

# Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (EA1213-01)

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## ***Insights into the Tulít'a Community Consultation Session held by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board***



**October 23, 2024**

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Consulting  
Services**

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Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board

## Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the many people of Tulít'a who generously shared their time, energy, thoughts, and insights during the community sessions held on October 22, 2024. We appreciate your trust in our team to facilitate the session. Your contributions offer key understandings into the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project that should be considered. We appreciate the high school students who made a special effort to attend and to voice their ideas.

We welcome any comments you might have about the report and hope that we have interpreted your words respectfully and accurately. Please reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

DRAFT

## Acronyms

DAR	Developers Assessment Report
EA	Environmental assessment
GNWT	Government of Northwest Territories
MVH	Mackenzie Valley Highway
Review Board	Mackenzie Valley Review Board (short from Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board or MVEIRB)
TK	Traditional Knowledge

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## 1.0 Background

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is proposing to build the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project (the Project) to extend Highway #1 from Pehdzéh Kǰ (Wrigley) to Tulít'a (Tulita) and Tłegóhłı (Norman Wells) in the Northwest Territories (NWT). The Project would connect to other existing and planned roads to create an all-season highway connection between these communities to replace the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road in this area.

The Project is undergoing an environmental assessment (EA) by the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) which hosted community sessions in the Dehcho and Sahtú regions from October 16-23, 2024. Dehcho community sessions were to be held in Łíídlı Kúé (Fort Simpson) and in Pehdzéh Kǰ (Wrigley). However, the recent passing of an individual in the community meant the Łíídlı Kúé event had to be postponed. Sahtú community sessions were held in Tłegóhłı (Norman Wells), Tulít'a and Délıne (Deline).

Throughout the sessions, community members talked about what they saw to be the most important potential impacts of the Project. While the Review Board accepts both scientific and Indigenous knowledge sources on an equal footing, most of the discussions within the sessions were grounded in Indigenous knowledge.<sup>1</sup> For example, several participants forecasted and predicted what might happen by applying key understandings of Indigenous knowledge to future conditions (e.g. how climate change impacts might affect the Project) as well as recounting what their Elders had prophesized.

Elders, knowledge-holders, youth and other community members voiced their insights, observations, concerns, issues and recommendations related to the Project directly to members of the Review Board and the developer (i.e. GNWT). Moving forward, both the Review Board and developer should be better informed on the potential impacts of the Project and thereby equipped to make adaptations to and recommendations on the Project.

The format of an environmental assessment generally leans towards siloes whereby impacts are divided into components (e.g., cultural, economic, environmental, social).

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<sup>1</sup> While many northerners use the term “traditional knowledge”, the term “Indigenous knowledge” is used throughout this report as it is the term used in the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People](#).

In reality, and in keeping with an Indigenous knowledge ethic, these impacts are inextricably bound and cannot be neatly divided.

This report attempts to highlight areas of overlap within and between these components, while at the same time, such components are falsely divided to align with the current environmental assessment structure. Key interconnected themes and recommendations discussed during the Tulít'a session held in the community on October 23, 2024 are presented. Joanne Barnaby facilitated the session with support from Hannah Currie.

Participants are invited to correct any misinterpretations with the authors.

## 1.1 Format

The Review Board, GNWT (developer), federal and territorial government consultation representatives, and independent facilitators travelled to Délı̄në to hold the community consultation session face-to-face, with a virtual option available to members of the community, Review Board and governments who were unable to attend in-person. Posters, radio announcements, and social media posts encouraged attendance in advance of the session. Interpreters were provided. PIDO Productions Ltd. delivered audio-visual support. Notes were taken during the session and later compared with recordings to produce this report.

The day in Tulít'a was originally planned into two sessions, one for Elders and knowledge-holders in the morning, and a community roundtable in the afternoon. However, due to lack of attendance for the morning, it was decided that one combined session in the afternoon would lead to the best discussions.

Elders, youth, community members and local government representatives attended, allowing for diverse perspectives to be shared with the GNWT and the Review Board. The community of Tulít'a was well represented during this session with just over forty people attending, including a class of students.

The session opened with a prayer offered by Sarah Lennie, followed by a welcome by Chief Frank Andrew, and introductions from the Review Board. Chief Andrew recognized and thanked the youth for their attendance and emphasized the importance of everybody gathering to discuss the proposed Project.

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<sup>2</sup> These transcripts are available upon request and uploaded to the Review Board website: <https://reviewboard.ca/>



Review Board Chairperson JoAnne Deneron explained the purpose of the meeting and went over the agenda for the day. She also emphasized the importance of hearing from community members regarding the potential impacts of the proposed project.

The Review Board is committed to hearing what everyone has to say. We want to understand what you think about the potential impacts of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway project, and we need you to clearly share your views on those potential impacts. The Review Board also asks you to share opinions on how important these impacts are to you. This will provide an opportunity to adapt its proposed project and make commitments prior to the end of the environmental assessment. The Review Board will fully consider everything that's heard today. – JoAnne Deneron, Review Board Chairperson

The Review Board members and staff then introduced themselves. Clémentine Bouche, the Environmental Assessment Advisor for the Review Board, played a short video explaining the structure of Review Board and the work that they do before presenting on the EA process. She concluded by reading a list of questions that was prepared by the Review Board and facilitation team and distributed to the community in advance.

Hard copies of the list of questions were distributed and displayed on a projection screen. The group was asked to consider:

1. In what ways could the proposed project affect the environment (such as wildlife, water) and the people (such as traditional harvesting, community relationships, culture, economy)?
2. What are the most important issues you would focus on if you were on the Review Board? What do you think about the issues the developer identified?
3. What impacts do you currently experience each year when the winter road opens? Please tell us about issues that should be prioritized.
4. Can you tell us about areas of special concern along the proposed route?
5. Can you share your insights into further Traditional Knowledge (TK) or land use (other than through TK studies) that may need to be brought forward? What kinds of recommendations would you like to make to reduce impacts?
6. What are your solutions to any of the issues shared today or otherwise identified?

Next, Seth Bohnet of the GNWT and representing the developer, outlined the EA process, the Project itself, and the key environmental and social impacts the GNWT has outlined in

the Developers Assessment Report (DAR). He directed community members to provide copies of the non-technical summary of the DAR<sup>3</sup> and the GNWT website.<sup>4</sup>

Following these presentations, the session shifted into an informal open-ended and facilitated discussion guided by the agenda. The facilitator generally encouraged an emergent approach whereby session participants shaped interests of importance to discuss and explore. The questions were interwoven into this approach with the aim of probing deeper into surfacing issues and making sure that key discussion topics weren't missed.<sup>5</sup>

Tables were arranged in a U-shape with GNWT and the Review Board seated at either end. Community members were encouraged to sit at the main tables set up in the middle of the room while some chose to sit on chairs along the wall. A sign-in table was set-up in the foyer inside the entrance of the meeting room.

