



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

## GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

**Monday, August 8, 2022 at 12:05 p.m.**

Report of a meeting held on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 12:05 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber.  
The following Committee members were in attendance:

Chair: Mayor R. Alty,  
Councillor N. Konge, (via teleconference)  
Councillor S. Morgan,  
Councillor C. Mufandaedza, (via teleconference)  
Councillor S. Payne, and  
Councillor R. Silverio.

The following members of Administration staff were in attendance:

S. Bassi-Kellett,  
J. Elliot,  
C. Greencorn,  
C. MacLean,  
K. Thistle,  
C. White,  
S. Woodward, and  
D. M. Gillard,

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
	(For Information Only)
1.	Mayor Alty read the Opening Statement.
	(For Information Only)
2.	There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.
3.	<b>Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to direct Administration to bring forward an updated development incentive program to facilitate development in the downtown to be funded by the Downtown Improvement Reserve.</b>

Committee noted that revitalization of the City's downtown has been a key focus of Council for many years. From adoption of the Vision for Downtown Revitalization in 2017 that proposed a multi-pronged approach to infuse the downtown with energy, vibrancy and



social and economic development to approval of the Retail Revitalization Strategy, incentivising development in the downtown has been a priority. There are many strategies, reports, and implementation plans that provide direction on actions specifically designed to improve the downtown. In response to Motion #0221-19, the collective studies and recommendations have been reviewed and a planned approach to development incentives needs to be designed in the post-COVID context.

Incentives, both monetary and in-kind, are provided by municipalities to encourage investment that might not otherwise happen and can be used to promote specific types of development and improvements in an area. The City of Yellowknife has two separate reserves, Downtown Improvement Reserve and Revitalization Initiative Reserve, which may be used to incentivize development and revitalization within the community.

During budget deliberations in 2020 and 2021, the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce requested that the City of Yellowknife outline a plan to deploy the funds in those reserves as soon as possible (<https://growthzonesitesprod.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/1245/2021/11/Yellowknife-Chamber-2022-Budget-Submission.pdf>). Since that time, Administration has taken the time to review a number of applicable strategies and studies to ensure that actions are taken and that the reserve funds are used in a manner that supports Council's vision for the community.

The recommendations contained in this Memorandum to Committee will focus on the Development Improvement Reserve and a separate Memorandum regarding use of the funds in the Revitalization Initiative Reserve is forthcoming.

### **Downtown Improvement Reserve**

The Downtown Improvement Reserve (also referred to as the Downtown Development Reserve) was created by Council in 2002 for the purpose of funding projects that impact the downtown area. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the City's parking meter revenues are deposited into this reserve each year. However, in Budget 2022 Council did not approve such a transfer to this Reserve on the basis that no comprehensive plan for use of this reserve existed; instead Council directed that, in 2022, 25% of parking meter revenues from the General Fund be used to support the Yellowknife Street Outreach program. As deposits to this reserve are made each year, this reserve can support continued incentive programming into the future. Currently, the Downtown Improvement Reserve Fund contains approximately \$877,000.

Examples of past projects funded from this reserve are:

- \$125,000 toward the Visitor Centre relocation (2021);
- Patio incentive program (2017-2022);
- Homelessness employment program (2019-2024)
- Downtown Litter Containers (2010-2011);
- Bike racks (2003); and
- Murals (2003-2009).



In recent years, the City has completed a number of initiatives, including adoption of the Community Plan and Zoning By-law, which informed Administration's recommendations.

Committee noted that Council's policies, resolutions or goals include:

Council Goal No. 1	Growing and diversifying our economy;
Council Goal No. 3	Ensuring high quality of life for all, including future generations;
Council Goal No. 4	Driving Strategic Land Development and Growth Opportunities.

