

NEWS RELEASE



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NTI Opposes Referendum Vote in May

(April 21, 2016 –*Iqaluit, Nunavut*) Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) President Cathy Towtongie today said that after careful consideration by the NTI Executive Committee, NTI does not support the sale of municipal lands at this time. The potential sale of municipal lands will be voted upon in a Government of Nunavut (GN) territory-wide referendum on May 9, 2016.

In accordance with the *Nunavut Agreement*, the referendum will ask voters whether they want the municipal council presiding over their community to be able to sell municipally owned lands to residents. The decision will be made on a community by community basis during the referendum.

“Since we signed the *Nunavut Agreement* and created the territory of Nunavut, each of Nunavut’s communities have experienced different opportunities and challenges. There are varying levels of economic development and prosperity in communities and among Inuit,” said Towtongie. “The Government of Nunavut has not provided sufficient information and analysis to convince NTI that a majority of Inuit would benefit from the sale of municipal lands in each community. Accordingly, NTI does not support a ‘Yes’ vote in the current referendum and the sale of lands at this time.”

This is the second referendum concerning the sale of municipal lands. In the first referendum in April 1995, NTI opposed the sale of municipal lands after NTI concluded that such a sale would not bring clear benefits to most Inuit. The proposal to sell lands was defeated at that time and a 20-year restriction on the sale of municipal lands was enacted. The referendum will ask voters if the restriction should be lifted.

NTI asked the GN to delay the vote to allow more time for the GN to provide sufficient information to voters to be able to make an informed decision, but the GN decided to move forward with the vote as it originally planned.

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For further information:

Kerry McCluskey
Director of Communications
Tel: (867) 975-4914 Toll-free: 1-888-646-0006 Cell: 867-222-2893
Kmccluskey@tunngavik.com www.tunngavik.com

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