During the sessions, large sticky notes were used to document community contributions which were then placed on a wall and organized by emergent topics. These sticky notes provided a visual summary of issues, mitigation measures and recommendations. Placement of the notes on the walls enabled session participants to gather around the notes during the breaks to review and discuss them.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://reviewboard.ca/upload/project\\_document/MVH\\_DAR\\_Non%20Technical%20Summary\\_final.pdf](https://reviewboard.ca/upload/project_document/MVH_DAR_Non%20Technical%20Summary_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/en/MVH>

<sup>5</sup> For example, including such topics identified in the DAR and previous community sessions.

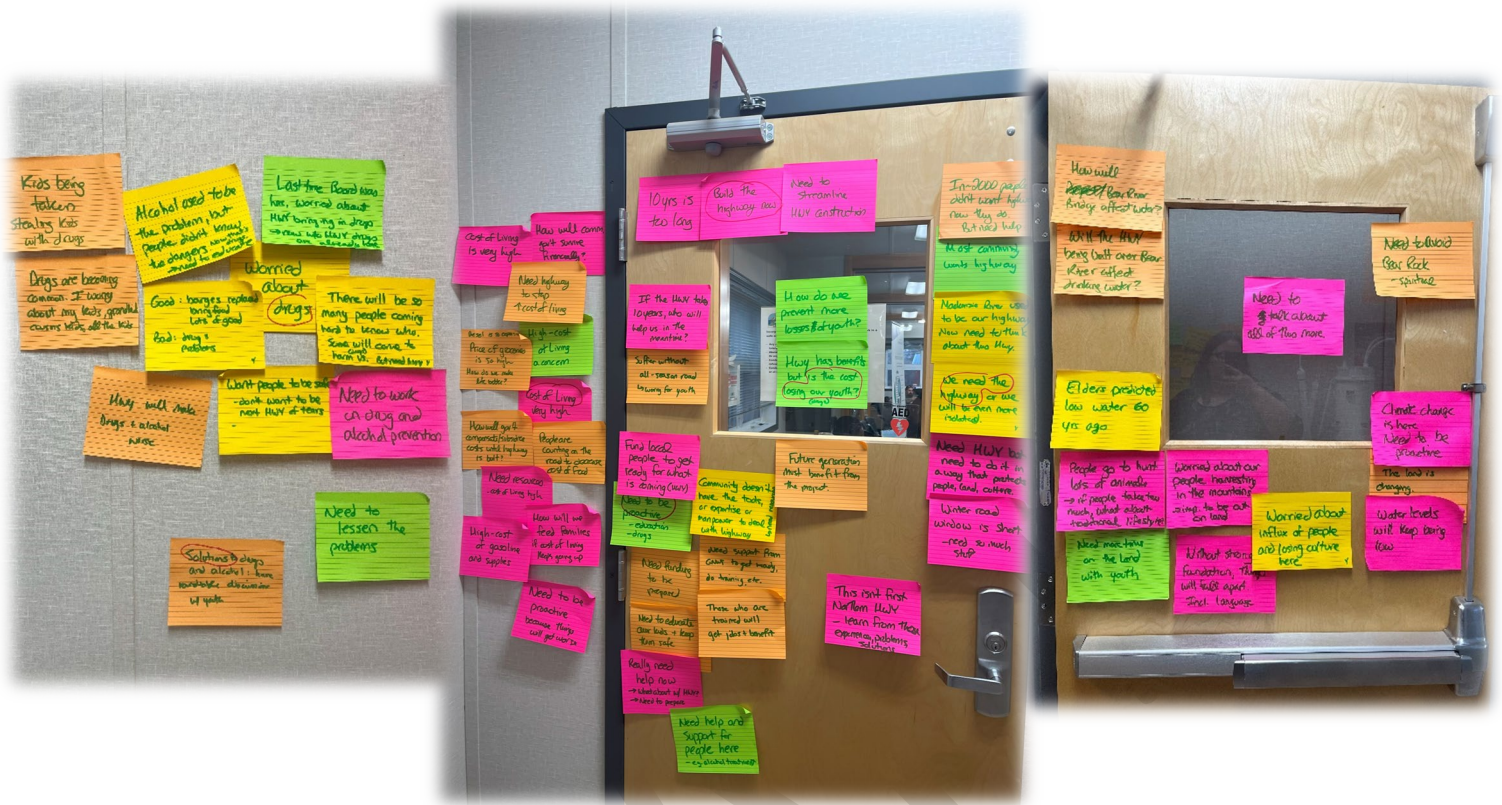


Figure 1: Facilitators used sticky notes to map issues, insights, concerns and recommendations about the Project.

## 1.2 Agenda

The following agenda was circulated before and during the community session (Figure 2).

### **Day 5 – Tulit’a**

**Tulit’a Cultural Centre**

**Wednesday, October 23, 2024**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>Session for Elders, Traditional Knowledge Holders, and Land Users</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening Prayer</li><li>• Opening comments by Review Board Chair Joanne Deneron</li><li>• Opening comments from Chief (or representative)</li><li>• Review Board presentation</li><li>• Developer presentation</li><li>• <b>Open Discussion</b></li><li>• Closing Prayer</li></ul>	10:00	This session is a focused opportunity for Elders, Traditional Knowledge Holders, and Land Users to share their expertise, insights, questions, comments, concerns, issues and advice with the Review Board. Youth are encouraged to participate. Joanne Barnaby and Natasha Thorpe will provide facilitation support.
<b>Elder’s Lunch</b>	12:00 pm	This lunch is a gathering for Elders who wish to share a meal and meet the facilitators in advance.
<b>Community Roundtable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Opening Prayer</li><li>• Opening comments by Review Board Chair Joanne Deneron</li><li>• Opening comments from Chief (or representative)</li><li>• Review Board presentation</li><li>• Developer presentation</li><li>• <b>Questions and comments from the public</b></li><li>• Closing Prayer</li></ul>	1:30 pm	This roundtable session is an open opportunity for any community member to share their expertise, insights, questions, comments, concerns, issues and advice with the Review Board. Youth are encouraged to participate.
<b>Community Feast</b>	5:00 pm	Everyone is invited to the feast.

Figure 2: Agenda

## 2.0 Community Perspectives and Observations

As Dene people, the Law was made for us by our grandparents, the Dene Laws. This Dene Law was here before the government was created. – David Etchinelle

Throughout the community session, participants centered their discussions around the wisdom of their Elders, traditional laws, and the impacts that the Project would bring to their community, especially their youth.

They shared the prophecies and stories of their Elders, and how the youth of today will be the ones to see these prophecies unfolding about environmental change, highway development, and other cumulative effects across their traditional territory. Participants stressed the importance of consulting with the youth given that they will be the ones living with both the positive and negative impacts of any development proposed today.

