



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday, March 3, 2025 at 12:05 p.m.

Report of a meeting held on Monday, March 3, 2025 at 12:05 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber. The following Committee members were in attendance:

Chair: Mayor R. Alty,
Councillor S. Arden-Smith,
Councillor G. Cochrane,
Councillor R. Fequet, (via teleconference)
Councillor B. Hendriksen,
Councillor C. McGurk,
Councillor T. McLennan, (via teleconference)
Councillor S. Payne, and
Councillor R. Warburton.

The following members of Administration staff were in attendance:

S. Van Dine,
C. Caljouw,
C. Greencorn,
S. Jovic,
C. MacLean,
K. Pandoo,
K. Thistle,
C. White,
G. White, and
B. Ly.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
-------------	--------------------

1.	(For Information Only) Mayor Alty read the Opening Statement.
----	--

2.	(For Information Only) There were no disclosures of conflict of interest.
----	--



3. **Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Northwest Territories and Aurora College regarding the location of the Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus.**

Committee noted that 2022, the City, GNWT, and Aurora College (collectively, the Parties) entered into an MOU regarding the location of a polytechnic university Yellowknife campus at Tin Can Hill. The two-fold purpose of the MOU was to confirm the potential location of the future campus, and serve as the basis for the Parties to work cooperatively to transfer the Tin Can Hill Site from the City of Yellowknife to the GNWT. Under the MOU, the Parties committed to working together to complete the transfer of land by March 31, 2023.

Since that time, discussions between the Parties regarding Tin Can Hill as a Yellowknife Polytechnic University Campus have declined while the City of Yellowknife's need for developable land for future needs has become more acute.

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

Strategic Direction #1: People First

Focus Area 1.2

Housing for All

Doing our part to create the context for diverse housing and accommodation options.

Strategic Direction #3: Sustainable Future

Focus Area 3.1

Resilient Future

Enhancing Yellowknife as a great place to live, visit, work and play now and into the future.

Focus Area 3.2

Growth Readiness

Ensuring land development supports economic readiness and community priorities.

Motion #111-22

That Council direct Administration to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of the City of Yellowknife with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Aurora College regarding the location of a Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill.

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

1. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, SNWT, 2003, c.22;
2. *Community Planning and Development Act*, SNWT, 2011, c.22;
3. Community Plan By-law No. 5007.
4. City of Yellowknife Economic Development Strategy 2020-2024; and



5. City of Yellowknife/Yellowknives Dene First Nation Joint Economic Development Strategy.

Committee noted that the City is facing considerable constraints in accessing developable land within the municipal boundaries.

The MOU states at Part 10:

- (a) the MOU comes into force when signed by all Parties and will terminate following the successful transfer of the Tin Can Hill site, unless terminated by either Party at an earlier date.
- (d) this MOU may be terminated for any reason by any one of the Parties upon sixty (60) days notice of termination having been made in writing to the other parties, or at a time otherwise agreed upon by the Parties. Such termination will take effect on the expiry of the notice period.

Therefore, Administration recommends providing immediate notice of termination, which will be effective 60 days after providing such notice.

Committee noted that the intent of the MOU was for the Parties to collaborate to advance shared interests related to having a polytechnic university campus in Yellowknife. It remains in the interests of Yellowknives and Northerners to have a university campus in Yellowknife, and the City continues to support such an initiative. However, the City has a greater and immediate need for land within the municipal boundary and can no longer hold Tin Can Hill as strictly reserved for post-secondary use(s).

Committee recommends that Council direct Administration to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and Aurora College regarding the location of the Polytechnic University Yellowknife Campus at Tin Can Hill.

MOVE APPROVAL

(For Information Only)

4. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to present By-law No. 5103, a by-law to declare a one-half (1/2) day civic holiday on Friday, April 4, 2025, to enjoy the Yellowknives Dene First Nation Spring Carnival, for adoption.

Committee noted that the City of Yellowknife has received a request from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation leadership to declare a half-day civic holiday on Friday, April 4, 2025 when the YKDFN Spring Carnival is scheduled to begin. Yellowknife City Council has declared a half-day civic holiday in recognition of the YKDFN Spring Carnival since March 2023.



The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) supports one-half day holiday per year for community-declared events such as carnivals or jamborees and looks to each community to confirm if/when events are happening.

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

Strategic Direction #1: People First

Focus Area 1.1

Reconciliation

Continuing to nurture positive and respectful relations with Indigenous governments, organizations and peoples.

Key Initiative 1.1.1

Continuing to strengthen relations with Indigenous governments and peoples.

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

1. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*;
2. By-law No. 5067 (declare a one-half (1/2) day civic holiday on Friday, March 31, 2023); and
3. By-law No. 5081 (declare a one-half (1/2) day civic holiday on Friday, April 5, 2024).

