

# Dän Laachewdäw Kún

## ~ Answering Community Questions ~

May 3, 2026

### “Was there a feasibility study done?”

Yes. A feasibility study (a study that asks whether a project makes sense, what it would cost, whether it's needed, and where it can be) was started in 2017 and finished in November 2019. It was based on what people told us during community engagement and the 2015 Vision Document.

It was updated in April 2023 (after COVID) to add a more detailed building plan and site design. This update was needed so that we could apply for funding and get accurate costs.

### “I haven't seen the feasibility study, where can I find it?”

All three documents are on the NND website: <https://www.nndfn.com/heritage/>

- 2015 Vision Document for a Nacho Nyak Dun Cultural Centre
- 2019 Nacho Nyak Dun Cultural Centre Feasibility
- 2023 Nacho Nyak Dun Cultural Centre Feasibility UPDATE

If you'd rather have a printed copy, just ask the project team.

### “Why isn't the building in Mayo or by the highway? People asked for it to be by the road so we get tourists.”

A few reasons:

- NND doesn't own settlement land along the highway
- Building in the Village of Mayo carries flood risk
- In 2009, the General Assembly decided new NND development should happen on the C-6 settlement land, and that decision is still in place
- The site needs to be close to Government House so the two buildings can share day-to-day operations

### “Why haven't the Elders been included?”

Elders have been part of this project from the beginning. Every engagement event since 2015 has been open to everyone, and Elders have come to community meetings, dinners, and open houses through every phase.

The project team has also met specifically with Elders four times:

- November 10, 2017
- September 24, 2019
- July 6, 2023
- November 14, 2023

Elders chose the building's name.

There is an Elder seat on the Community Advisory Committee, the group of community members who guide the project. That seat is open right now. The late Florence Moses held it and brought a lot of depth to the project. If you want to have a say, this is one way in.

## “Should we be focusing on wellness first?”

*This building is for wellness. Culture is wellness. Culture is healing.*

It will hold space for people to come together, practice culture, and access wellness programming when getting out on the land isn't possible. The project team has worked closely with Community Wellness on how the building will support that work.

CHRT-41 prevention funding is also being applied to help cover building costs. CHRT-41 is federal funding that supports prevention work for First Nations children and families — and because the building will support wellness programming, it qualifies.

## “Shouldn't we prioritize an Elders Center? We need one first.”

This building doesn't come at the expense of an Elders centre. Both can happen.

An Elders centre is one of the top five priorities in NND's 2015–2025 capital plan, the plan for big projects like buildings and major infrastructure. The next step is a feasibility study, and that's being scoped right now within Community and Capital Planning.

## “Why does the price keep going up?”

Two big reasons.

The first is the large gathering space. It was identified as a need in 2019 and confirmed in 2024 (see the gathering space question). Adding it made the building bigger, and more expensive.

The second is that construction costs have gone up everywhere since COVID. Materials, labour, shipping, all of it has gotten more expensive across the industry, not just here.

## “Why isn't there transparency around the budget?”

Budget updates are shared at every General Meeting and at community engagement events. All the information is available, and you can ask for it any time.

**The current budget is \$68,030,860.** That number will keep shifting until funding is confirmed and we can move into construction. That's normal at this stage of a project.

<b>TOTAL SPENT TO DATE:</b>	<b>\$2,172,215</b>
<b>FUNDING RECIEVED:</b>	<b>\$380,929</b>
<b>FUNDING ELIGIBLE &amp; PENDING:</b>	<b>\$1,761,301</b>
<b>NND PAID:</b>	<b>\$114,446</b>

## “How can we make sure future generations aren't paying for this?”

We hear this concern, and we take it seriously.

The project team is working hard to bring in as much outside funding as possible, so the cost to NND is as small as we can make it. NND is in a strong financial position, Government House was paid off ten years ahead of schedule.

This building is an investment in NND's culture, children, and future. It's also an opportunity to invest in citizens directly, through training, mentorship, and meaningful work in how the building gets built and run.

