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**Re: NTI Concerns Related to the Review of the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan**

Thank you for your letter dated September 14, 2021, received by email on September 16, 2021, in which you raised a number of concerns related to NTI's review challenges regarding the 2021 Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan (2021 DNLUP) including timing and resource issues. I will respond to your concerns in the order you raised them in your letter. I note that on September 15, 2021, the Commission advised all participants, including NTI and RIAs, in the review process that the deadline for written comments on the 2021 DNLUP has been extended to October 8, 2021.

The review period from July 8, 2021, to October 8, 2021, provides 93 calendar days for review and comment. The extension from the original September 30, 2021, submission period allows even more time for participants to prepare their comments, presentations and allows all parties sufficient time to review those comments prior to the public hearings. The amended October 8, 2021 submission schedule has received support from most participants that have communicated with the NPC.

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The dates for the public hearings remain unchanged (commencing in Thompson, Manitoba on November 1, 2021) as does the date for interested parties to register as participants (September 30, 2021). The NPC is committed to a schedule that is both reasonable to all participants and the commitments made on July 8, 2021 to submit a final draft Nunavut Land Use Plan as soon possible in 2022.

The Commission welcomes NTI's commitment to work with RIAs in preparing a joint submission. I understand that this will require additional effort on your part and that of the RIAs, but the result can greatly contribute to the hearing process. Accordingly, I have directed my staff to assist NTI and the RIAs in accessing materials and information (although all relevant materials can be found on the NPC website), answering questions of clarification and providing printed copies and guidance to optimally use digital maps in the review process and meaningful participating in the public hearings. I understand my staff have indicated their availability to meet with NTI this afternoon in our Iqaluit Office.

With regard to NTI's concerns about the digital maps, the reason for the NPC's decision regarding the use of digital maps is to support and enable participants to examine areas of interest at a range of topographical scales that meets their respective individual and/or organizational needs without the constraints of working with static and fixed scale mapping. It is increasingly evident from Nunavut and other jurisdictions engaged in large scale regional land use planning that various organizations are increasingly more capable and interested to undertaking various levels of granular scale analysis and submission of the reviews. NPC staff are available and committed to meet with their staff counterparts at your convenience and welcome the opportunity to assist wherever possible, within the approved schedule in order to achieve a shared commitment.

With regard to providing printed maps to the RIAs and NTI, unfortunately, the Commission lacks the necessary resources to do so. My staff is certainly prepared to assist NTI in accessing the electronic maps and enabling NTI to print them if that would be helpful.

Similarly, the Commission lacks the resources required to make available to all 100 plus registered participants print versions of the 2021 DNLUP and the accompanying maps. I note that each community will be provided printed versions and all community delegates to the public hearings will have printed copies. The 2021 DNLUP and accompanying materials are in the final stages of translation into Inuktitut and will be available very shortly, probably during the week of September 20, 2021.

With regard to ensuring that the public hearing procedures support Inuit oral communication and decision-making in the conduct of the public as reflected in our revised Rules for Public Proceedings (2019) which were developed with input from participants including NTI, I confirm that we will make every reasonable effort to do so.

There is no intention on the part of the Commission to constrain the ability of Inuit to provide oral evidence and ask oral questions at the public hearings, but we must all be cognizant of time and resource constraints and the need to ensure that all parties are able to participate fairly and effectively in the hearings.

The central purpose of the public hearings is to focus on the recommendations in the Draft Plan based on the best information available at this time. The hearings will focus on outstanding policy issues and land use designations of potential concern where input from Inuit, the approving parties and stakeholder groups will enable the Commission to finalize the 2021 DNLUP in a reasonable but expeditious timeframe.

In the end, it is in the interests of all parties that the views and concerns of all participants, and particularly Inuit, are raised, discussed and fully understood. This has been, and continues to be, a fundamental aspect of the planning process and one that the Commission is fully committed to upholding.

In that context, it is important that all participants have sufficient time to carefully review the presentations prepared by others prior to the public hearings. The October 20, 2021 deadline for submitting written public hearings presentations and written questions is necessary to provide all participants with the time needed to review the other presentations and prepare for the public hearings accordingly.

Finally, while I appreciate the conflict raised by the Nunavut Impact Review Board's recent announcement that it would be holding its hearing in Iqaluit during the same week as the Kivalliq hearing, the Commission cannot at this stage re-schedule its hearing given the timing and resource ramifications of doing so.

The Commission has worked hard to develop and implement a process that will work for all Inuit and while the process and timelines present challenges for some parties, further delays will not advance the goal of achieving the first-generation Nunavut Land Use Plan in a timely way.

As you note, the Commissioners fully agree, the development of this first-generation Nunavut Land Use Plan is of great consequence to all Inuit and indeed to all Canadians.

Given the existing and emergent territorial, national and global circumstances, an approved Nunavut Land Use Plan can play a key part of a solution to a complex and dynamic challenge facing all of us. A challenge we must rise to.

It is in all our shared interests to move from planning to implementation. I look forward to working with you as we advance our mutual goals and our collective vision for Nunavut and Nunavummiut.

Respectfully,



Andrew Nakashuk  
Chair, Nunavut Planning Commission

CC:

Stanley Anablak, President, Kitikmeot Inuit Association

Kono Tattuinee, President, Kivalliq Inuit Association

Olayuk Akesuk, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association