley	517,000	517,000
Yellowknife	6,756,000	6,756,000
Total	44,330,000	44,330,000

Notes

(1) All funding is subject to the approval of the Legislative Assembly.

Water and Sewer Services Funding⁽¹⁾

Community	Approved 2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Aklavik	540,000	540,000
Behchoko	881,000	881,000
Colville Lake	287,000	287,000
Deline	513,000	513,000
Dettah	201,000	201,000
Enterprise	156,000	156,000
Fort Good Hope	411,000	411,000
Fort Liard	536,000	536,000
Fort McPherson	767,000	767,000
Fort Providence	489,000	489,000
Fort Resolution	539,000	539,000
Fort Simpson	638,000	638,000
Fort Smith	258,000	258,000
Gameti	316,000	316,000
Hay River	432,000	432,000
Hay River Reserve	272,000	272,000
Inuvik	576,000	576,000
Jean Marie River	245,000	245,000
Kakisa	169,000	169,000
Lutselk'e	267,000	267,000
Nahanni Butte	229,000	229,000
Norman Wells	419,000	419,000
Paulatuk	310,000	310,000
Sachs Harbour	272,000	272,000
Trout Lake	259,000	259,000
Tsiigehtchic	354,000	354,000
Tuktoyaktuk	452,000	452,000
Tulita	523,000	523,000
Ulukhaktok	376,000	376,000
Wekweeti	258,000	258,000
Whati	518,000	518,000
Wrigley	197,000	197,000
Yellowknife	-	-
Total	<u>12,660,000</u>	<u>12,660,000</u>

Notes

(1) Actual amounts per community in 2011-2012 dependent on actual activity of communities.

(2) All funding is subject to the approval of the Legislative Assembly.

Community Public Infrastructure Funding⁽¹⁾

Community	Approved 2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Aklavik	823,000	823,000
Behchoko	1,036,000	1,036,000
Colville Lake	675,000	675,000
Deline	809,000	809,000
Dettah	708,000	708,000
Enterprise	646,000	646,000
Fort Good Hope	805,000	805,000
Fort Liard	536,000	536,000
Fort McPherson	864,000	864,000
Fort Providence	866,000	866,000
Fort Resolution	799,000	799,000
Fort Simpson	943,000	943,000
Fort Smith	1,114,000	1,114,000
Gameti	735,000	735,000
Hay River	1,260,000	1,260,000
Hay River Reserve	736,000	736,000
Inuvik	1,231,000	1,231,000
Jean Marie River	640,000	640,000
Kakisa	620,000	620,000
Lutsek'e	768,000	768,000
Nahanni Butte	665,000	665,000
Norman Wells	869,000	869,000
Paulatuk	740,000	740,000
Sachs Harbour	668,000	668,000
Trout Lake	646,000	646,000
Tsiigehtchic	696,000	696,000
Tuktoyaktuk	899,000	899,000
Tulita	789,000	789,000
Ulukhaktok	772,000	772,000
Wekweeti	675,000	675,000
Whati	788,000	788,000
Wrigley	692,000	692,000
Yellowknife	2,210,000	2,210,000
Total	<u>28,002,000</u>	<u>28,002,000</u>

Notes

(1) All funding is subject to the approval of the Legislative Assembly.

