

Mr. Speaker, this budget was shaped by those conversations.

Today, I rise to present the Main Estimates for the Government of Nunavut for the 2026–2027 fiscal year.

This budget is about more than numbers on a page.

It is a statement about priorities.

It reflects where this government believes we must continue investing, where we must remain disciplined, and where Nunavummiut most need to see progress.

The proposed Main Estimates total approximately \$2.47 billion in operating expenditures, representing an increase of approximately 8 percent over the previous fiscal year.

These are significant investments.

But they are also necessary investments.

Because Nunavummiut expect government to respond honestly to the realities people are facing today.

Not with promises that sound good for a moment.

But with practical actions that improve daily life over time.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES TO MANAGE HIGHER COSTS

Mr. Speaker,

For many Nunavut families, affordability pressures are no longer occasional.

They are constant.

People feel it every time they buy groceries.

Every time they pay for fuel.

Every time they open a power bill.

Many households are working hard simply to keep up.

This government recognizes those pressures.

That is why this budget proposes to double the Nunavut Child Benefit, while also increasing it each year to help keep up with the rising cost of living.

The budget also proposes a \$4 million (or 2.9 times) increase in the Early Childhood Program Day Care contributions.

This is direct support aimed at helping lower-income families manage rising costs.

Because even modest assistance can make a real difference for families where every dollar matters.

This budget also provides a \$23.3 million increase to Family Services to strengthen youth supports, poverty reduction initiatives, foster family services, and suicide response staffing.

The proposed budget sets aside contingency funding to review and top up existing programs that are meeting real needs but facing demand beyond current budgets.

Because strong communities begin with strong families.

And the earlier people receive support, the better chance we have of preventing hardship from becoming crisis.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH CARE

Mr. Speaker,

Few issues are raised more often with Members of this House than health care.

Nunavummiut want better access to care.

They want stronger local services.

And they want greater confidence that support will be there when families need it most.

Too many Nunavut families know the stress of having to leave home for treatment.

The disruption.

The uncertainty.

The strain it places on parents, children, and Elders.

This budget responds directly to those realities.

The Department of Health's operating budget will rise to more than \$663 million, an increase of \$82.8 million, or 14.3 percent.

This includes additional staffing to respond to Nunavut's suicide crisis. This budget recognizes that the Suicide Crisis is about more than Health Care and requires a holistic approach. This budget proposes additional resources and supports in Health, Family Services, and Justice to support Nunavummiut through difficult times.

It also includes investments in physician services, long-term care contracted services, and operational funding to begin the phased opening of the new Aqquariaq treatment facility so Nunavummiut who need help can access it closer to home.

Mr. Speaker, behind these numbers are real Nunavut families and communities.

These investments affect whether Nunavummiut can access care more reliably and whether families feel better supported during difficult moments. To continue providing family support to individuals receiving care outside of the territory, we are increasing the budget to allow more visits from loved ones.

At the same time, we continue building the long-term infrastructure our territory needs.

Planning and development continues for the Nunavut Long Term Care Facility in Cambridge Bay.

Design work advances for the replacement health centre in Qikiqtarjuaq.

And investments continue in modern diagnostic equipment and health facility upgrades across Nunavut.

This is long-term work.

But it is necessary work.

Because Nunavummiut deserve a health system that becomes stronger, more stable, and more dependable over time.

BUILDING OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH

Mr. Speaker,

Every young person in Nunavut should be able to look ahead and see opportunity.

Opportunity to learn.

Opportunity to build a career.

Opportunity to contribute to their communities while remaining connected to home.

Education is how we help create those opportunities.

This budget increases the Department of Education's operating expenditures to nearly \$310 million. This includes an increase of over \$6 million for teachers to ensure our wages are competitive and we attract talented and passionate educators.

Construction is being completed on the new high school in Taloyoak.

Major work continues at Sakku School in Coral Harbour.

And design work advances for a new school in Arctic Bay.

This budget also provides an increase of \$14.5 million for the Nunavut Student Financial Assistance Program, to help more Nunavut students pursue post-secondary education and training.

We are also continuing investments in Nunavut Arctic College and workforce development initiatives.

Because Nunavut must continue building a future where more Nunavut jobs are filled by Nunavummiut.

That work begins with education.

HOUSING THAT PEOPLE CAN FEEL

Mr. Speaker,

Housing continues to affect nearly every part of life in Nunavut.

Health.

Education.

Mental wellness.

Family stability.

Economic opportunity.

We often discuss housing in terms of units and capital projects.

But to the family waiting for housing, it is much more personal than that.

It is about privacy.

It is about stability.

It is about finally having enough space for children to sleep, study, and grow.

When a Nunavut family receives the keys to a new unit, that moment carries real meaning.

