



First Nations
FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT
BOARD

CONSEIL
DE GESTION
FINANCIÈRE des
Premières Nations



First Nations Tax Commission
Commission de la fiscalité des premières nations

Via Email

March 25, 2022

The Right Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada, Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2
justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

RE: The Need To Establish The First Nations Infrastructure Institute

Dear Prime Minister:

We are writing in respect of the sections related to Indigenous Peoples in *Delivering for Canadians Now, A Supply and Confidence Agreement* that the Liberal and New Democratic parties announced this week. In particular, we noted the commitment to make “A significant additional investment in Indigenous housing in 2022. It will be up to First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities to determine how housing investments are designed and delivered.”

We are pleased that Canada is prepared to increase its investments in First Nations infrastructure. The gap in infrastructure between Indigenous Peoples and the rest of Canada is well documented. However, we are compelled to raise the fact that investments in infrastructure alone will not be able to close this gap. The systems that First Nations are required to operate under to build and maintain their infrastructure are fundamentally flawed, and until they are fixed the outcomes will also be flawed. In short, First Nations are required to take on the risks and liabilities associated with projects without having the corresponding control and decision-making power during project planning, financing and construction.

We believe this approach to infrastructure is ineffective because many Indigenous communities do not have the capacity to effectively manage, mitigate, or transfer the risks associated with constructing, operating, and maintaining infrastructure assets over their full life-cycle. To address this systemic challenge, we continue to advocate for the creation of First Nations Infrastructure Institute (FNII) through the *First Nations Fiscal Management Act (FMA)*. Over the past several months we were pleased to engage many of your officials in dialogue about how this could be done. From these conversations, we remain hopeful that Budget 2022 will announce enabling legislation and funding for FNII. We encourage you to include FNII, particularly considering the coming increase in federal investment.



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The timely creation of FNII would build upon the success of the FMA as an optional First Nation-led initiative and provide more tools and capacity development support for First Nations communities and organizations. As the drafting of Budget 2022 nears completion, we are available at any time for discussion with you or your officials on the establishment of FNII under the FMA.

Sincerely,

Harold Calla, Executive Chair
First Nations Financial Management Board

C.T. (Manny) Jules, Chief Commissioner
First Nations Tax Commission

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