The Elders talked about how it's going to be today, and that's how it is. The water has really gone down and who knows what next year will be. I think about that and what the Elders would say, about 60 years ago the Elders said maybe we would be walking across the river in our rubber boots. I think we're just about there. That's our highway right now, the Mackenzie River. It brings everything into us. I think about that, and I think about what the Elders were saying. I'm getting a little older now, and I don't know if I will use the highway, that's why I want the young people to make the decision. I see the changes the Elders were talking about. ... Listening to the prophecies of our people, when these things come in, they will affect everybody. I think it's happening now, and a lot of people talk about that. – Chief Frank Andrew

## 2.1 The North has Changed

Chief Andrew explained how, in the year 2000, the Dene Nation met to discuss the Mackenzie Valley Highway project proposed at the time. The highway was not supported by the community of Tulít'a, and he abstained from making a motion of support. Today, he said, is a different story. The community has undergone many environmental, cultural, and social changes in the last two decades such that the community must look to an alternate and dependable way of receiving essential supplies and materials. Participants spoke about shortening winter road seasons due to increased temperatures and reduced snowfall. The changing environment has resulted in a shorter window for the winter road to be constructed and used.

Listening to the prophecies of our people, when these things come in, they will affect everybody. I think it's happening now, and a lot of people talk about that. So, I just wanted to share that with you guys. In the year 2000, Tulít'a didn't want a highway, and we didn't support it at that time at the Dene Nation meeting. Things are a little different now. – Chief Frank Andrew

Elders of the past have prophesized the loss of water in the Mackenzie River, and many people see these prophecies being fulfilled.

When I went to Ottawa, I mentioned climate change. It's real and it's happening, a lot of things are changing here. ... I just wanted to mention that climate change is here and it's real. ...The Elders have said this water will go down, and we will be able to walk across [the Mackenzie River] one of these days. – Mayor Douglas Yallee

Building on these sentiments, participants seemed resigned to the fact that there is a need for a highway now given the profound impacts from environmental change.

The highway, we need it. It does come with a lot of problems, but we really need it now. Climate change is not a joke anymore, stuff is changing every day that we have no control over. We're so isolated and the highway is really the only option that we have. – Hailey, Youth

Community members shared their experiences with the rising cost of living and ever-changing landscape. Unpredictable water levels leading to the inability to barge in goods and supplies, and a shortening winter road season have resulted in the community needing solutions to steep rises in their cost of living.

I agree we need to be proactive because things have changed so much in the last 10 years, and it's going to get worse. We need your help, we're in dire need. Just like Norman Wells, we are in dire need. Our energy cost is going up, our grocery prices are going up, we really need resources here too. - Helen Squirrel



Even though the road will bring a variety of benefits to the community, it will also bring an array of negative impacts particularly around the effects of drugs and alcohol. People emphasized the importance of delivering the Project in a way that minimizes negative impacts: the Project cannot move forward at all costs. On balance, participants shared their desire to come up with solutions to minimize and mitigate negative impacts and called upon the GNWT for support.

It's hard to say I really want this, but as the majority of our kids who are very knowledgeable have pointed out, climate change is coming. We need this. If you look around here, you can see it. We do need it, but we also have to come up with a way to protect our people, our land, and our culture.  
– Alana Benard

For all participants, it was clear that they were weighing their Elders' guidance and prophecies with Indigenous knowledge and the realities of potential negative impacts. Knowledge-holders demonstrated their ethic where everything is connected as they spoke to social issues, economic considerations, the land, youth as the future, and recommendations related to the Project. Lowering water levels have a direct impact on a dependable all season transport season which affects the cost of living which impacts social ills such as an increase in drugs and alcohol which threatens community wellbeing which harms youth. They expressed the need to consider everything together.

We need this. If you look around here, you can see it. We do need it, but we also have to come up with a way to protect our people, our land, and our culture. – Alana Benard

## 2.2 Key Issues

Issues shared during the community session are illustrated in a word cloud below (Figure 3). In addition to the overarching concern that the North has changed, several other interconnected issues emerged. To summarize, these included:

- Drugs and alcohol are already a major problem in Tulít'a, threatening the lives of youth and other community members today. People want support for the current crisis and protection from these getting any worse with the Project.
- Today, and especially if the Project moves forward, the community needs more support, resources, and funding from the territorial and the federal governments for education, cost of living subsidies, on the land programming, environmental monitoring, and drug and alcohol treatment.
- The Project will have life-changing impacts on the youth. This highway would be built for the youth and future generations. It is important to consider the youth in the decisions that are made surrounding the highway.
- Financial challenges because of an unreliable all season transportation network mean that families are struggling more than just economically.
- Waiting a decade for the Project to complete is too long for community members to weather a high cost of living. The GNWT should begin construction right away, explore concurrent building, and streamline the process so that the highway might be completed earlier than proposed.
- Emergency and support services are not sufficient today, let alone if the Project were to move forward.

Our elders fought this long to protect the water, wildlife, and land for us. Now it's for us to protect for our younger kids. – David Menacho

In addition to these issues, participants made connections that are grouped under the themes in the section below: people and community (social), benefits (economic), the Land (environment). Building on these themes, recommendations made by participants recommendations are presented. Together, these issues, insights, concerns and offerings should be considered as interconnected rather than in isolation or as “components.”





Figure 3: A word cloud developed from the morning and afternoon sessions in Tulít'a

## 2.3 People and Community (Social Impacts)

People talked about their concerns around what would happen to people in their community should the Project move forward. They shared the links between community (people, youth, children), wellbeing, jobs, training, education, traditional ways of living, being on the Land and more.

As illustrated in the word cloud, “community” lies at the centre of everything. From there, most of the discussions around community highlighted the connections between:

- drugs and alcohol;
- youth and children; and
- education and training.

### 2.3.1 Drugs and Alcohol

I'm not against the highway or anything about it, but I'm against the drugs that are coming in.  
– Jessie Campbell

At the time of the session, community members were grieving the recent and tragic passing of a youth because of the toxic drug crisis. The potential social issues surrounding the Project, such as an increased prevalence of drugs and alcohol, were at the forefront of everybody's mind. Drugs and alcohol are already causing tragedies within the community, especially with newer and more fatal drugs entering the North.

Drugs are getting more common, and I have great concern for that. My children will suffer, my nieces, my grandchildren, every child here in town is like my own and I love them from the bottom of my heart. I don't want anything to happen to them. I don't want to hear any bad news when I get up in the morning. – Charlotte Menacho

Whatever happens going forward, I want to know our people are safe. I want to know our kids are safe, and I want to make sure nothing happens to any of our community members. We are reeling from a loss right now; it has affected a lot of us and it's only going to get worse from here. – Alana

Community members know that a highway will bring more drugs and alcohol to the community. One participant stressed the importance of preventing further losses through education and proactive planning and prevention. This community member also shared that they had raised concerns about the highway bringing in drugs and alcohol a decade ago and asked what could be done to prevent it.