Council Motion #0119-17	That Council direct Administration to promote downtown sidewalk patios by accepting applications and providing Downtown Sidewalk Patio Permits to qualified applicants starting as a pilot program in 2017.
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Council Motion 0122-17	That Council direct Administration to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Provide up to \$10,000 per establishment to downtown businesses for their approved sidewalk patio's first year installation using the Downtown Development Reserve Fund;</li><li>2) Contribute an annual amount of \$500 to each business or nongovernment office for opening washrooms for public use during their business hours, with locations in the or Downtown zone covered by the Downtown Development Reserve Fund and locations in other zones covered by the City's O&amp;M budget, starting in 2017.</li></ol>
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Council Resolution #0190-17	That Council: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Approve of the Vision for Downtown Revitalization<sup>1</sup>; and</li><li>b) Direct Administration to develop a 3 year action plan for implementation of strategies, including those that can be included in the 2018 budget<sup>2</sup>.</li></ol>
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Council Motion #0130-17	That Council adopt the implementation schedule and work plan for the downtown anti-litter incentives that was presented at the June 12, 2017 Municipal Services Committee meeting.
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<sup>1</sup> Vision for Downtown Revitalization ([https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Economic\\_Development\\_and\\_Tourism\\_Strategy/Economic-Development/Downtown\\_Revitalization\\_Vision.pdf](https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Economic_Development_and_Tourism_Strategy/Economic-Development/Downtown_Revitalization_Vision.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> Downtown Revitalization Implementation Plan 2017 (<https://events.yellowknife.ca/meetings/Detail/2017-11-20-1205-Municipal-Services-Committee/a939635a-bfa8-413c-9da5-ae53012db547>)



- Council Motion #0059-18      That another Councillor be authorized to travel to Kelowna, BC from April 22-25, 2018 to attend the Business Improvement Association of British Columbia (BIABC) and International Downtown Association Conference (IDA).
- Council Motion #0115-16      That pursuant to Land Administration By-law No. 4596, as amended, Council direct Administration to:
- a.      Establish a Revitalization Initiative Reserve account within the Land Development Fund; and
  - b.      30% of all future Land Development Fund sales toward the “Revitalization Initiative Reserve” for purposes of targeting land assembly which supports “revitalization initiatives” within targeted areas (Downtown, Old Town, Old Airport Road, Kam Lake).
- Council Motion #0145-19      That Council approve the implementation plan, as presented at the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting for May 13, 2019, regarding the July 2018 Theia Partners report regarding downtown revitalization<sup>3</sup>.
- Council Motion #0221-19      That Council:
- (i)      adopt for information the City of Yellowknife Retail Revitalization Strategy; and
  - (ii)     direct Administration to review the Vision for Downtown Revitalization and bring forward recommended actions for implementation of the Vision for Downtown Revitalization based on existing strategies, including the City of Yellowknife Retail Revitalization Strategy, Theia Report, Economic Development Strategy and Community Plan.
- Council Motion #0064-20      That Council adopt for information the City of Yellowknife Economic Development Strategy 2020-2024.

Committee noted that applicable legislation, by-laws, studies or plans include:

1.      *Cities, Towns and Villages Act S.N.W.T. 2003;*
2.      *Community Plan By-law No. 5007;*
3.      *Zoning By-law No. 5045;*
4.      Land Administration By-law No. 4596, as amended;

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<sup>3</sup> THEIA Partners Report – Implementation Plan (<https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/doing-business/resources/Downtown-Revitalization/Theia-Partners-Report-Implementation-Plan-2018.pdf>)



5. City of Yellowknife Vision for Downtown Revitalization;
6. Retail Revitalization Strategy;
7. City of Yellowknife Economic Development Strategy (2020-2024);
8. THEIA Report;
9. University/Postsecondary Feasibility Study;
10. Urban Design Initiative (2010);
11. 2010 Smart Growth Development Plan;
12. City of Yellowknife Visitor Services Strategy; and
13. YKDFN/City Joint Economic Development Strategy

Committee noted that over the past few years there have been numerous studies and plans conducted to provide guidance on how to stimulate development in the downtown. Administration has reviewed the recommendations from each of those plans and studies to develop a comprehensive list of overlapping objectives that support development, the economy and vibrancy of the downtown to inform the recommendations contained herein.