Proposed 2011-2012 “Other” Community Government Funding⁽¹⁾

Community	Seniors/Disabled Rebate ⁽²⁾	Grant-in- Lieu ⁽²⁾	Property Tax Grant Program ⁽³⁾	Mobile Equipment	Utility Funding
Aklavik	-	-	23,728	-	-
Behchoko	-	-	62,399	-	-
Colville Lake	-	-	-	6,000	190,000
Deline	-	-	17,220	-	-
Dettah	-	-	900	8,000	65,000
Enterprise	-	-	13,943	-	-
Fort Good Hope	-	-	16,353	-	-
Fort Liard	-	-	19,074	-	-
Fort McPherson	-	-	46,612	-	-
Fort Providence	-	-	31,938	-	-
Fort Resolution	-	-	24,065	-	-
Fort Simpson	20,000	254,000	-	-	-
Fort Smith	72,000	617,000	-	-	-
Gameti	-	-	-	-	-
Hay River	93,000	523,000	-	-	-
Hay River Reserve	-	-	-	47,000	44,000
Inuvik	39,000	945,000	-	-	-
Jean Marie River	-	-	-	34,000	120,000
Kakisa	-	-	-	27,000	33,000
Lutselk'e	-	-	3,062	42,000	104,000
Nahanni Butte	-	-	-	36,000	139,000
Norman Wells	7,000	53,000	-	-	-
Paulatuk	-	-	5,037	-	-
Sachs Harbour	-	-	6,510	-	-
Trout Lake	-	-	-	45,000	22,000
Tsiigehtchic	-	-	12,048	-	-
Tuktoyaktuk	-	-	74,403	-	-
Tulita	-	-	23,022	-	-
Ulukhaktok	-	-	18,104	-	-
Wekweeti	-	-	-	-	-
Whati	-	-	11,583	-	-
Wrigley	-	-	-	29,000	150,000
Yellowknife	175,000	2,944,000	-	-	-
Total	406,000	5,336,000	410,000	274,000	867,000

Notes

(1) All funding is subject to the approval of the Legislative Assembly.

(2) Budgeted amount; actual amounts will be invoiced from the eligible community governments.

(3) Budgeted amount based on historic experience; actual amounts provided in 2010-11 may be different depending on property tax payment activity of community residents.

Gas Tax Agreement Funding⁽¹⁾

Community	Approved 2010-2011	Proposed 2011-2012
Aklavik	291,197	291,197
Behchoko	581,551	581,551
Colville Lake	177,261	177,261
Deline	277,185	277,185
Dettah	196,327	196,327
Enterprise	146,627	146,627
Fort Good Hope	272,820	272,820
Fort Liard	283,157	283,157
Fort McPherson	335,302	335,302
Fort Providence	338,058	338,058
Fort Resolution	267,537	267,537
Fort Simpson	437,752	437,752
Fort Smith	723,742	723,742
Gameti	214,474	214,474
Hay River	1,036,607	1,036,607
Hay River Reserve	214,704	214,704
Inuvik	969,991	969,991
Jean Marie River	162,330	162,330
Kakisa	157,736	157,736
Lutselk'e	239,742	239,742
Nahanni Butte	172,437	172,437
Norman Wells	341,044	341,044
Paulatuk	217,920	217,920
Sachs Harbour	173,815	173,815
Trout Lake	164,627	164,627
Tsiigehtchic	188,746	188,746
Tuktoyaktuk	378,256	378,256
Tulita	258,119	258,119
Ulukhaktok	242,958	242,958
Wekweeti	177,491	177,491
Whati	257,200	257,200
Wrigley	186,679	186,679
Yellowknife	4,523,608	4,523,608
Total	<u>14,625,000</u>	<u>14,625,000</u>

Notes

(1) The Gas Tax Agreement between Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories contains specific reporting and accountability provisions that must be fulfilled by community governments prior to funding being provided, please refer to Appendix D.

New Programs, Services and Initiatives

A Clear Path Forward - MACA's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan

MACA's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan "A Clear Path Forward" was released to stakeholders in September 2010. The Plan provides a framework for MACA's actions as the Department plans for tomorrow. It complements and supports the vision of the Legislative Assembly, while also focusing on prioritizing the core business of the Department.

Over the past several years, MACA and its partners reached the following milestones:

- Completion of policy and legislative amendments to implement the "New Deal for NWT Community Governments;
- Developing a made-in-the-NWT approach to the allocation of federal infrastructure funding to community governments;
- Facilitating completion of "Integrated Community Sustainability Plans" for all 33 community governments;
- Development of a "Public Service Capacity" initiative for community governments; and
- Development of the "Healthy Choices Framework."

MACA now needs to gauge the environment and context that it operates within, take stock of where it is at, and reflect on lessons learned. The Department intends to move forward proactively building on its successes in collaboration with its partners. This approach will allow MACA to support community governments in achieving their vision, goals and objectives, and to provide opportunities and support for youth to embrace healthy living as a stepping stone into a successful adult life.

"A Clear Path Forward" is intended to demonstrate a sequence of actions that will guide MACA's activities over the next five years in a cohesive and transparent manner. The Strategic Plan will be complemented and supported through the development of annual business plans providing details on targets and achievements and note important milestones.