A few years ago in this arena, this Board came to talk about the impacts of the highway if it should come through. At that time, I said drugs are coming into Tulit'a and if the highway comes it will get worse. I asked, what are ways you can help us in our community? From then, I have never heard anything about it. We're still as isolated as we were when you came a few years ago, but the difference is that there is a lot of different drugs coming into our community. – Jessie Campbell

One youth expressed concern that there will be so much traffic coming in and out of the community, that it will be difficult to know who is there and for what reason. They fear that people will be coming into the community to distribute dangerous drugs, failing to care for the well-being of the users. Another youth seconded this thought, saying there will be an increase in drug dealers coming into the community.

The biggest thing is drugs and alcohol. People will have so much access to our town, and we will not know who is coming in and out. There are going to be people that will come here not for the beauty of our town, but because they just want to come here to harm our people with drugs. – Hailey, Youth

With the highway I think there would be a lot of benefits, but also lot of cons. Benefits like since the water is low, we don't have the barge coming and it's hard to get food for the Northern Store. But there's also drugs and alcohol that will come into town, and drug dealers. I think the highway would be a good idea but there would be a lot of problems that come with it. – Kaleb Clement

### *Drugs, Alcohol and Culture*

**Elder David** Menacho highlighted the relationship between drug and alcohol use and culture. When people are in active addiction, it may be difficult for them to maintain their traditional Dene way of life. With vulnerability, Chief Frank Andrew and Elder David Etchinelle both spoke about their own experiences with alcohol, sharing some of the negative impacts it brought to their lives.

Community members, Elders, and youth spoke to how drugs and alcohol take people away from their culture and traditions.

Because of alcohol, we have lost a lot of people, and we lost our traditional way of life.  
– **Elder David** Etchinelle

I'm kind of afraid. I have no idea what's going to go down the road with it, and it makes me afraid for my people because of the drugs. I feel like if the highway happens, it will be a bunch of people coming into the community and I just feel like they would take over our community. They would take our culture away, our land, take over everything, and I don't want that piece to leave. – Destiny Ayah, Youth

### *Drug and Alcohol Programs*

The youth today face major challenges, and increased awareness surrounding the dangers of drugs and alcohol is required. Participants highlighted the need for additional supports such as counselling and treatment available in the community, targeted education surrounding the dangers of drugs and alcohol, as well as drug and alcohol addiction prevention programs. Tulít'a wants support to deliver these programs to community members well in advance of the Project.

There is a need for strong drug and alcohol addiction prevention strategies to be implemented, as well as increased support for addiction recovery. Still in shock from the recent drug-related death, Tulít'a community members expressed a great deal of concern surrounding the potential increase in drugs and alcohol that may come with the development of the Project.

I think about my children and my grandchildren. Recently, drugs are getting more common, and I have great concern for that. My children will suffer, my nieces, my grandchildren, every child here in town is like my own and I love them from the bottom of my heart. I don't want anything to happen to them. I don't want to hear any bad news when I get up in the morning. We know there has been a lot of incidents, now we're talking about the highway. What's going to happen? What will it look like in the future? Families are worried. We need an education program for our children.

– Elder Charlotte Menacho

It was clear that the drug and alcohol crisis is not only causing grief and trauma owing to fatalities, but also real and tangible physical and emotional stress due to an every-present and underlying worry. The impacts should be considered together.

I know the highway is very important to the Sahtu. I've been hearing about the high cost of living, I've been hearing about the positive impacts, everyone is pushing. But is that at the cost of losing more of our youth? ... We must save our youth and people who are using. Maybe we can't stop it from coming in, but there has to be some way we can protect our youth from it. – Jessie Campbell

### **2.3.2 Youth and Children**

I was sitting at my home listening to the radio, and they told me there was a meeting about the highway. I didn't really want to [come today] but then I was thinking, I have a lot of grandchildren, I have a lot of kids, and there is a lot of young people in this community. Maybe I will listen for them, for the sake of the young people. ... I'm not a meeting goer. – Charlotte Menacho

In addition to the dominant concern around the effects of drugs and alcohol on youth, one of the major points of discussion was protecting and educating youth.

The Mackenzie Valley Highway is a development that will have a life-changing impacts on the youth and future generations. Chief Frank Andrew and Elders Judith and David noted

that the highway is going to be built for the youth, given that many of the people present at the community session may not be around to see the Project completed. Youth must be considered in the decisions that are made surrounding the highway and other major developments.

I'm getting a little older now, and I don't know if I will use the highway, that's why I want the young people to make the decision. I see the changes the Elders were talking about. – Chief Frank Andrew

An Elder shared that they rarely see youth on the Land. It is important that youth be involved in land-based activities and acquire on the land training. The Elder suggested that a cabin should be constructed for the youth to use and that more resources be allocated towards getting the youth out. Time on the Land is an important component of well-being, resilience, culture and knowledge-sharing.

Especially our children, we don't see any young people on the land. They will take over eventually and we need to teach them and train them. We need your help, as a board and the territorial government. - Elder David Etchinelle

Participants agreed that educating and supporting youth is a top priority and that more funding be directed towards educating youth both inside and outside of a classroom. Further, youth must be educated on the other potential social, cultural, environmental, and economic impacts of the Project.

### 2.3.3 Education and Training

Everyone needs to be educated more to be ready for this highway. ...One of our Elders here brought it up in the last highway meeting, saying that we need help getting field workers, doing surveys on the land and the bridges. – Helen Squirrel

In addition to on the land programs, community members expressed their interest in receiving job-related training before the start of construction and requested financial assistance to do so. One community member shared that only the people with training will be making money long-term from the operation and maintenance of the highway, therefore it is important to train as many people as possible to ensure employment opportunities for the residents of Tulít'a today and into the future.

### 2.3.4 Wellness, Health and Safety

People spoke to the importance of having better health and safety infrastructure and resources prior to the Project. An Elder from the community shared that the community has a dire need for more nurses, wellness workers and mental health professionals as it stands. An influx of travelers and the social impacts that may result from the highway will only intensify this need.

...we really need resources here too. I have been asking about getting a mental health worker, a social worker, and to this day, nothing. I don't know what Sahtu health board is doing, but we need them back here, we need that support. We do have our health center and nurses, but there's a shortage of nurses. We need to invest in our young people to get into health fields. – Helen Squirrel

The Tulít'a Fire Department is not ready nor equipped to deal with the potential safety impacts of the Mackenzie Valley Highway. A former Fire Chief expressed the need for additional manpower, tools, training, and resources to prepare for the highway. With the Mackenzie Valley Highway, there may be drinking and driving related accidents and the emergency services available in Tulít'a will not be sufficient to extract any injured individuals. People are concerned that the highway may lead to more drug-related fatalities, especially given the current crisis.

