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For Immediate Release

Budget focuses on governance, infrastructure and enhancing programs and services

The Nunatsiavut Government's 2020-21 balanced budget focuses on investments in governance, infrastructure and improving the lives of Labrador Inuit.

"When we started down the road of self-government, there was a vision of Labrador Inuit taking control of our own affairs, making decisions that are relevant and culturally-appropriate, and successfully affecting change on so many issues that are important to us," said Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology Minister Tony Andersen in delivering the budget during a session of the Nunatsiavut Assembly this week. "This plan will build on achievements, make significant investments in addressing priorities and ensure that we have all the resources available to be successful."

Of the \$144,700,000 million budgeted for the fiscal year, which begins April 1, a total of \$110,308,000 million will be received under the Fiscal Financing Agreement (FFA), which is nearing the final stages of negotiation between the Nunatsiavut Government and the governments of Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador. The FFA ensures funding is provided to the Nunatsiavut Government for the provision of programs and services to Inuit and other persons living in Inuit communities, at levels reasonably comparable to those generally prevailing in communities of similar size and circumstances in Labrador.

Other sources of revenue include projected personal income tax of \$5 million, and Goods and Services Tax (GST) of just over \$1.7 million – both of which are received through agreements with the Government of Canada. The budget includes investment income of \$4.8 million, as well as about \$300,000 from access fees collected from fishers utilizing Nunatsiavut Government fishing licences.

Nunatsiavut Civil Service

- Effective April 1, Nunatsiavut Government employees will receive a two per cent increase in salaries per year for the next three years.
- A position will be created within the Department of Language, Culture and Tourism to manage and market the Illusuak Cultural Centre in Nain and to assist in developing programs and exhibits for the facility. Additional positions will be created in the department to support efforts of the Torngat Mountains National Park Base Camp and Research Centre and the Hebron National Historic Site, as well as to support the expansion and delivery of language programs.
- Two new positions will be created within the Nunatsiavut Secretariat and the Department of Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology to maintain and strengthen relations with Inuit Community Governments, as well as the provincial and federal governments.
- The Nunatsiavut Government is setting up a centralized purchasing system for the entire government and an additional human resources generalist.

Investments in Infrastructure

- This year's budget will help address aging infrastructure in the Inuit community of Rigolet, as well as the storage needs for the Nunatsiavut Government in the Inuit Community of Hopedale.
- Necessary steps will be taken to begin to address limited capacity at Nunatsiavut Government offices, specifically in the Inuit communities of Makkovik, Postville and Nain, to ensure improved delivery of programs and services.
- With increasing infrastructure improvements, and plans to replace and/or new buildings, a Director of Public Property position will be created.

Focus on Priority Areas and Delivery of Programs and Services

- The Culture Division hosted a *language* summit during 2019-20, with many ideas and recommendations on how to revitalize and strengthen language in Nunatsiavut. The budget includes funds to address human resources and development and delivery of Inuktitut programs.
- In 2017, the Nunatsiavut Government received committed funding of \$7.5 million per year for *housing* initiatives for the next 10 years. The commitment, along with internally-restricted funds for housing, brings the budget allocation for 2020-21 to \$27 million. These funds will also help in establishing a Nunatsiavut Housing Commission and the development and implementation of housing programs and initiatives.
- Funding has been set aside to help address issues around *energy security*, as outlined in the Nunatsiavut Energy Plan.
- Funds have been approved to help address *food security* issues through enhanced programming and service delivery, and to leverage additional funds from other sources.
- The budget will allow for the enhancement of programs and services related to mental wellness and healing and suicide, diabetes and tuberculosis prevention (and elimination), to name a few other priority areas.

“This year’s financial plan is about growing our government so that we can continue to maintain, improve and enhance program and service delivery to our people and to our communities,” says Minister Andersen. “It is a fiscally-responsible budget, one that will allow us to build on the significant progress we have made as a government while focusing on priority areas that will position us well for the future.”

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