For a copy of "A Clear Path Forward", visit www.maca.gov.nt.ca.

Public Service Capacity Initiative

The Public Service Capacity for Local Governments Initiative is a collaborative effort between the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) and Human Resources, the NWT Association of Communities and the Local Government Administrators of the NWT. The initiative involves a series of programs and services that will help to address challenges concerning the recruitment and retention of key senior administrative staff at the local government level.

Advancing Local Government Administrator Program (ALGAP)

The Advancing Local Government Administrator Program (ALGAP) is the flagship program of the Public Service Capacity Initiative and was launched at the annual general meeting of the NWT Association of Communities in May 2010. Through ALGAP, community governments can apply for up to two years of funding to support either a trainee or mentor for their senior administrator position, depending on the current needs of the local government.

ALGAP has an annual budget of \$500,000 and provides assistance within the following three categories of support.

- **Investing Locally (Category One):** This category is for local governments who do not have a Local Government Administrator (LGA) on staff. A local trainee is identified to receive training and support from an experienced administrator. The administrator is hired to provide both support to the trainee and to carry out the operational responsibilities of the LGA. To support retention, the trainee is expected to fill the LGA role for a minimum of two years of service upon successfully completing the program.
- **Succession Planning (Category Two):** This category allows a local government whose LGA is within two years of retirement or departing for other reason to train a successor. The LGA acts as a mentor to a trainee while performing his/her LGA duties. To support retention, the trainee is expected, upon successful completion, to succeed the outgoing LGA for a minimum of two years.
- **Skill Builders (Category Three):** This category allows a community's LGA who is interested and in need of training and development opportunities to access funding to improve the professional skills the LGA position he/she already holds.

The council of a local government must support any application for ALGAP funding by motion. Other conditions for successful applications are: a contribution agreement must be signed, a candidate must be identified and an agreed upon, approved training plan must be in place.

Together with the pilot projects that were launched in 2009-2010, there are now eleven community governments participating in and benefiting from this program.

Other Programs

Other programs of the Public Service Capacity Initiative include the Good Governance Workshop Series offering training for elected leaders; human resources contracted services; national job postings; and a new website with complete program information at www.33strong.ca. Other components of the initiative are still under development; these include a mentorship program, community self-assessment tools, and a "pool of professionals" program.

For more information about the Public Service Capacity for Local Governments Initiative, visit www.33strong.ca.

Regional Youth Sport Events

MACA launched the new Regional Youth Sport Events (RYSE) Program in June 2010. The RYSE program is designed to:

- Assist sport and recreation organizations and school authorities to organize and host regional youth sport events;
- Improve access to sport events for youth in small, remote, primarily Aboriginal communities;
- Improve sport competition and development opportunities for all youth and to encourage more youth to become physically active; and
- Assist with the high cost of travel to sport competitions which are a barrier for sport organizations and school sport groups.

Sport and recreation organizations and school authorities interested in organizing and hosting regional youth sport events can apply for funding up to \$50,000.

The 2010-2011 intake for the RYSE Program was very successful with 24 applicants receiving funding. Successful applicants were selected in accordance with the program policy and guidelines, and represent all regions and a variety of seasonal sports.

For more information about the Regional Youth Sport Events Program, please visit www.maca.gov.nt.ca.

Active After School Funding – Healthy Choices Framework

MACA coordinates its physical activity initiatives through the Healthy Choices Framework which is part of a pan-Canadian effort to increase the physical activity of youth. The Framework identifies the following key areas as priorities for improving the health and well being of residents:

- Reducing high-risk sexual behaviours;
- Reducing tobacco harm and encouraging smoking cessation;
- Preventing addictions and injuries; and
- Promoting active living, healthy eating and mental health.

The Healthy Choices Framework is a joint initiative involving the departments of Health and Social Services, MACA, Education Culture and Employment, Justice, and Transportation.

As part of the Healthy Choices Framework, MACA launched the Active After School Funding as a pilot in 2009-2010 which involved 18 projects in all regions of the Northwest Territories. The funding is administered by the NWT Sports and Recreation Council (SRC) which helps to create physical activity opportunities for youth such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hip-hop, floor hockey, and badminton. In order to qualify for the funding, schools and community groups must demonstrate they are providing activities that appeal to inactive or underactive youth, and ensure that the youth are active for a minimum of 40 out of every 60 minutes.

