



Sharon Ehaloak
Executive Director
Nunavut Planning Commission
P.O. Box 1797, Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Sent via E-Mail

June 30, 2022

Dear Ms. Ehaloak,

Re: Submission on Draft Agendas and NPC Responses to Questions

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) is writing on behalf of NTI and the Regional Inuit Associations (RIAs) in response to the Nunavut Planning Commission's (Commission) request for submissions on the proposed Draft Agendas for the Regional Public Hearings regarding the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan 2021 (DNLUP 2021).

In this land use planning process, NTI and the RIAs continue to emphasize that the process must ensure procedural fairness, fulfill obligations under the *Nunavut Agreement* and the *Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act* (NuPPAA) and provide for adequate consultation with Inuit. After careful consideration of the draft agendas, we have several comments and concerns.

We are encouraged that the Commission stresses in its procedural direction of June 2, 2022 that public input and feedback are essential to the land use planning process and that it is assuring all participants, including affected communities, that the Commission will give great weight to the Inuit tradition of oral communication and decision-making at the Regional Public Hearings. Given these statements by the Commission, NTI and the RIAs are disappointed that virtual participation will not be available at the Regional Public Hearings.

By not allowing virtual participation, Inuit participation at the hearings will be unnecessarily limited. Virtual interaction in combination with in-person attendance at hearings is technologically possible and provides an additional tool that promotes Inuit participation and Inuit oral communication and decision making. Other Institutions of Public Government, including the Nunavut Impact Review Board and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, make available the option of interactive virtual participation at their hearings in addition to in-person attendance. Inuit have benefited from this approach, and we urge the Commission to reconsider its decision on this matter.

Without interactive virtual participation many Inuit and Inuit organizations that are interested in participating more fully will not have that opportunity and the Commission will not receive important Inuit evidence and traditional knowledge as defined in the Commission's Rules for Public Proceedings. As interactive virtual participation will assist the Commission in fulfilling its *Nunavut Agreement* obligations, including to facilitate the active and informed participation of Inuit in the process, NTI recommends that the Commission take the necessary steps to allow for interactive virtual participation at the upcoming Regional Public Hearings.

NTI and the RIAs are also concerned that the draft agendas do not set aside time for submissions from Elders during the hearings. The Commission's Rules for Public Proceedings anticipate submissions from Elders in the definition of "Hearing" and Rule 15 (3) states that the Commission "may encourage the submission of Traditional Knowledge and Evidence from Elders and other holders of local or Traditional Knowledge at any time during its Proceedings". NTI and the RIAs recommend that the Commission add time in the draft agendas for the participation of Elders during all the Regional Public Hearings on the DNLUP 2021.

Additionally, NTI and the RIAs request that in finalizing the draft agendas that the Commission augment its procedural direction and indicate that Inuit participants who are providing oral submissions at the Regional Public Hearings will not be required by the Commission to provide their submissions and questions in writing. The obligation at section 11.4.17 of the *Nunavut Agreement* for the Commission to "at all times, give weighty consideration to the tradition of Inuit oral communication and decision-making" in its conduct of hearings requires the Commission to facilitate to the highest degree possible oral submissions.

In closing, NTI and the RIAs wish to acknowledge the Commission's written responses to our questions that we received on June 21, 2022. On a preliminary basis, we find that the responses are not as fulsome as expected and that more clarity is still required on several matters. We will continue to assess the responses and may have further comments and questions.

We look forward to the Commission's response on the draft agendas.

Sincerely,



David Ningeongan
Chief Operating Officer
NTI

cc

Stanley Anablak, President, Kitikmeot Inuit Association
Kono Tattuinee, President, Kivalliq Inuit Association
Olayuk Akesuk, President, Qikiqtani Inuit Association