

Municipal and KRG Summer Construction Projects

The 2010 summer construction season is now in full swing. The KRG and the Northern villages have a number of major infrastructure development projects already underway and even more are planned to begin shortly. These projects include:

- wastewater lagoon construction in Salluit and Puvirnituk;
- drinking water plant upgrading in Quaqtuq plus modest upgrades in several other communities;
- arena renovations in Akulivik, Ivujivik and Umiujaq;
- gymnasium renovations in Kuujjuarapik;
- pool construction in Kangiqsualujjuaq and Salluit;
- bridge construction in Kangirsuk and Kuujjuaq;
- road drainage improvements in Salluit;
- resurfacing of the wastewater lagoon access road in Puvirnituk;
- community centre renovations in Puvirnituk and Umiujaq;
- KRG office expansion in Kuujjuaq;
- KRG staff housing construction in Puvirnituk (for airport operations and the police), in Kangirsuk (for the police), in Kangiqsualujjuaq (for the new park) and in Kuujjuaq;
- public-transit garage construction in Aupaluk, Kangirsuk, Ivujivik and Salluit;
- possible fire hall and public-transit garage construction in Puvirnituk and Inukjuak.



Since 1999, the Isurruutiit Program has made possible many municipal infrastructure improvements. The \$63.4-million resource envelope under the second phase of the Program is expected to be depleted by the end of 2010.

The KRG Municipal Public Works Department is playing a lead role in the implementation of many of these projects. Funding for the projects is drawn from a variety of sources including the Isurruutiit Program, the Pivaliutiit Program, the *ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport* (education, recreation and sports), the Gasoline Excise Tax and Québec Contribution Program, the Regional Development Fund, the Kativik Local Development Centre and local sources.



Infrastructure improvement and construction projects generate economic spin-offs in the communities, stimulating local purchases and creating direct and indirect jobs.

Sanajit Training

This summer, the Sanajit Project is focusing on construction workers and projects in Umiujaq, Kangiqsualujjuaq and Ivujivik. In particular, construction-tool, core-math and pre-employment skills training is planned for new *sanajit*. On-the-job mentoring will also be delivered by more experienced Inuit construction workers.

The goals of the Sanajit Project are to develop a strong and autonomous regional construction workforce and to keep the economic spin-offs of community infrastructure development in the region. For more information on the Sanajit Project and how to participate, speak to your local employment officer.

Exciting Cirqiniq Activities Planned this Summer

To go along with the new name and logo for the KRG's social circus program, many exciting activities are planned in the summer and fall of 2010.



First, a summer camp for 50 youth from across Nunavik will be organized in Kuujuaq from August 13 to 22. The develop-

The Cirqiniq Program is a five-year project that uses circus arts to reach out to youth and encourages them to make positive lifestyle choices.

ment of newly recruited junior instructors from across the region is also to be prioritized: the junior instructors will be an important part of the August summer camp and will receive additional training at *Cirque du Soleil*[®] facilities in Montreal at the end of September. Finally, beginning in October, a series of one-week structured activities in every community will be carried out to involve as many of the region's youth as possible.

A first phase of the Cirqiniq Program was carried out in the fall of 2009 with one-week visits organized in seven communities. A second phase was carried out in January and February of 2010 with one-week visits organized in every Nunavik community. The KRG's goal is to develop junior instructors and independent, local support structures capable of ensuring the continuity of the program in the region's communities.

The KRG social circus program is being implemented in close collaboration with *Cirque du Soleil*[®] with funding provided through the Ungaluk Program for safer communities under the *Partnership Agreement on Economic and Community Development in Nunavik* (Sanarrutik Agreement).



Intensive training. A regional performance of youth circus performers is planned before the end of the year.

Possible Public Financing Constraints Ahead

At their early June sitting, KRG Councillors were made aware that the Québec government is tightening its spending. Government departments were recently directed to compress and prioritize all their programs and services for the coming months.

From a regional stand point, many important KRG programs rely on provincial funding. A few of these programs are the Isurruutiit Program for municipal infrastructure improvements, the Makigiarutiit Fund for business development, the Marine Infrastructure Maintenance Program, childcare (including 240 new

spaces announced in 2008), the Nunavik Fire Safety Cover Plan and the Affordable Housing Program for the Kativik Region.

While negotiations between the KRG and the Québec government for the renewal of many of these programs have been initiated, the KRG and the Northern villages should begin preparing for a period of restrained government development spending. It will be important for Nunavimmiut to adjust their focus: maintaining existing infrastructure and equipment in good working order will need to become a priority.

Cost-of-Living Measure Developments

Following intensive representations by the Makivik Corporation and the KRG in early May, the Québec government announced its decision to renew funding for Nunavik's cost-of-living reduction measures. Totalling \$4.6 million, the funding for 2010–2011 will remain at the same level as last year. The previous three-year funding agreement, which was signed in 2007 following the Katimajit Conference, expired this past March.



When the new price of gasoline is set by fuel distributors in August, it will be important to review allocations for each regional cost-of-living reduction measure.

With funding to remain unchanged over the next year, all six cost-of-living reduction measures will have to be monitored closely to ensure that costs are not exceeding available funding. The six regional cost-of-living measures are the Food Program, the Transportation Subsidy

Program (for vehicles and appliances), Support for Inuit Harvesting Activities, the Gasoline Subsidy Program, the Airfare Reduction Program and Elders' Assistance.

At their early June sitting, KRG Councillors were reminded that a third component of the Transportation Subsidy Program is now in effect to subsidize transportation costs for used snowmobiles, outboard motors and ATVs purchased by Nunavimmiut from other individuals.

Also, a joint Nunavik–Québec working group is expected to table a cost-of-living summary report later this summer. Based on the working group's report, the KRG and Makivik (in cooperation with the Québec government) will have to decide what efforts can be reinforced to effectively continue to reduce the cost of living in Nunavik.



Two components of the Makivik–KRG Transportation Subsidy Program cover vehicles and equipment intended for harvesting activities, including snowmobiles, outboard motors and all-terrain vehicles.

Nutrition North Canada

On May 21, the Government of Canada announced the Nutrition North Canada Program. Early in 2011, the new program will replace the Food Mail Program. An important change under the new program will see Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) pay its subsidy directly to retailers, instead of to Canada Post, in order to more effectively reduce shipping costs for food.

The government has said that the new program will make healthy food more accessible and affordable to Canadians

living in isolated Northern communities. The most nutritious perishable foods such as fruits, vegetables, bread, fresh meats, milk and eggs will receive the highest rate of subsidy.

The KRG has completed a preliminary review of the new list of eligible items and noted that the new list differs from the list of items covered under the Food Mail Program. The exact impact of these changes on Nunavik consumers remains to be determined.