MACA's regional offices are available to assist organizations wishing to access funding. Recipients of the 2010-2011 funding will be announced in early November 2010. For more information, visit www.maca.gov.nt.ca.

Proud2bnwt.ca – GNWT Youth Website

The NWT's newest youth website "Proud2bnwt.ca" was introduced by the Government of the Northwest Territories in January 2010. Intended for youth aged 15 to 30 the website is a one-stop shop for all youth-related programs and services offered by the territorial government.

Poud2bnwt.ca provides information on a variety of programs and services such as arts and culture, awards and bursaries, careers and employment, health and wellness, sports and recreation. The site offers an extensive number of links to organizations and agencies outside the GNWT. A "newsletters" section provides an opportunity for posting and linking to other youth related sites and cyber publications. For more information, visit www.proud2bnwt.ca.

Updates to Existing Programs, Services and Initiatives

Public Safety Division

Implementation of MACA's new Public Safety Division is complete. The new division has consolidated departmental public safety and regulatory programming into one stand-alone division, to improve service delivery to the public, community governments and other stakeholders, and streamline operations.

Community Fire Departments Needs Assessment

MACA is increasing its efforts to assist communities to develop the capacity of their fire departments. The Office of the Fire Marshal will be assisting community governments with conducting a Fire Department Needs Analysis; this analysis will assist the community government to develop a long-term plan for the development and sustainment of their fire departments.

The Office of the Fire Marshal, through its Regional Assistant Fire Marshals, in coordination with the School of Community Government will be providing expanded training opportunities to community fire fighters across the Northwest Territories.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management training will be offered to community governments in the coming year. A three day introduction package is being developed, which will focus on community government needs and will be delivered in communities. Potential topics include an overview of emergency management concepts, familiarization with the Incident Command System, the Northwest Territories Emergency Management System, tabletop emergency response exercises, and emergency incident response planning processes that will include a review of the community response plan.

The Public Safety Division has partnered with the Department of Transportation's Airports Division to expand required regulatory airport response exercises into a comprehensive community government emergency response activity. These exercises will take place in five to seven communities each year. The Public Safety Division will work with community governments by reviewing their community response plans, identifying training objectives and designing training opportunities to help prepare for the exercise in advance.

MACA is taking full advantage of the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP). JEPP is a federal cost sharing program providing up to 50 percent funding for projects directly related to increasing emergency response capability. Eight projects in the Northwest Territories received approval in 2010-2011 with federal funding contribution of over \$200,000.

Building Canada Plan (BCP)

In February 2008, the Government of the Northwest Territories and Canada signed a Framework Agreement for the Building Canada Plan. This Framework Agreement outlined a commitment of \$185.5 million over a seven year period for infrastructure funding to the Northwest Territories. Of this amount, \$45.5 million was committed to municipal community public infrastructure.

MACA worked with the NWT Association of Communities to identify a formula which allocated funding to each community government. Each community then identified a project (or projects) that met the criteria (including eligible project category, eligible construction timeframe, and where the community provided at least 25 percent of the project cost from non-federal funding sources).

Projects completed to date under the Building Canada Plan include:

- Sachs Harbour Community Complex
- Colville Lake Community Office
- Fort Good Hope Community Complex
- Norman Wells Seawall
- Tulita Pool
- Dettah Community Complex
- Yellowknife Fieldhouse
- Fort Smith Paving Project

The GNWT is required to complete all financial reporting to Canada by 2017.

Gas Tax Agreement

The Canada-Northwest Territories Gas Tax Agreement signed in November 2005, provided \$37.5 million over the five fiscal year period of 2005-2006 to 2009-2010 to community governments in the Northwest Territories.

An Extension Agreement for the Gas Tax was signed in late March 2009, which will flow an additional \$60 million (\$15 million per year) for the period from 2010-2011 to 2013-2014. Canada has indicated that post 2014, they intend to make the Gas Tax program permanent but the details on how this will be achieved are not yet known.

As highlighted in the 2009 MACA Update, issues started to appear regarding the reporting requirements under the Gas Tax Agreement and compliance with these requirements by community governments.