It is important to note that while the City currently has a Development Incentive by-law, there has been minimal subscription to the incentives contained within it. In contrast, recent initiatives such as the Indoor Space Improvement grant have been very successful. This lack of interest or use by the community in certain initiatives and adoption of a new Community Plan and Zoning By-law create the opportune time for the City to create a new series of incentives and to re-think how the initiatives are funded.

The following table summarizes actions taken and initiatives led by the City in response to recommendations made in previous studies:

Action/Program	Description
Patio Incentive Program	Motion #0122-17 established the 5 year pilot program to help business owners with the cost of creating and installing downtown sidewalk patios
Public Washroom Incentive	Motion #0122-17 established the 5 year pilot program to provide access for all residents to public washrooms during regular business hours
Food Truck Lottery	Provides mobile vendors fixed locations to operate in the downtown
Cigarette Butt Containers	City sold containers at-cost to downtown businesses
Litter Patrol	City staff and Council members volunteer at lunch in summer months to clean up litter from downtown streets (Green Team)
Outdoor Space Grant	Eligible businesses could obtain up to \$10,000 to expand their outdoor space
Indoor Space Improvement Grant	Eligible businesses could receive up to \$5,000 for costs incurred to remain engaged with current and future customers
Yellowknife Business Services Grant	Eligible businesses could apply to receive up to \$5,000 to cover costs associated with re-opening or returning to full capacity



	operations
Visitor Services Relocation	Scheduled to be complete September 2022.
Amend Zoning By-law No. 4404	Zoning By-law No. 5045 adopted which provides more flexibility to developers
Development Incentive Program By-law No. 4534	Identified as a priority by Council once the Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw updates were completed. Council approved \$50,000 in Budget 2020 to support this work. Range of tax abatements offered <sup>4</sup>
Win Your Space	Program designed to incubate business in the downtown.
Street Outreach Program	Program aimed at addressing the needs of the Yellowknife street-involved population
Homelessness Employment Program	Program aimed at providing meaningful employment to street-involved population
Car Share Program	By-laws permit car share; City sponsored YK Car Share

### COVID-19

A state of emergency was declared in the Northwest Territories in March 2020 due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic impact of the COVID-19 response has added to the need for incentives to facilitate business retention, new development and affordable residential opportunities.

### Financial Considerations

While contributions to the Downtown Improvement Reserve continue to be made it is imperative that these funds are deployed in a manner that supports Council's vision for the downtown.

### Economic Development

While many different plans have been developed over the years for the purposes of revitalizing the downtown, each with a set of specific set of objectives, upon thorough review, the following key themes became evident:

- (i) Creating new development incentives;
- (ii) Jumpstarting development of vacant land (i.e. 50/50 Lot); and
- (iii) Affordable housing.

Based on these key themes, Administration recommends that the first step in this process should be a comprehensive review of all of the current programs offered by the City. This review would include an assessment of the Development Incentive Program By-law (as previously directed by Council), and incentive programs such as the façade improvement program, patio program, etc., as well as a jurisdictional scan of municipal best practices, and extensive stakeholder engagement. The information obtained from this comprehensive review will be used to develop a toolbox of incentives that can (and will) be utilized by local businesses and developers.

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<sup>4</sup> See Development Incentive Program Summary (<https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/doing-business/development-incentives.aspx>).



Administration recommends that this reserve continue to be used to fund development and business incentives. However, it is clear that these incentives must be modernized so that they are responsive, easy to access and efficient to administer. Initial research indicates that municipalities provide funds to support initiatives such as the following:

- Improve storefront window displays;
- Provide ambient light from storefront windows;
- Redesign storefronts;
- Undertake streetscape and open space development to support district revitalization (e.g. 50 / 50 corner);
- Continue to advance and support the facade improvement program or repeal and replace;
- a forgivable loan program for improvements or mixed-use/residential development;
- deferred loan repayment program;
- crowdfunded equity;
- tax deferral, reductions or subsidies;
- density bonuses; and/or
- infrastructure development, such as:
  - municipal streetscape upgrades; and
  - active transportation connectivity.