Knowing the highway is coming, we don't have the resources, we don't have the manpower, we definitely don't have the tools to take care of what will come when that highway comes through. We're not ready for extractions on the highway constantly because people might be drinking and driving. We're not ready for the influx of people coming in from wherever they're coming in from. We can't keep count where they are coming and going, and we can't keep count of what they have or what they're bringing it – Alana Benard, Tulít'a Fire Department Volunteer

With the isolated nature of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway, there was concern surrounding the potential increase in Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls from the area once the highway is operational. Alana Benard shared their fear that this highway may become the next Highway of Tears.

If things aren't handled properly on your end or ours, we could become the next Highway of Tears. This is a scary thought for our people, our women, our children, our men. Whatever happens going forward, I want to know our people are safe. I want to know our kids are safe, and I want to make sure nothing happens to any of our community members. – Alana Benard

In addition to this, multiple community members shared their concern for children being taken from the community. Elder Charlotte Menacho recounted memories of children being taken in the past and how this was a very dark time for the community. David Menacho said he remembers hearing about Indigenous children being stolen and sold, and he stressed the importance of protecting the children.

David expressed the need to receive funding and resources to best prepare and educate the youth on the potential dangers of the highway.



## Summary

- Elders may not be around when the Project is completed such that youth need to be contribute their perspectives during meetings. The Project will bring life-changing impacts to youth.
- There is already a drug and alcohol crisis in Tulit'a and across the North. The Project would mean more dealers bringing drugs and alcohol coming to the community. More support for programs targeted at youth and other users must be in place today, let alone if the Project moves forward.
- There needs to be more support for drug and alcohol education and proactive planning and prevention programs in place.
- Targeted funding for on the Land education and opportunities for the youth is important for helping them to remain culturally strong.
- Youth expressed their fear of losing their culture, the possible influx of drugs into the community, and the landscape level environmental changes they have seen in recent years because of a warming climate.



Figure 4: Tulita community session

## 2.4 Benefits (Economic)

Acceptance of the Project because of the higher cost of living resulting from environmental change seemed to be at the core of most discussions. People talked extensively about needing “help” from the government, as illustrated in Figure 3. The Project is expected to positively impact the cost of living for Tulít’a.

If you promise us all the prices will go down when the highway is built, that’s what people believe right now. I hope that will happen. – Chief Frank Andrew

As a result of low water levels on the Mackenzie River and a shortened winter road season, most of the fuel, goods, and building materials have had to be flown in by plane to the community nowadays. It hasn’t been possible to barge in supplies for the past two years, and this has caused a steep increase in the cost of living for the residents in Tulít’a. The current cost of living is not sustainable, and an immediate solution is required: people want help.

I am worried about how we’re going to feed our families. The prices are outrageous, and it has to stop. We don’t know how long the government is going to keep paying for everything to be flown in, especially all the materials for the new health centre.– Helen Squirrel

Further, participants voiced that increased subsidies and financial support to help regulate the cost of living until the Project is operational are needed. Judith Wright Bird shared that although the Northern Store has a subsidy program, it’s not enough to make any real impact. She went on to explain how people that are unable to harvest wildlife or have a garden are even further financially strained. Judith also expressed that although there are resources provided for spring and fall hunting, when they are gone, people go back to having nothing. People urged the GNWT to create additional subsidies and supports to help manage the rising cost of living.

We’re talking about low water and how expensive it’s going to get. Is the government going to help compensate with food subsidies or shipping in lumber? Will the government look into that until the highway is built? You don’t know, it might take 20 years [to build the Project]. Everything will be so expensive we won’t be able to afford anything. When I was 10 years old my grandma told me you won’t be able to buy a pair of socks because it will be too expensive. If you think about it now, that’s today, this is coming. ... Is the government thinking about how they will help the community?  
– Elder Stella Bayha

Elders discussed the predictions their own Elders shared in decades past. Elders in the past prophesized the increased cost of living that the community is experiencing today and some Tulít’a community members spoke to the situation today as these prophecies are coming to fruition.



## Summary

- The Project is expected to bring positive economic impacts in several ways, especially lowering the cost of living for community members.
- When community members have more financial resources, they can afford to go hunting, fishing, harvesting, and to build a garden.
- Community members are reaching out to GNWT for more help through additional support and subsidies given the existing cost of living. These may be required until the Project is complete.



Figure 5: Youth participating in the community session

## 2.5 The Land (Environment)

Although financial concerns related to environmental change were the main topic of discussion, participants also expressed their concerns around caring for spiritual places, water, wildlife, and everything that is “the Land.”

The currently proposed Mackenzie Valley Highway route passes very close by Bear Rock, an area of deep spiritual significance. There is a need to re-route the highway around Bear Rock to preserve its high cultural value and to maintain the spiritual integrity of the site.

If the highway is going to go through, will it follow the winter road? If it is, how will it affect Bear Rock? That’s our spiritual rock and it means a lot to us. – Jessie Campbell

The GNWT is aware of the significance of Bear Rock and is working towards respectful solutions:

Our goal is to try and follow the existing winter road alignment as much as we can in order to minimize new disturbance and environmental impacts. However, the final design isn’t done yet. We continue to engage and discuss areas where the winter road isn’t appropriate as an all-season road. Near Bear Rock is one area that we’ve heard we need to try and avoid more. – Seth Bohnet (GNWT)

Water is also an important concern that was shared several times throughout the session. The proposed route crosses the Great Bear River which the sole source of drinking water for Tulit’a. It is essential that the Great Bear River is protected from contamination, and any water crossing along the road does not impact water quality upstream of the water treatment plant.

While participants repeatedly spoke to the decrease in water levels on the Mackenzie River, they raised concerns about other environmental impacts including the effects of recent wildfires. Due to extensive wildland fires in the summer of 2023, a large portion of wildlife habitat has been burnt. One community member shared that the fires have taken away the food, the animals and even the cabins that stood upon the land. The landscape looks much different after the fires raged across the NWT.

The fire took the food of our animals away, you don’t see any trees. We lost all our cabins at the point due to fire too. Things have changed quite a bit. – Chief Frank Andrew

The cumulative effects of a warming climate, increased fire activity, and decreased water levels were noted as key concerns. Participants highlighted how everything is connected.

Ricky brought up a good point about the wildlife, we need to protect our animals up in the mountains. We also need to protect the water, our drinking water. If the highway opens, we will see tourists and hunters. We need funding in order to help our people and to educate them. Our elders fought this long to protect the water, wildlife, and land for us. – David Menacho

Participants expressed worry about outsiders harvesting wildlife along the highway and how this may have a strong negative impact on Tulit'a's traditional harvesting and hunting way of life. Harvesting is an important part of a traditional life, and it could be at risk if non-community members begin to harvest along the highway.

I'm worried about our people harvesting in the mountains. We still have a lot of harvesters. There's not as much trapping, but they still go on the land. It's so important to be on the land for our people. We worry about people coming up hunting. ...What might happen to our hunting way of life? I worry about everything that my people said, and I'm behind everything. I'm not against the highway, I just want to say this because we have to worry about it, and we will need help with it. – Ricky Andrew

In addition, an Elder shared that there will be the need to hire fieldworkers to survey the landscape and the infrastructure including the existing bridges along the winter road route that are proposed to be utilized in the all-season highway.

