



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS (AFN)

**Written Submission to House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance
Pre-Budget Consultations in Advance of the 2024 Budget**

Submitted August 4, 2023

Required Investments Summary – Budget 2024

Sector	Program	Over 5 Years (\$ millions)
Lands	Recognizing Land Rights and Self-Determination	\$25
	Additions to Reserve	\$23
	Specific Claims	\$18
	First Nations Seeking Reserve Lands and/or Recognition	\$175
Water	Sustainable Development Goals Implementation	\$263
	Freshwater and Marine Protection, Conservation and Stewardship	\$2,032
Environment	Climate Action	\$33,985
	Conservation and Biodiversity	\$2,144
	Environmental Health	\$1,834
Infrastructure	Housing and Homelessness	\$138,420 ^(*)
	Community Infrastructure	\$59,510 ^(*)
	All-Season Roads Access	\$35,500 ^(*)
	Drinking Water Advisories	\$670 ^(*)
	Wastewater Treatment	\$9,200 ^(*)
Governance	Financial, Administrative, and Political Governance Supports	\$3,675
	Emergency Management	\$501
Economic Development	Connectivity	\$5,200 ^(*)
	Procurement	\$18
	Cannabis	\$50
Rights and Justice	First Nations-led Coordination on Implementation of the UNDA	\$1,517
	Truth and Reconciliation	\$1,260
	MMIWG Calls for Justice	\$3,675
	Policing	\$3,780
	Justice Reform and Reclamation	\$1,471
Education	K-12 Education	\$9,230
	Education Infrastructure	\$4,700
	Post-Secondary	\$10,331
	Adult Education	\$767
Languages	Language Revitalization	\$3907
Social Development	Income Assistance	\$2,340
	Jordan's Principle	\$2,485
	Assisted Living	\$278
Health	Mental Wellness	\$4,025
	Accessibility	\$2,642
	Community-Based Care and Human Resources	\$846
	Health Legislation Implementation	\$18

^(*) 7-year figures, as per co-developed research identifying \$349.2 billion investment required to meet Canada's commitment to Close the Infrastructure Gap by 2030.

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that works to advance the collective aspirations of First Nations individuals and communities across Canada on matters of national or international nature and concern.

In June 2023, Canada released its Action Plan for implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*. The Action Plan outlines measures to ensure Canadian laws align with the principles and objectives of the Declaration.

This submission details long-term investments toward First Nations priorities that align with the Declaration to eliminate socioeconomic gaps and ensure First Nations-led solutions to replacing existing laws and policies that undermine inherent and Treaty rights, title, and jurisdiction. These investments support First Nations and their governments who provide supports to their citizens residing on and off-reserve, in the territories and in the North, including through Modern Treaty and self-government agreements.

Canada and First Nations share a common goal to increase self-determination for First Nations, as this, above all else, will improve the quality of life of First Nations' citizens. Investments supporting First Nations to exercise jurisdiction are a crucial element to the important work that First Nations and Canada are engaged in together.

The legal, moral, and economic imperative to make these investments is clear. First Nations must be supported to make contributions to the Canadian economy and lead healthy and prosperous lives. These investments represent progress toward truth, healing, and reconciliation and pave a way towards a more inclusive and equitable future for all. Rebuilding First Nations capacity and supporting Indigenous-led institutions are essential to achieving true nation-to-nation relationships.

LANDS

First Nations' laws, cultures, and economies derive from the lands. Returning land is foundational to upholding First Nations rights, reconciliation, and the UN Declaration.

➤ **Recognizing Land Rights and Self-Determination**

Investments toward First Nations-led engagement on laws, policies, processes, and mechanisms support the implementation of self-determination and land rights.

Nation-to-Nation Negotiations on Land Rights	CIRNAC	\$25
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➤ **Additions to Reserve (ATR)**

Investments support interim and transformational approaches to accessing lands and resolving over 1300 ATR applications.

Policy Reform and Engagements	CIRNAC	\$8
Process ATR Backlog and Capacity Development	ISC	\$15

➤ **Specific Claims**

A new Centre for the Resolution of Specific Claims would coordinate the co-development and joint implementation of reform to the way specific claims are resolved.

Independent Centre for Resolution of Specific Claims	CIRNAC	\$18
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➤ **First Nations Seeking Reserve Lands and/or Recognition**

Investments for the formal recognition of First Nations and landless First Nations.

Re-Commit Nation Rebuilding Program Funding	ISC, CIRNAC	\$145
New Band and Band Amalgamation Policy (NBBA) Re-Design		\$30

WATER

Investments to advance First Nations-led sustainable development frameworks that contribute to Canada's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and domestic and international targets on climate change and biodiversity.

➤ **SDG Implementation**

Investments to build First Nations capacity and community-led SDG implementation.