Administration's recommended path forward incorporates Council's previous direction and will result in actions, programs and mechanisms to support revitalization in our downtown.

Committee noted that the reserve fund was established to encourage the vibrancy, sustainability, and accessibility of the City's downtown area. The goal of the review of the Development Incentive Program By-law is to identify potential amendments which may be needed to ensure these programs continue to be well positioned to provide property owners, commercial tenants and developers with effective incentives that encourage investment through improvements to existing buildings as well as support new development opportunities that will contribute towards long-term goals and priorities for these areas.

**Committee recommended Council direct Administration to:**

- (i) Review all current development and business incentive programs offered by the City of Yellowknife, including the Development Incentive Program Bylaw No.4534; and**
- (ii) bring forward recommendations for a comprehensive incentive program, funded from the Downtown Improvement Reserve, that facilitates development in the downtown.**

## MOVE APPROVAL



- (For Information Only)
4. Committee accepted for information the Minutes of the Audit Committee meetings of October 21, 2021, February 3, 2022 and April 28, 2022.

- (For Information Only)
5. Councillor Payne moved,  
Councillor Silverio seconded,

That Committee move in camera at 12:40 p.m. to discuss a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Heritage Committee, a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness and a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- (For Information Only)
6. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Heritage Committee.

- (For Information Only)
7. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness.

- (For Information Only)
8. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development.

- (For Information Only)
9. Councillor Morgan moved,  
Councillor Payne seconded,

That Committee return to an open meeting at 12:45 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Business arising from the in camera session

10. **Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Heritage Committee.**

Committee noted that there is a vacancy on the Heritage Committee.

It is the practice of the City of Yellowknife to advertise all vacancies for boards and





committees. The City has advertised the vacancy on the Heritage Committee in the Capital Update and the City's website.

Committee noted that Council's policies, resolutions or goals include:

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|-----------------|--|
| Council Goal #2 | Delivering efficient and accountable government.                       |
| Council Goal #3 | Ensuring a high quality of life for all, including future generations. |

Committee noted that applicable legislation, by-laws, studies or plans include:

1. Council Procedures By-law No. 4975; and
2. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*.

#### Legislation

Section 122 of Council Procedures By-law No. 4975 states:

Special Committees of Council

122. Where Council deems it necessary to establish a special committee to investigate and consider any matter, Council shall:

- (1) name the committee;
- (2) establish terms of reference;
- (3) appoint members to it;
- (4) establish the term of appointment of members;
- (5) establish requirements for reporting to Council or a standing committee; and
- (6) allocate any necessary budget or other resources to it.

#### Procedural Considerations

All appointments to Special Committees and Subcommittees must be approved by Council.

It is the practice of the City of Yellowknife to advertise all vacancies that arise on City Boards and Committees.

Committee noted that appointing a full complement of members to the Yellowknife Heritage Committee will ensure that the Committee's projects are not unduly delayed.

**Committee recommended that Council appoint Sarah Woodman as a member at large to serve on the Heritage Committee commencing August 23, 2022 and ending August 22, 2024.**

### **MOVE APPROVAL**

11. **Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness.**

Committee noted that there is a vacancy on the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness for a representative from an organization serving women/families fleeing violence.



It is the practice of the City of Yellowknife to advertise all vacancies for boards and committees. The City has advertised vacancies on the Community Advisory Board (CAB) on Homelessness in the Capital Update, the City's website and social media sites.

Committee noted that Council's policies, resolutions or goals include:

Council Goal #2 Delivering efficient and accountable government.