## **“I keep hearing that we haven’t followed due process. Is that true?”**

No. Every contract on this project has gone through a public or invited RFP, a Request for Proposals, which is a call for companies to apply for a contract. Those qualified could apply, and the best one was chosen.

- Architect: TAG, chosen from 6 applicants — 2022
- Construction Manager: Ketz, chosen from 5 applicants — 2025
- Commissioning Authority: DUNE, chosen from 2 applicants — 2026
- Regenative’s contract was sole sourced in 2016

Recommendations were brought to Council with resolutions to approve each contract. NND’s own financial policies have been followed throughout.

We’re also working with NNDDC and Ketz to make sure NND citizens have opportunities to work on construction. Job postings will go up on the DLK website, NND channels, and social media.

## **“Doesn’t the finance act say this should have been done at the GA and not a GM?”**

The Finance Act has been followed throughout this project, specifically sections 18, 19, and 26. We haven’t asked the Assembly for any money for construction.

The Annual General Assembly is a longer version of a General Meeting. The only things that have to be read at a General Assembly are changes to the constitution or to legislation. This project isn’t either of those.

## **“Why is there a large gathering space?”**

In 2019, the community and Council said NND needed a space to host big events. People confirmed it again in 2023 and the formal decision was made in January 2024.

This space lets NND host gatherings, weddings, funerals, and community events in our own building. Right now there’s nowhere in the community big enough. The Mayo community hall costs money to rent, has rules that don’t always work for NND and is often booked, which means NND ends up moving meetings and events around to fit someone else’s schedule.

Adding this space made the building much bigger, and more expensive. But it also made it ours.

## **“Why was the building designed so big?”**

The size comes from what people asked for. Over 11 years and 32 engagement events, the community told us what was needed. We didn’t get feedback that the design didn’t match those needs.

It’s designed to grow with NND, Government House is already out of room.

## **“Why are there offices in the building? They don’t belong here.”**

Some office space is needed for the staff who will run programming in the building day to day.

Putting them here also frees up space at Government House, which is full.

## “Is this going to be heritage’s building”?

No. The Heritage department is managing the project right now, and the building will hold heritage items and programming, but it isn't the Heritage department's building. It belongs to NND.

It's being designed for the whole community. It will hold space for wellness, tourism, lands, language, heritage, and other community programming. It will be run through FNNND, with a building manager who isn't tied to any one department.

NND decides how the building is used. Operational planning starts once construction is confirmed.

## “Why is this taking so long?”

We hear this one a lot. The project has moved at the pace NND can carry it - money, staff and what the community has been going through. A few things have slowed us down:

- The Heritage Manager role was empty from 2017 to 2019
- COVID and a community crisis from 2020 to 2022
- We are still operating in a state of emergency specifically related to the toxic drug crisis, but have also had evacuations from wildfires
- Federal funding takes as long as it takes, and we don't control that timeline

*Through all of it, the project has kept moving forward.*

## “Who is working on this project? Who is the we?”

From the very start, the community shaped and worked on bringing this building to life.

The “we” in this document means the people working to bring this building to life: Chief and Council, the Internal Working Group, the Heritage department, the Advisory Committee, and the project team.

### **Community Advisory Committee**

Joella Hogan, Bobbie-Lee Melancon, Taiya Melancon (Youth Rep), Esther Winter, Asia Winter-Sinnott, Eileen Peter, Teresa Samson (Heritage), Melody Hutton (Heritage)

*FORMER:* Franklin Patterson (resigned), the late Florence Moses (Elder Rep)

*OPEN POSITIONS:* Youth Rep and Elder Rep

### **Internal Working Group**

McGarry Selbee (Executive Director), Teresa Samson (Heritage Department), Dan Pictin (Capital Director), Shafeeq Codabux (Finance Director)

### **Technical Advisors**

#### *NND Technical Advisors*

- Martin Slama
- James Buyck
- Franklin Patterson

*Others Advisors:* FNNND Staff, Shane Wolffe, Ava Cairns-Locke, Sandy Washburn (Yukon U), Troy Anderson (Carlton U), Canadian Museum of History (Nadja Roby, Jessica Lafrane-Hwang, Patric Remillard), David Slimmon (Ingenium)