

# THE CANADIAN NORTHERN CORRIDOR ROUNDTABLE PROGRAM: RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

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## KEY MESSAGES

- Canada needs a long-term strategic and integrated infrastructure vision for mid- and northern Canada that focuses on long-term policy priorities of communities to address supply-chain constraints and maintain the country's global competitiveness.
- It is essential for infrastructure policy development in mid- and northern Canada to prioritize collaborative approaches that engage diverse rights- and stakeholders and foster meaningful partnerships, with a focus on respecting community rights, interests and aspirations while promoting sustainable and inclusive development through the coordination of actors.
- Managing cooperation between communities, governments and industries can be complex. Effective governance mechanisms, such as collaborative planning, stakeholder engagement and dispute resolution processes, are crucial to ensure that infrastructure development is equitable, inclusive and sustainable.
- Streamlining of regulatory frameworks is required to improve efficiency, integration and coordination in the planning and approval of hard and soft infrastructure development.
- Decision-makers should adopt a holistic infrastructure approach that includes not only physical infrastructure assets but also digital and soft infrastructure supporting social goals and outcomes such as education and healthcare.
- A focus on local community capacity-building should be incorporated into any type of northern infrastructure development strategy to help support communities to address their priorities and to foster cooperation between both public and private rights- and stakeholders.
- While federal support is important, any national infrastructure vision for mid- and northern Canada must incorporate the priorities of local Indigenous and municipal rights- and stakeholders. This approach avoids a top-down infrastructure approach and recognizes the role these communities have in addressing the challenges related to climate change and supply-chain constraints that Canadians are facing today.
- A majority of communities in mid- and northern Canada consist of Indigenous populations, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Indigenous self-governance, participation and inclusion and Indigenous-owned initiatives must be incorporated into any northern corridor framework to support reconciliation.

- While infrastructure needs vary across mid- and northern Canada, the digital divide is a shared concern. To sustain prosperity and mitigate consequences associated with geographical remoteness, such as a lack of access to health services, education and social connections, communities need reliable and affordable high-speed internet access.
- Recent disruptions in global and Canadian supply chains underline the need for strategic and targeted infrastructure optionality, ensuring reliable transportation and access to goods and services.
- Infrastructure development, focused on transportation and access to services such as healthcare, is essential to safeguard the high living standards we are enjoying today for future generations. For all Canadians to benefit, infrastructure development must adhere to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.