One of our Elders here brought it up in the last highway meeting, saying that we need help getting field workers, doing surveys on the land and the bridges. – Helen Squirrel

During discussions around the routing of the Project, it was clear that there is confusion around whether the Great Bear River Bridge Project is part of the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.

I don't think you're going to be using the Mackenzie River, so if you are still going to build the Bear River Bridge, where will it be built? – Jessie Campbell

Seth Bohnet, on behalf to the developer, clarified that the Great Bear River Bridge Project is separate from this environmental assessment and that alternatives like winter road access or ferries are being explored. Mark Cliffe-Phillips from the Review Board further explained that there was a preliminary screening and approvals process carried out in the mid-2000s for a previous proposal for the bridge. If there is a new proposal for the bridge, it would have to go through Part 5 of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*.

### Summary

- There is a need to re-route the proposed highway route around Bear Rock to preserve its high cultural value and to maintain the spiritual integrity of the site.
- Great Bear River must be protected from contamination. The Project cannot impact water quality, particularly upstream of the water treatment plant.

- The Project would make it easier for outsiders to harvest wildlife along the highway which would negatively impact Tulít'a's traditional harvesting and hunting way of life.
- The cumulative effects of a warming climate, increased fire activity, and decreased water levels were noted as key concerns.
- Help is needed to secure field workers to survey the land and bridges along the proposed route.
- There needs to be better communication with the community around how the Great Bear River Bridge Project relates to the Mackenzie Valley Highway Project.



*Figure 6: Elders speaking to the Review Board*



## 2.6 Overall Thoughts

We know a majority of the community members want the highway. – David Etchinelle

Most participants felt there was an urgent need to move forward with the Project, particularly given that environmental change is leading to an unreliable transportation network which ultimately means that the cost of living will continue to rise. While community members spoke to potential negative social and environmental impacts the highway may bring, participants in the session expressed support for the Project overall.

It's not helping when we hear that the road may take another 10 years. I know you're trying your best, but that's too long of a timeframe. I've heard that you could shorten the time frame by working on the three sections at the same time, I think this is something people could live with. Ten years for some of us, we might not be around. I would like you to take that away because it's been mentioned many times here today. – Judith Wright Bird

I thought maybe the highway would be built faster but now it seems like ten years? Here I thought maybe three years or something, but now you're saying 10 years or so. In the meantime, who's going to help us in the Sahtu? There's no barge, there's a high cost of living. Who will help us now until we get a highway? That's pretty harsh when we need the highway so badly now. Even though there's a lot of negatives, there's positives too. We have to adjust to those, and we know it's going to be hard. – Mary Jane Kunkel

Participants expressed their worries about how the Project would negatively affect the community, especially around how access to drugs and alcohol would be easier. There is already a drug and alcohol crisis in Tulit'a which affects every aspect of peoples' lives. Bound together with other social challenges, this crisis makes it difficult to be a "strong" community and to practice traditional ways of living today. As a starting point, the Project would need to help address this crisis.

## 3.0 Recommendations

Throughout the session, participants offered their recommendations to minimize potential impacts ranging from rerouting the road to supporting land-based activities to investing in training and education. Many recommendations put forth are rooted in an increased need for funding from territorial and federal governments so that community members can be better prepared to engage in the EA process. People expressed their desire to “be at the table” to plan for and contribute to the Project as active participants.

I want to ask a question to the territorial government. You said you went to Ottawa to meet with the federal government. Can you tell us what the discussion was? The community here isn't aware of what's been talked about or what might happen. Maybe you took notes, that's it. We haven't heard anything. I know GNWT is taking responsibility of building this highway, but it's up to the community to make that final decision. We need to get some kind of compensation, even financially, to assist us. We need to converse, communicate and meet with the youth. Tell us what kind of meeting you had in Ottawa when you went to visit them. – David Echinelle

I want to suggest that maybe you can help the organizations with funding. To get the local people ready for what's coming. We need something in place. Our Elders have said we have to make a path for the young people. – Mayor Douglas Yallee

Building on this broader need for increased funding, other specific recommendations provided by session participants are listed below. Key issues, recommendation and support for these recommendations are summarized in Appendix A.

1. Provide financial resources to community organizations so that people can:  
(1) carry out their own research on the Project, including engaging with the federal government, and (2) gather to prepare for, discuss and evaluate the Project.
2. Support young people to make decisions about the Project.
3. Develop and implement initiatives around building a strong community foundation and reclaiming language.
4. Understand ways to protect people, land, and culture according to community perspectives and ways of knowing.
5. Spend more time (i.e. two days) in the community to continue meaningful engagement.

6. Provide resources to develop a drug and alcohol action plan for Tulít'a that includes more educational resources and programming, roundtable discussions, and healing supports.
7. Host roundtables with youth around drugs and alcohol
8. Fund and build programs and facilities for youth to participate in land-based activities.
9. Provide compensation and assistance to the community to organize and train people.
10. Create jobs so that community members can choose to stay or come home to Tulít'a for work.
11. Invest in education and training for youth and other community members to enter health fields, especially in nursing.
12. Implement a plan to scale emergency services, tools and resources to what the Project would bring.
13. The territorial government needs to communicate and deliver a plan around how to provide resources to help the community with the rising cost of living.
14. Provide solutions to help the community with the high cost of living while people wait until the Project is completed.
15. Start the Project as early as possible and consider building the three sections at once.
16. Secure funding to protect animals in the mountains as well as water and drinking water, especially from tourists and hunters.
17. Conduct proactive research to learn from other communities and look at the problems and issues with other all-season roads. Apply these learnings to the Project.

## 4.0 Closing

The community session closed with a well-rounded summary provided by Judith. Joanne Barnaby encouraged the GNWT to work closely with the working group being developed by the community of Tulít'a to carry out engagement on the Project and move the Community Readiness Strategy forward. Chief Frank Andrew thanked people for attending the meeting and encouraged the GNWT to begin construction from Tulít'a to Wrigley right away. Chairperson JoAnne Deneron thanked community members for sharing their issues, concerns, insights, expertise and recommendations. She assured participants that their contributions were recorded and will be recognized.

On behalf of the Review Board, we thank the community for hosting us. We go home tomorrow, but this isn't the end of it. We will be back in the community and there will be more opportunities to voice your concerns. You can also connect online. We are grateful to hear from the Elders and grateful to hear from the youth. – JoAnne Deneron, Review Board Chairperson

Mark Cliffe-Phillips, Executive Director of the Review Board, provided an overview of next steps in the environmental assessment process, and Seth Bohnet re-iterated that this session was not the only opportunity the community has to voice their concerns.