Motion #0459-96, as amended by #0460-96, #0462-96 and #0273-09:

"The following policy be adopted with respect to appointments to municipal boards and committees:

- i) The maximum consecutive years that an individual may serve on any one board or committee is six.
- ii) Individuals who have served the maximum six-year period on one municipal board or committee shall be eligible to be appointed to another board or committee.
- iii) No individual shall be precluded from serving concurrent terms on more than one municipal board or committee.
- iv) Notwithstanding that an individual appointee has served less than six years on a particular board or committee, Council may, after the expiration of the first or subsequent terms of that appointee, advertise for applicants to fill a vacancy on that board or committee.
- v) Notwithstanding clause (i.) of this policy, should the City receive no applications to fill a vacancy on any particular board or committee, the six year maximum limitation may, at the discretion of City Council, be waived.
- vi) Should the City receive no applications to fill a vacancy on any particular board or committee, City Council may appoint a member of the public at their discretion.

Committee noted that applicable legislation, by-laws, studies or plans include:  
Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended.

#### Legislation

Section 122 of Council Procedures By-law No. 4975 states:

#### **Special Committees of Council**

120. Where Council deems it necessary to establish a special committee to investigate and consider any matter, Council shall:

- (1) name the committee;
- (2) establish terms of reference;
- (3) appoint members to it;
- (4) establish the term of appointment of members;
- (5) establish requirements for reporting to Council or a standing committee; and
- (6) allocate any necessary budget or other resources to it.



### Procedural Considerations

All appointments to Special Committees must be approved by Council.

The composition of the Committee was structured so that various segments of the community are represented. be approved by Council.

Committee noted that the Committee members will assist the City in an advisory capacity regarding homelessness issues within the municipal boundaries of the City of Yellowknife. Appointing a full complement of Members will ensure that the work of the committee is completed in a timely fashion.

**Committee recommended that Council appoint Zoe Share as a representative from an organization serving women/families fleeing violence to serve on the Community Advisory Board on Homelessness (CAB) commencing August 23, 2022 and ending August 22, 2024.**

### **MOVE APPROVAL**

**12. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to appoint a member to serve on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development.**

Committee noted that there is a vacancy on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development for a representative from Real Estate (developers/realtors/builders/planning & engineering).

It is the practice of the City of Yellowknife to advertise all vacancies for boards and committees. The City has advertised the vacancy on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development in the Capital Update and the City's website.

Committee noted that Council's policies, resolutions or goals include:

Council Goal #3 Ensuring a high quality of life for all, including future generations.

Council Motion #0146-19

That Council:

1. Adopt the Terms of Reference for the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development for the purpose of providing input in the development of the 2020-2024 Economic Development Strategy and providing ongoing advice in the implementation phase of the strategy.
2. Direct Administration to undertake the necessary steps to recruit members to the Committee.

Council Motion #0057-22

That Council amend the Terms of Reference for the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development to extend the term of the Committee to December 31, 2024.



Committee noted that applicable legislation, by-laws, studies or plans include:

1. Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended; and
2. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*.

#### Legislation

Section 122 of Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended, states:

#### Special Committees of Council

122. Where Council deems it necessary to establish a special committee to investigate and consider any matter, Council shall:

- (1) name the committee;
- (2) establish terms of reference;
- (3) appoint members to it;
- (4) establish the term of appointment of members;
- (5) establish requirements for reporting to Council or a standing committee; and
- (6) allocate any necessary budget or other resources to it.

#### Procedural Considerations

All appointments to Special Committees and Subcommittees must be approved by Council.

It is the practice of the City of Yellowknife to advertise all vacancies that arise on City Boards and Committees.

Committee noted that the city's economy is multi-faceted and collaboration between stakeholders is crucial in successfully developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy. Through the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development, Council is seeking the input and advice from potential partners who share an interest in economic development in Yellowknife.

Appointment of members to the Committee will ensure that these tasks are undertaken in a timely manner.

**Committee recommended that Council appoint Devon Straker as a representative from Real Estate (developers/realtors/builders/planning & engineering) to serve on the Mayor's Task Force on Economic Development for a three (3) year term commencing August 23, 2022 and ending August 22, 2025.**

#### **MOVE APPROVAL**

13. The meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.