Sustainable Development Research	ECCC	\$240
SDG Strategy Engagement	ESDC	\$23

➤ **Freshwater and Marine Protection, Conservation and Stewardship**

Investments toward capacity building, First Nation-led initiatives, and ensuring Crown-led stewardship and governance respect inherent rights, Treaties, title, jurisdiction, and knowledge systems.

First Nations-led Stewardship and Monitoring	DFO, ECCC, PC	\$900
Rights-Based and/or Co-Governance Agreements		\$44
Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) Enhanced Funding Model		\$800
Canada Water Agency and the <i>Canada Water Act</i>	ECCC	\$150
Strengthened Freshwater Action Plan Engagement		\$98
Marine Spatial Planning	DFO	\$40

ENVIRONMENT

Investments toward First Nations leadership in climate, conservation, and food security are the most effective way to combat simultaneous climate and biodiversity loss crises.

➤ Climate Action

Investments in First Nations-led climate action will ensure our collective well-being.

First Nations Climate Institute	ECCC	\$25
First Nations Climate Emergency Coordinator Network		\$325
Climate Adaptation		\$23,385
Green Infrastructure Investment Fund		\$8,500
Clean/Alternative Energy Solutions		\$1,750

➤ Conservation and Biodiversity

First Nations have a sacred stewardship to protect Mother Earth.

First Nations-led Conservation	ECCC	\$1,500
Protecting Species at Risk and Freshwaters		\$644

➤ Environmental Health

Investments to enhance access to nutritious and traditional foods, sustainable food systems, and environmental protection initiatives.

Food System/Security Initiatives	ECCC	\$634
Environmental Contaminants Protection		\$1,200

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure investments are foundational to economic reconciliation, closing the infrastructure gap, health and well-being, and economic growth.

➤ Housing and Homelessness

Investments to address overcrowding, unit replacement, new lot servicing, repair needs, on-reserve migration, and population growth.

Capital	ISC, CMHC	\$114,710
Operations & Maintenance (O & M)		\$20,410
Eradicating Homelessness	INFC, ISC	\$3,300

➤ **Community Infrastructure**

Investments to meet basic community infrastructure needs, including buildings, ports and wharfs, transportation infrastructure, and utilities.

Capital	ISC	\$37,960
O & M		\$21,550

➤ **All-Season Roads Access**

Access to affordable goods and services is limited for communities that are inaccessible by road.

Capital	ISC, INFC	\$29,130
O & M		\$6,370

➤ **Drinking Water Advisories**

Investments are required across the drinking water supply chain to eliminate advisories, including source waters, abstraction, treatment, storage, and distribution.

Capital	ISC	\$270
O & M		\$400

➤ **Wastewater Treatment**

Urgent investments are required across the wastewater supply chain, including source waters, abstraction, treatment, storage, and distribution to address chronic underfunding and mitigate threats to health and wellbeing due to inadequate sanitation.

Capital	ISC	\$6,800
O & M		\$2,400

GOVERNANCE

➤ **Financial, Administrative, and Political Governance Supports**

These investments will enable First Nations to perform good governance and provide adequate services to their citizens no matter where they reside.

Band Support Funding	ISC	\$2,835
Band Employee Benefits		\$420
Professional and Institutional Development		\$315
Tribal Council Funding		\$105

➤ **Emergency Management**

Investments for each First Nation to establish and maintain formal and culturally relevant emergency management programs, inclusive of personnel, equipment, and training.

First Nations Emergency Management Programs	ISC	\$501
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

First Nations' economic growth benefits all Canadians and contributes to Canada's GDP.

➤ **Connectivity**

Bridge the digital divide for First Nations by meeting the minimum broadband standards outlined in Canada's *Federal Connectivity Strategy, High-speed Access for All*.

Connectivity Infrastructure Capital Funding	ISED	\$5,200
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➤ **Procurement**

A new First Nation-led procurement organization will support First Nations businesses in securing procurement opportunities and meeting the federal 5% Indigenous procurement target.

First Nations-Led Procurement Organization	ISC, PSPC	\$18
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➤ **Cannabis**

Investments for First Nations engagement in the *Cannabis Act* review.

<i>Cannabis Act</i> Review Engagement	HC	\$50
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RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

Investments for transformational changes outlined in the TRC, the National Inquiry into MMIWG, and the UN Declaration.

➤ **First Nations-led Coordination on Implementation of the UNDA**

Sufficiently resourced funding for First Nations-led processes is needed to ensure Canada's laws, policies, and regulations meet the objectives of the UN Declaration (UNDA Sections 5, 6 and 7).

Supporting First Nations-led Policy Development, Coordination and Results Monitoring including National/Regional/Treaty-based, First Nation Representative Governments/Band Councils)	CIRNAC	\$1,517
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➤ **Truth and Reconciliation**

2025 will mark a decade since the release of the Final Report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Truth and commemoration are overdue, including efforts to ensure First Nations-led approaches in national commemoration activities and monuments and to repatriate artifacts and remains.