Chief Frank Andrew offered the closing prayer.



*Figure 7: Review Board members listening to participant*



**Appendix A    List of Participants**

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## **Community Members and Participants**

- Richard Andrew
- Helen Andrew
- Chief Frank Andrew, Chief of Tulít'a Dene Band
- Destiny Ayah, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Stella Bayha, Tulít'a
- Samantha Boyd, Hamlet of Tulít'a
- Jessie Campbell
- Kaleb Clement, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Mary Ann Clement, Tulít'a
- Hailey Doctor, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- David Etchinelle, Tulít'a Dene Band
- Aaron Etchinelle
- Pierre Etchinelle
- Roy Horassi, Tulít'a
- Andy Horassi, Tulít'a
- Bernadette Horassi, Tulít'a
- JoeeHorassi
- Sally Ann Horassi, Tulít'a Dene Band
- Mary Jane Kunkel
- Sarah Lennie, Tulít'a
- Richard MacCauley, Tulít'a
- Casnis Matherson
- David Menacho, Tulít'a District Land Corporation
- Charlotte Menacho, Tulít'a
- Sarah Menacho, Tulít'a
- Stella Mendo, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Colby Modeste, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Brian Savoy, Chief Albert Wright School
- Leon Sewi, Tulít'a
- Helen Squirrel, Tulít'a
- Emerson Stewart, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Caroline Widow, Tulít'a

- Aiden Widow, Student at Chief Albert Wright School
- Jonathan Yakeleya
- Douglas Yallee, Mayor of Tulít'a

## **Review Board Members and Staff**

- Clémentine Bouche
- Mark Cliffe-Phillips
- JoAnne Deneron
- Jim Edmondson
- Alan Ehrlich
- Catherine Fairbairn
- Kate Hearn
- Chuck Hubert
- David Krutko
- Malorey Nirlungayuk
- Donna Schear
- Simon Toogood

## **Territorial Government**

- Sufiyan Bharucha, Government of Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure
- Seth Bohnet, Government of Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure
- Patricia Coyne, Government of Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure
- Alison Heselp, Government of Northwest Territories Department of the Environment and Climate Change
- Nancy Njere, Government of Northwest Territories Department of the Environment and Climate Change, Project Assessment Branch
- Anita Ogaa, Government of Northwest Territories Department of Infrastructure
- Melissa Pink, Government of Northwest Territories

- Zoe Zwaigenbaum, Government of Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services

**Federal Government**

- Bridget Campbell, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Clarisse Fiset, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Canada
- Chantal Grey, Northern Project Management Office
- Tatiana LeClerc, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Melissa Pinto, Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Jennifer Sabourin, Environment and Climate Change Canada

- Anna Cox, Parks Canada
- Jennifer Heneberry, DPRA Canada
- Annalee Kornelsen, Drawing Change
- Toby Kruger, Fort Norman Métis Council
- Todd McCauley, The Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated
- Caroline Mora
- Timm Rochon, DPRA Canada
- Anne-Marie Whittaker, EcoPlan
- Judith Wright- Bird, Fort Norman Métis Council

**Facilitators and Support**

- Joanne Barnaby, Joanne Barnaby Consulting
- Hannah Currie

**Interpreter**

- Michael Nayally

**Observers**

- Erica Bonhomme, K'alo Stantec

Note: This list is as it appeared on the sign-in sheet. In some cases, people did not list their affiliation

**Appendix B Tulít'a Community Session Issues,  
Recommendations and Support**

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## B.1 General

Issue	Recommendation	Support
<p>The community needs to carry out their own research, engage with the federal government, and gather to prepare for, discuss, consider and evaluate the Project.</p>	<p>Provide financial resources to community organizations so that people can: (1) carry out their own research on the Project, including engaging with the federal government, and (2) gather to prepare for, discuss and evaluate the Project.</p>	<p>Support community to carry out their own research on the Project, including engaging with the federal government. I know GNWT is taking responsibility of building this highway, but it's up to the community to make that final decision. We need to get some kind of compensation, even financially, to assist us. We need to converse, communicate and meet with the youth.– David Etchinelle</p> <p>I know you're here to take recommendations from the community members today. I want to suggest that maybe you can help the organizations with funding. To get the local people ready for what's coming. We need something in place. Our Elders have said we have to make a path for the young people. I advocate for the streamlining because most of us won't be around at that time, depends how fast it will go. – Mayor Douglas Yallee</p>
<p>Many people attending the community session will not be alive when the Project is complete. The Project will have life-changing impacts on the youth. This highway is going to be built for the youth and future generations. Youth should be considered in the decisions that are made surrounding the Project.</p>	<p>Support young people to make decisions about the Project.</p>	<p>I'm getting a little older now, and I don't know if I will use the highway, that's why I want the young people to make the decision. I see the changes the Elders were talking about.</p> <p>– Chief Frank Andrew</p>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
<p>Many people lost their language at residential school making it difficult to keep the Elders' stories alive as a strong community foundation. This loss is at the centre of a communication gap between languages, generations and cultures.</p>	<p>Develop and implement initiatives around building a strong community foundation and reclaiming language.</p>	<p>Once our few Elders are gone, we need to make sure that we keep their stories. Most of us lost our language through residential school, but we need to make sure it's there for our young people. One thing my late friend Rod H. told me was "you need to build a strong foundation for our people, Helen. If you don't build that strong foundation, things will fall apart." You need to do it for your family and the community.... I want you to really think about how you are going to help us, especially our youth because they are our future. We need to build that strong foundation for them. - Helen Squirrel</p> <p>So, it's hard for us to comprehend or understand, but when we sit like this, we understand a little. ... Communication is a problem, it's not right. Here, our community members need support, they need healing, they want to get sober, but it's hard. - David Etchinelle</p> <p>I agree with David, he talks about a lot of things that Elders have talked about, but there's a communication gap. We really need help so that we don't go through what we went through this weekend. The pain of losing a young person is bad, and I'm sure I'm not the only one that's affected in our community.- Jessie Campbell</p>
<p>There needs to be ways to protect people, land, and culture according to community perspectives and ways of knowing.</p>	<p>Understand ways to protect people, land, and culture according to community perspectives and ways of knowing.</p>	<p>We need this. If you look around here, you can see it. We do need it, but we also have to come up with a way to protect our people, our land, and our culture. – Alana</p>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
The GNWT and Review Board should spend more time in communities as part of engagement for the Project.	Spend more time (i.e. two days) in the community to continue meaningful engagement.	It would be nice if you guys could stay two days. There's so much to express. This short time, you come and go back out, we don't see you until next time. We need support where we can continue to meet. We can't just meet once with your group and then forget about it again; we need to continue to talk about this. – Helen Squirrel

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## B.2 People, Community, Benefits, and the Land