It represents relief.

It represents dignity.

And it represents hope.

This budget increases the Nunavut Housing Corporation operating budget to approximately \$296 million, while providing \$87.2 million in housing capital investments this fiscal year.

Those investments support:

- new public housing construction,
- staff housing,
- affordable housing initiatives,
- homeownership programming,
- mould remediation,
- retrofits and modernization,
- and Local Housing Organization improvements.

Housing progress does not happen quickly.

But this government remains committed to continuing that work community by community across Nunavut.

BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Mr. Speaker,

Strong communities require strong infrastructure.

Reliable airports.

Safe water systems.

Secure fuel systems.

Effective waste facilities.

Modern communications infrastructure.

These investments may not always attract attention.

But communities depend on them every day.

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure's operating budget rises to more than \$281 million, an increase of 7.2 percent.

The capital plan advances major work including:

- the Rankin Inlet Air Terminal Building,
- runway resurfacing in Rankin Inlet,
- fuel tank farm work in Arviat,
- water and sewer main replacement projects,
- fibre connectivity improvements,
- airport upgrades,
- and municipal water, wastewater, and solid waste projects across Nunavut.

These projects strengthen communities today.

But they also strengthen Nunavut's future.

As national discussions continue around Arctic sovereignty and Arctic security, the Government is coordinating with the Department of National Defence and other Federal partners to continue ensuring its voice is heard clearly.

Our communities are central to the future of our territory.

Because Nunavut communities are at the heart of the Arctic discussion.

SAFER COMMUNITIES AND STRONGER SUPPORTS

Mr. Speaker,

Community wellbeing also depends on safety and accessible support systems.

This budget provides increased funding to the Department of Justice for RCMP crime reduction strategies, rising operating and staffing costs, and additional suicide response supports.

Capital work continues on Ilavut Centre renovations in Kugluktuk and courthouse renewal work in Iqaluit.

But safer communities are not built through enforcement alone. They are also built through prevention. This government is investing more funding in the Department of Justice to improve firearm safety.

Stronger communities are built through stronger family supports.

Through mental wellness services.

And through helping people earlier, before challenges become crises.

That broader approach continues guiding this government's work.

PARTNERSHIP AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Speaker,

Nunavut moves forward best when we work together.

Progress requires partnership with Inuit organizations, municipal governments, federal partners, community leaders, and public servants across government. The Nunavut Tunngavik election is only days away, and our government looks forward to working with the incoming President to advance shared priorities for the benefit of all Nunavummiut.

We are increasing our financial support for municipal insurance programs to help protect important municipal infrastructure in our communities.

Growing Nunavut's economy requires partnership. Government cannot do it alone. We must continue working closely with private sector employers and service providers in sectors such as mining, fisheries, tourism, and culture. When businesses succeed, our communities benefit through meaningful jobs, more training opportunities, and greater prosperity for Nunavummiut.

No single institution builds Nunavut alone.

This budget reflects that understanding.

It also reflects our responsibility to ensure government continues improving how it works internally.

We are continuing efforts to strengthen how government reviews programs and measures results as Nunavut prepares for devolution responsibilities and works to improve services across government. This work includes bolstering our internal audit team to ensure programs are effective and efficient so we can spend our limited resources prudently.

Better systems inside government help deliver better services outside government. This budget includes funding for partners to deliver accessible transportation to our elders so they can continue to access the services they need outside of their homes.

That work matters too.

A PRACTICAL PATH FORWARD

Mr. Speaker,

This government also recognizes the importance of maintaining fiscal discipline.

After two years of deficit pressures, we are working toward restoring stronger fiscal balance within the next three years.

We are encouraged by an expected 11.4 percent increase in net revenues, including:

- a 5.7 percent increase in Territorial Formula Financing,
- a 41 percent increase in third-party funding agreements, and
- a 15.7 percent increase in local tax collection without increasing local tax rates.

These are positive signs.

But Nunavummiut also expect careful stewardship of public resources. That stewardship begins inside government. This budget prioritizes improving how programs are planned, investments are managed, and services are delivered. By strengthening internal efficiency, we can focus resources where they will make the greatest difference for Nunavummiut.

That responsibility remains central to this budget.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Speaker,

This budget does not pretend that Nunavut's challenges are simple.

And it does not pretend they can all be solved in a single year.

But it does reflect a government that has listened carefully to Nunavummiut.

A government focused on practical progress.

A government investing where pressures are greatest.

And a government committed to continuing the long-term work of building stronger communities across this territory.

Progress that families can feel.

Progress that communities can see.

Progress that creates more opportunity for the next generation.

This is steady work.

This is shared work.

And this is the work of continuing to build a stronger Nunavut together.

Matna, Uqaqtitsiji.