
STATEMENT

STATEMENT FROM INUVIALUIT REGIONAL CORPORATION (IRC) IN RESPONSE TO CANADA'S MAJOR PROJECTS OFFICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Inuvik, June 24 2026 - Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) welcomes the Government of Canada's announcement initiating the process to list the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (MVHP) and the Grays Bay Road and Port Project (GBRP) under the Building Canada Act. We recognize the significance of these projects for the North and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, including their potential to connect communities, enhance Arctic security, and unlock economic and export opportunities. Inuvialuit communities remain among the least connected in the world, and improved transportation links will help connect us with other Indigenous groups across the territory, open new opportunities for Inuvialuit contractors and contribute to reducing the high cost of living in our region.

IRC acknowledges the federal commitment to meaningful consultation with Indigenous rights holders. The success of these projects depends on partnerships that respect the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (IFA) and complete treaty-based impact assessment and regulatory processes. Although both projects are outside the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR), potential impacts to Inuvialuit rights and interests must be fully considered, including MVHP effects near the ISR border, socioeconomic impacts to Inuvialuit communities, GBRP shipping through the Northwest Passage and transiting near two Arctic marine protected areas, construction staging through Tuktoyaktuk and potential transboundary impacts to caribou.

At the same time, IRC underscores the importance of long-term planning for operations and maintenance of critical infrastructure. We want to ensure that the Government of the Northwest Territories and Canada have fully considered sustainable, long-term funding for road maintenance. Recent closures of the Inuvik–Tuktoyaktuk Highway due to insufficient maintenance funding have had serious impacts on communities, including disruptions to medical travel, delivery of medicines, food supply and essential resupply. Developing additional highways without secured, long-term funding risks stretching already limited resources much thinner and degrading the level of service that northern communities rely on.

We look forward to engaging in the upcoming consultations and working collaboratively with Canada, territorial governments and other Indigenous partners. IRC is committed to ensuring that these projects align with the principles of the IFA, advance reconciliation, and improve quality of life for Inuvialuit and all Northerners. As these projects advance, IRC reminds Canada of the IFA-based objective of achieving full Inuvialuit participation in the northern Canadian economy. We expect that the streamlined regulatory pathways provided by the Building Canada Act will be implemented in a manner that upholds our rights and supports true partnership in developing the northern and national economy and society.

IRC will continue to advocate for transparent processes, environmental stewardship, and long-term prosperity for our region. We encourage all parties to prioritize Indigenous engagement and partnership at every stage of project development.

About Us

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation represents the collective interests of Inuvialuit, advancing their rights, culture, and long-term prosperity. Through strong partnerships and community-driven programs, the organization supports economic growth, cultural preservation and opportunities for current and future generations.