Residential Schools Investigation and Commemoration	CIRNAC	\$1,260
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➤ **MMIWG Calls to Justice**

Investments to implement the National Inquiry into MMIWG Calls for Justice are critical to improve safety and security and to provide culturally appropriate healing.

Implementing Calls for Justice – First Nations National Action Plan	CIRNAC	\$3,675
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➤ **Policing**

Everyone deserves to live in safe and thriving communities. These investments will establish First Nations police agencies comparable to other policing agencies.

Enhancements and Expansion of First Nations Police Agencies	ISC, PS	\$3,150
Implementation of a Statutory Framework Recognizing First Nations Police Services as Essential Services		\$630

➤ **Justice Reform and Reclamation**

Acknowledging Indigenous customary laws and legal norms and resolving First Nation overrepresentation in the criminal justice system.

Establish Restorative Justice Programs	JC	\$788
Community Safety and Security Programs		\$683

EDUCATION

Quality, culturally relevant education supports wellness, socioeconomic mobility, and economic resilience.

➤ **K-12 Education**

Investments based on real needs will close the educational attainment gap and address critical funding shortfalls in language, education transportation, and facilities.

Regional Education Agreements	ISC	\$3,800
Education Partnerships Programs		\$125
COVID-19 Learning Recovery		\$75
O & M Funding for Schools and Teacherages		\$2,210
Education Transportation		\$1,070
Language Revitalization in K-12 Programming		\$1,950

➤ **Education Infrastructure**

Investments to immediately build, replace, repair, and expand First Nations schools and teacherages and eliminate overcrowding.

School and Teacherages Capital Needs	ISC	\$4,700
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➤ **Post-Secondary Education (PSE)**

Investments for students, institutions, community-based programming, and ongoing technical tables in advancing First Nations PSE models.

Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP)	ISC	\$8,530
Institutions and Community-Based Programming		\$1,030
Negotiating First Nations PSE Models		\$25
Implementing First Nations PSE Models		\$746

➤ **Adult Education**

Investments to expand adult education programming that meets the unique needs of First Nations adult learners.

Adult Education	ISC	\$767
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LANGUAGES AND CULTURE

Languages and culture are foundational to intergenerational transmission of knowledge and identity.

➤ **Revitalizing First Nations Languages**

Investments to urgently reverse language decline and support initiatives in non-school settings.

Language and Culture Programs	PCH	\$3,800
International Decade on Indigenous Languages	PCH, GAC	\$107

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

➤ **Income Assistance**

Investments to support ongoing inflation relief benefits for First Nations IA clients.

Income Assistance – Inflation Relief	ISC	\$2,340
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➤ **Jordan’s Principle Post-Majority Supports**

Investments for First Nations youth to thrive and support their transition into adulthood.

Extend Eligibility to Ages 18 through 26	ISC	\$2,485
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➤ **Assisted Living**

Investments to support program integrity and adjust for population growth and inflation.

Assisted Living Program	ISC	\$278
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HEALTH

Address longstanding inequities by supporting strength-based, community-based, accessible, anti-racist, and equitable wellness systems delivered by First Nations workforces.

➤ **Mental Wellness**

Strengthen First Nations mental wellness workforces to reduce burnout and increase access to holistic, culture-based, and intergenerational trauma-informed interventions.

Mental Wellness Teams	ISC	\$606
National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program		\$1,409
First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework		\$303
Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program		\$606
National Indigenous Healing Organization		\$1,101

➤ **Accessibility**

Properly fund First Nations to meet the requirements for accommodating modern accessibility standards and address inequities faced by persons with disabilities.

Infrastructure Retrofitting	ISC	\$1,590 ^(*)
Accessibility Products, Services, Devices	ESDC	\$150
Capacity for Needs Assessments and Implementation – <i>Accessible Canada Act</i>		\$750
Social Financing (mobilizing private capital)		\$150
Disability Inclusion Plan and National Autism Strategy – Technical Committee	ESDC, PHAC	\$2

➤ **Community-Based Care and Human Resources**

Access to health services is a basic determinant of wellness. Enhancing the First Nations health workforce will bring care closer to home and ensure that care across the lifespan.

Non-Insured Health Benefits Allied Health Services	ISC	\$52
Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative		\$107
Home and Community Care		\$331
Palliative/End of Life Care		\$266
Midwifery		\$21
Anti-Racism Ombudsman		\$69

➤ **Implementation of Distinctions-Based Health Legislation**

Investments to ensure First Nations effectively lead the implementation of distinctions-based health legislation.

First Nations Implementation of Health Legislation	ISC	\$18
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