As a result, a Control Management Framework was put in place to provide some security to Canada regarding the measures that the territorial government would put in place to protect the federal funds provided to the Northwest Territories. Mandatory use of the Capital Planning Tool, and quarterly (unaudited) reporting are two of the items that this Control Management Framework requires.

In the spring of 2010, MACA consulted with the NWT Association of Communities regarding the renewal of the Gas Tax Agreement. Two highlights of the consultation included maintaining the 1 percent of funding available for agreement administration, and updating the community popu-

lation figures to reflect 2009 population figures (the previous allocations were based on 2004 population numbers).

These two items resulted in some changes in funding allocations to community governments. Amending Agreements (updates to the first signed gas tax agreements) were circulated in September 2010 with the updated information and funding amounts.

With these updated agreements, funding will continue to flow to community governments in two instalments each fiscal year as long as community governments remain in compliance with their amended Agreement.

Under the Gas Tax Agreement, community governments are also required to be compliant with the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) with their financial reporting. MACA is working closely with community governments to ensure that their 2010 audited financial statements meet this requirement.

Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (ISF)

The Infrastructure Stimulus Fund is a short term funding opportunity made available by the Government of Canada, in order to assist in stimulating the economy.

The Government of the Northwest Territories and Canada signed the Infrastructure Stimulus Funding Agreement and three associated schedules in June and July of 2009. Of the total funding available to the Government of the Northwest Territories, \$2.7 million is allocated to community government projects.

Ten community government projects have been approved in the Northwest Territories by Canada for funding. These projects are cost-shared on a 50/50 basis, with a maximum of 50 percent available from the Infrastructure Stimulus Funding and the remaining 50 percent coming from the community government.

In 2010, the Aklavik Local Roads Upgrade project, the Inuvik Paving Program, and the Norman Wells Utilidor project were completed.

All remaining projects must be completed by March 2011. Community governments are required to report quarterly on these projects and submit claims to be reimbursed for the federal portion of the funds.

Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (MRIF)

The MRIF Agreement provided the Government of the Northwest Territories with total funding of \$19.2 million, starting in 2005-2006. Eligible categories in the Northwest Territories were water, wastewater and solid waste projects. The Agreement stipulated that 55 percent of the funding was for projects in non-tax-based communities and 45 percent for tax-based communities.

Canada funded up to 33 percent of projects in tax-based communities, and funded up to 50 percent of the cost of projects in non-tax-based communities. As per the terms of the Agreement, this program ends March 31, 2011.

Over the term of the agreement, six projects were approved in non-tax based communities, nine projects were approved in tax-based communities, and seventeen innovations projects were approved. Of particular note under this program was the first "Bundled Water Treatment Plant"

project which saw five communities (Aklavik, Behchoko, Deline, Tuktoyaktuk and Ulukhaktok) receive new water treatment facilities which meet the Canadian Guidelines for Drinking Water.

Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP) Implementation

In 2009-2010, all 33 community governments completed the development of their ICSPs by the March 31, 2010 deadline specified in the Canada-Northwest Territories Gas Tax Agreement. MACA is now shifting focus and resources to support community governments in the implementation of their ICSPs.

MACA is working in partnership with the NWT Association of Communities and Arctic Energy Alliance to develop a work plan to guide this work. The work plan includes individual community government workshops, a territorial conference, the development of tools that assist community governments with their strategic planning and tracking efforts and communication resources. MACA is also sharing best practices and supporting community governments with self assessments, staff human resource assessments, and council training. With the assistance of the Arctic Energy Alliance, approved community energy plans are also being supported.

Volunteer Support Initiative

MACA continues to develop the Volunteer Support Initiative (VSI) and related programs to better promote and support the volunteer sector in the Northwest Territories.

The Department has retained a contractor to consult with volunteers and volunteer serving organizations on the development of the updated VSI. The consultation process and development of a new VSI is expected to be completed by late fall of 2010.

In September 2010, MACA updated the Volunteer Organization Development Contribution Policy. The amendments to the Policy have increased the budget for the Policy from \$20,000 to \$50,000, has clarified which organizations are eligible for funding, confirms what activities and expenses are eligible for reimbursement, and clarifies that individuals sponsored by eligible organizations are also eligible for funding.