Issue	Recommendation	Support
There is a drug and alcohol crisis in the North already and the Project cannot contribute to making this any worse.	Provide resources to develop a drug and alcohol action plan for Tulít'a that includes more educational resources and programming, roundtable discussions, and healing supports.	<p>We need help developing an action plan for drugs and alcohol. – Judith Campbell</p> <p>Drugs are getting more common, and I have great concern for that. .... We need an education program for our children, they have to go to school. – Charlotte Menancho</p> <p>We need people that can come in and educate our young people. We need to know what kind of drugs are coming in to our community and what can happen. – Jessie Campbell</p> <p>Here, our community members need support, they need healing, they want to get sober, but it is hard.– David Etchinelle</p>
Youth need to receive more education around drugs and alcohol and provide their input into drug and alcohol programs.	Host roundtables with youth around drugs and alcohol.	<p>What we're talking about here, it's a good way to deal with it, round table discussions like this. Youth are here, and we know the young people have problems with drugs and alcohol around them. They have a hard time comprehending and making a living here. This is where we come in, we have to help them. ... David Etchinelle (Elder)</p>
There need to be supports to encourage youth to participate in land-based activities and on-the-land training.	Fund and build programs and facilities for youth to participate in land-based activities.	<p>I told [the MLA] we need to train the youth and take them on the land. I also requested to Norman Yakelya that they should build a cabin for youth to use on the land. Those materials all went to Norman Wells, and they might do something like that. – David Etchinelle (Elder)</p>



<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
Community members are interested in receiving job-related training before the start of construction and requested financial assistance to do so.	Provide compensation and assistance to the community to organize and train people.	We know the highway is going to happen, but before the construction starts, we need compensation and assistance from the GNWT to help us organize and train people. - David Etchinelle (Elder)
There are not enough jobs for community members to choose to stay or come home to Tulit'a for work.	Create jobs so that community members can choose to stay or come home to Tulit'a for work.	We have to also remember we have members living outside of Tulit'a. If they want to come home, we need to create jobs for them so they can come home and stay home. – Helen Squirrel
There are not enough support workers in Tulit'a today.	Invest in education and training for youth and other community members to enter health fields, especially in nursing.	I have been asking about getting a mental health worker, a social worker. To this day, nothing. I don't know what Sahtu Health Board is doing, but we need them back here, we need that support. We do have our health center and nurses, but there's a shortage of nurses. We need to invest in our young people to get into health fields. – Helen Squirrel

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
<p>The community does not have the emergency services, tools and resources today to handle what the Project would bring.</p>	<p>Implement a plan to scale emergency services, tools and resources to what the Project would bring.</p>	<p>Knowing the highway is coming, we don't have the resources, we don't have the manpower, we definitely don't have the tools to take care of what will come when that highway comes through. We're not ready for extractions on the highway constantly because people might be drinking and driving. We're not ready for the influx of people coming in from wherever they're coming in from. We can't keep count where they are coming and going, and we can't keep count of what they have or what they're bringing it. ...I want to go back to school to be a critical care paramedic. That would be very useful here especially if the highway does come in. It's a volunteer-based department and I see the shortfalls in the community and the leadership. I see what's coming and it leaves an anxious feeling and fear for my people. Again, I see what's happening in leadership and I see what's coming. Knowing that it's coming regardless of how anybody feels about it is the scary part. It would be nice to have some reassurance. – Alana</p>
<p>The cost of living is increasing and there is uncertainty around how long the territorial government will continue to fly-in goods.</p>	<p>The territorial government needs to communicate and deliver a plan around how to provide resources to help the community with the rising cost of living.</p>	<p>I agree we need to be proactive because things have changed so much in the last 10 years, and it's going to get worse. We need your help, we're in dire need. Just like Norman Wells, we are in dire need. Our energy cost is going up, our grocery prices are going up, we really need resources here too.- Helen Squirrel</p> <p>I'm worried about how we're going to feed our families. The prices are outrageous, and it has to stop. We don't know how long the government is going to keep paying for everything to be flown in, especially all the materials for the new health centre. We don't know if the government is in a deficit, who's covering for all that? I want you to really think about how you are going to help us, especially our youth because they are our future. – Helen Squirrel</p>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
<p>Waiting a decade for the Project to complete is too long for community members to weather the high cost of living.</p>	<p>Provide solutions to help the community with the high cost of living such while people wait until the Project is completed.</p>	<p>Is the government going to help compensate with food subsidies or shipping in lumber? Will the government look into that until the highway is built? You don't know, it might take 20 years [to build the Project]. Everything will be so expensive we won't be able to afford anything. When I was 10 years old my grandma told me you won't be able to buy a pair of socks because it will be too expensive. If you think about it now, that's today, this is coming. ... Is the government thinking about how they will help the community? - Stella Bayha</p> <p>Within those 10 years leading up to the highway, how can you help us? I'm asking you again, how can you help us? Our community is isolated and it's still coming in. How can you help us? - Jessie Campbell</p>
<p>The GNWT should begin construction right away, explore concurrent building and streamline the process so that the highway might be completed earlier than proposed. People are struggling without a dependable all season transportation network: financial challenges mean that people can't afford to provide for their family, heat their homes, go hunting, practice a traditional way of life, etc.</p>	<p>Start the Project as early as possible and consider building the three sections at once.</p>	<p>It's not helping when we hear that the road may take another 10 years. I know you're trying your best, but that's too long of a timeframe. I've heard that you could shorten the time frame by working on the three sections at the same time. I think this is something people could live with. Ten years for some of us, we might not be around. I would like you to take that away because it's been mentioned many times here today.- Judith Campbell</p> <p>Climate change is not a joke anymore, stuff is changing every day that we have no control over. We're so isolated and the highway is really the only option that we have.- Hailey (YOUTH)</p> <p>I don't want to wait ten years. I want that highway built now. - Helen Squirrel</p>

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Support</b>
Wildlife and water need to be protected, especially from tourists and hunters.	Secure funding to protect animals in the mountains as well as water and drinking water, especially from tourists and hunter.	I'm worried about our people harvesting in the mountains. We still have a lot of harvesters. There's not as much trapping, but they still go on the land. It's so important to be on the land for our people. We worry about people coming up hunting.– Ricky Andrew Ricky brought up a good point about the wildlife, we need to protect our animals up in the mountains. We also need to protect the water, our drinking water. If the highway opens, we will see tourists and hunters. We need funding in order to help our people and to educate them. – David Menacho
There are lessons to be learned from communities about problems and issues with other all-season roads.	Conduct proactive research to learn from other communities and look at the problems and issues with other all-season roads. Apply these learnings to the Project.	This won't be the first all-season roads that's built in the North. I think if we have good communication with some of the communities that have built all-season roads, we could see what types of issues and problems and things that have happened. We could start off by coming up with a plan for this area. We could learn a lot from them. ...At the end of the day, it's still an all-season road that impacts communities that haven't had them before. The more research we can do to see the problems, the issues, and how we can get ahead of it and be proactive. – Brian Savoy