



## **Joint News Release – Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Government of the Northwest Territories Reach Deal on Runway and Civil Infrastructure Projects at Inuvik Airport**

**Yellowknife, Northwest Territories (September 29, 2022)** – The Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Gwich'in Tribal Council, the Government of Canada, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) have reached an agreement to advance the runway extension and civil infrastructure projects at the Inuvik Mike Zubko Airport.

The Runway Extension Project includes extending the runway by 3,000 feet to a total length of 9,000 feet, and modernizing the lighting, navigational and military aircraft landing system. This project will help Canada meet its obligations under the North American Aerospace Defense Command Treaty to support Northern air sovereignty operations. It will also modernize the airport's infrastructure, enhance safety, and provide important jobs and economic activity in the Beaufort Delta Region. The collaborative approach the partners have taken in reaching this agreement supports efforts this important northern project will continue to advance.

Civil infrastructure improvements will increase the resiliency of the airport to the effects of climate change and help protect the permafrost below the airport. The existing runway and taxiway embankments will be widened, and drainage improvements will help direct water away from vulnerable areas.

A \$41.2 million contract for drainage, earthworks and quarry material production was awarded in July 2022 to a joint venture, including both Indigenous governments – the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and Gwich'in Development Corporation – as well as two Inuvialuit-owned businesses in the Region – Northwind Industries and E. Gruben's Transport Ltd.

Work started in September 2022.

### **Quote(s)**

"Innovation and collaboration are critical to building resilient northern communities. The improvements to the existing runway and taxi way embankments will increase the reliability and efficiency of air transportation for approximately 7,000 people in the Beaufort Delta Region, including improving access to life-saving healthcare through medevac services. As construction begins on this project, our words turn to action and our work to reduce greenhouse emissions continues."

**-Michael McLeod**, *Member of Parliament for Northwest Territories, on behalf of the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities*

"The improvement projects at the Mike Zubko Airport are a priority of the 19th Legislative Assembly and the GNWT is committed to advancing this key infrastructure project. A longer runway will not only support Arctic sovereignty and modernize the airport's

infrastructure, it will create business opportunities in the Beaufort Delta Region. As a resident of this region, I'm looking forward to this collaboration with our partners to improve this significant piece of infrastructure."

**-Diane Archie, Minister of Infrastructure**

"Working with our partners to the North, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, the Inuvialuit Development Corporation and their businesses, we are constructing this essential Northern infrastructure in the Gwich'in Settlement Area. We could not be more excited at the prospect of putting our businesses and participants to the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA) to work in the coming years alongside all other residents of the Beaufort Delta region. The Governments of Canada and NWT are also supporting their joint commitments under the GCLCA through this contract. This would not have been possible without our modern-day land claim agreement and the spirit of collaboration between governments and Indigenous Nations working together for the benefit of the residents and businesses located in the Northwest Territories."

**-Ken Kyikavichik, Grand Chief, Gwich'in Tribal Council and Chair, Gwich'in Development Corporation**

"The GNWT has significant obligations to Inuvialuit under the Inuvialuit Final Agreement. This agreement demonstrates the GNWT's understanding of these obligations, and we expect the GNWT will continue to work towards the achievement of its Treaty obligations to Inuvialuit. We have the most talented Inuvialuit firms working alongside ourselves and our JV partners and we are very proud to showcase what our Region is capable of. As we continue to successfully deliver on major infrastructure projects in our region, IRC looks forward to continued work with our Federal and Territorial partners to ensure future work remains in our Region."

**-Duane Smith, Chair and CEO, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation**

"Modernizing northern infrastructure is critical in our efforts to bolster the defence and security of Canada's northern regions. To this end, this project not only provides economic benefits for the region, it also ensures we provide the essential infrastructure our Canadian Armed Forces personnel need to operate effectively. Our support for these runway upgrades is an investment in both our military capability and the Inuvik community."

**-Anita Anand, Minister of National Defence**

### **Quick facts**

- EGT Northwind Ltd. is a joint venture construction company consisting of E. Gruben's Transport Ltd. and Northwind Industries Ltd. – two privately owned Inuvialuit companies. EGT Northwind Ltd will act as the prime contractor for the project.
- The runway extension is funded by the Department of National Defence under the Capital Assistance Program. DND has committed to provide the GNWT with up to \$150 million over five years to complete the project.
- The Government of Canada is investing \$16.5 million in the civil infrastructure project through the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF) to widen the



existing runway and taxi embarkments, and the Government of the Northwest Territories is providing \$5.5 million.

**Related links**

- [Department of National Defence](#)
- [Infrastructure Canada](#)
- [Inuvialuit Regional Corporation](#)
- [Gwich'in Tribal Council](#)
- [GNWT Department of Infrastructure](#)

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