Policy and Legislation

Community Planning and Development Act

In 2005, MACA began a review of the Planning Act in order to address a number of issues with the Act, including the prescriptive nature of the legislation and the need for its provisions to be brought more in line with the planning legislation of other jurisdictions.

Currently, MACA is working with the Department of Justice to develop a bill for introduction in the winter of 2011 with the intent to replace the existing legislation in the life of the 16th Legislative Assembly. In the meantime, the draft legislation is being reviewed by a Peer Review Committee that will provide advice to MACA on the contents of the proposed bill.

Local Authorities Election Act

Based on feedback received to the Discussion Paper released in 2008, MACA is continuing its work with the Department of Justice to amend the Local Authorities Elections Act and is aiming to introduce a bill during the spring 2011 session.

The proposed amendments include:

- Reducing election periods to ensure less disruption to the public and local authorities;
- Encouraging voter participation by increasing the availability of voting opportunities and providing alternate voting methods;
- Providing increased authority to the Chief Municipal Electoral Officer to initiate the election process if required, supervise Returning Officers, investigate election offences and/or bring a petition for a new election before the Supreme Court; and
- Recommending alternate provisions to break ties.

Cost of Credit Disclosure Act

Changing patterns of credit use among Canadians have prompted the need to modernize laws governing credit. To this end, MACA is working with the Department of Justice to develop new legislation to modernize and harmonize credit disclosure laws for consumers in the Northwest Territories. These provisions will also assist in the regulation of pay day lending companies which have recently appeared in larger communities. It is anticipated that the bill will be introduced in the 2011 winter session.

Dog Act

In 2009, MACA issued a discussion paper on how to improve the Dog Act. MACA is currently working with the Department of Justice to develop a bill for introduction in the fall of 2010. The amendments will include new protection for dogs, standards for treatment and increased penalties.

The Government of the Northwest Territories will use lessons learned from the amended Dog Act to determine if broader animal welfare legislation is needed.

Municipal Statutes Amendment Act

Over the course of the past several years, municipal governments (their officials and staff) have raised some issues regarding the interpretation of parts of the municipal statutes. The vast majority of these issues may be classified more in the nature of irritants than significant problems.

It is anticipated that a bill will be introduced in the fall of 2010 to make several minor amendments to the Cities, Towns and Villages Act, the Charter Communities Act, and the Hamlets Act. These amendments include remedies for issues that have been identified since the “new” municipal statutes were passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2003 and came into force in 2004.

Settlements Act

In 2004, the new municipal statutes came into force. Those statutes provide a wide range of models of municipal governance - charter communities, hamlets, and cities, towns and villages.

There were three settlements when the new municipal statutes came into force - Enterprise, Fort Resolution, and Colville Lake. Since that time, Enterprise and Fort Resolution have become hamlets, and Colville Lake has become a First Nation Designated Authority. With these changes, there are now no settlements in the Northwest Territories and MACA is working with the Department of Justice to revoke the Settlements Act.

It is anticipated that the bill to revoke the Settlements Act may be introduced in the fall 2010 Legislative Assembly session.

Operations and Maintenance Funding Policy

The O&M Funding Policy provides block funding for general program and service delivery including, but not limited to, the provision of administration staff and support, the operations and maintenance costs for community government buildings, and program support in areas such as recreation, works, governance, etc.

The existing O&M funding formula was first implemented in 2001 and, since that time, there have been significant changes that contribute to the need for a review of the Policy:

- Increases in operating costs related to cost of living (i.e. utilities, salaries, etc). Due to the fact that MACA's forced growth cycle is based on historical increases, financial pressures related to utility costs are addressed one to two years behind the period when the costs increase.
- With the implementation of new responsibilities related to capital, community governments are finding that they have additional financial pressures in the area of operations and maintenance.

In addition, both community governments and MACA recognize that since the implementation of the New Deal in 2007-2008, it is difficult to determine an appropriate way to assess the impact of additional operations and maintenance requirements related to new infrastructure. This includes not only the traditional O&M costs but also such items as insurance costs for new assets.

MACA is currently conducting a review of the Operations and Maintenance Funding program as part of an overall review of the New Deal. The Department is planning to have the outcome of this review done by the end of the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

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