Legislative

Pursuant to Section 4 of the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*, the City has the general authority to declare a civic holiday. Section 70(1) outlines the general areas in which a municipality may make by-laws, and includes the authority to declare such a holiday.

Reconciliation

Declaring a civic holiday on the afternoon of Friday, April 4, 2025 when the YKDFN Spring Carnival is scheduled to begin, supports Yellowknifers to participate in YKDFN activities and enhance community relationships. YKDFN leadership supports this proposed action by the City and encourages Yellowknifers to attend the planned Carnival events.

Procedural

The City must declare a civic holiday by by-law. The City is required to advise the GNWT as soon as a decision is made if there will be a half-day civic holiday in 2025.

Committee noted that the City has, in the past, declared a one-half day civic holiday to encourage attendance and participation by residents at spring carnival events such as the Long John Jamboree and previously, Caribou Carnival. Since COVID, many community events have been challenged to continue, including Long John Jamboree, thus affecting community spirit and connection. Supporting a civic holiday in 2025 to encourage Yellowknifers to participate in the YKDFN Spring Carnival will endorse Yellowknifers' ability to actively engage in cultural activities and the northern tradition of spring carnivals.



Committee recommended that By-law No. 5103, a by-law to declare a one-half (1/2) day civic holiday on Friday, April 4, 2025 to enjoy the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) Spring Carnival, be presented for adoption.

(For Information Only)

5. Committee heard a presentation regarding the 2025 Workplan Update.

Committee noted that the 2025 Workplan would be further discussed at Governance and Priorities Committee in the near future.

(For Information Only)

6. Committee accepted for information a memorandum and presentation regarding Project Initiation and Work Plan for Community Plan Comprehensive Update.

Committee noted that the Planning and Development Department is set to initiate the Community Plan Comprehensive Update in early 2025. This update aims to ensure the City of Yellowknife's Community Plan reflects current needs and long-range strategic priorities, while aligning with legislative requirements. The purpose of this comprehensive update is to establish a long-term strategic framework that guides sustainable growth and development, while ensuring environmental protection, social equity including housing affordability, economic sustainability, fostering a thriving Yellowknife community. The Community Plan Comprehensive Update initiative is funded through the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF), under an agreement between the City of Yellowknife and the Federal Government in 2024.

This memo provides Council with an overview of a proposed structure of the new Community Plan document, the Community Plan Update process and a high-level work plan for conducting the necessary preparatory activities to support the Community Plan Comprehensive Update.

Committee noted that considering the complexity of the initiative, the update to the Community Plan will involve a comprehensive and multi-phased process, which is expected to span approximately one and a half to two years. The key stages of this process are outlined below:

1. **Background Works:** A substantial portion of the overall update process will be dedicated to background research, data collection, community engagement, and technical workshops. These efforts will culminate in a series of roundtable discussions with stakeholders to establish the policy directions for the Community Plan. Extensive community engagement, including consultations with Indigenous governments and community members, the public, and other relevant stakeholders, will be integral to shaping the vision and goals for the city's growth and development over the next 25 years. A significant amount of time will be devoted to conducting background studies and compiling strategic policies that will guide future growth and development.



The major components of the background work will include the following:

- Demographic & Employment Projections
- Land Use Policies
- Intensification and Infill Policies
- Housing Policies
- Work Camps Policy
- Public Transportation & Active Transportation Policies
- Environmental & Natural Heritage Policies
- Public Health and Safety (Wildland Fire Policy, Human Made Hazards)
- Servicing and Infrastructure Policies
- Economic Development & Tourism
- Climate Adaptation & Mitigation
- Processes, Interpretation, Implementation
- Relevant Maps and Data

2. **Public Hearing & By-law adoption:** Public Hearing is a statutory requirement of the Community Plan Comprehensive Update in accordance with the *Community Planning and Development Act, SNWT 2011, c.22*, as amended. Depending on the extent of the revisions, there may be multiple Public Hearings.

3. **Department of Municipal and Community Affairs Approval:** Upon completion of the Public Hearing(s) and the Council's First and Second Readings of the By-law, Administration will notify the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) that all required steps have been fulfilled, allowing for the Community Plan to be submitted for review and approval. At this stage, all stakeholder engagements will be concluded.

It is important to note that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has a constitutional obligation under the *Constitution Act, 1982*, to consult and accommodate Aboriginal Governments and organizations. This consultation may begin at the outset of the process and could extend through the MACA approval stage.

The updated Community Plan will not take effect until it has received formal approval from the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs of the GNWT.

4. **Implementation of Community Plan:** Once the Community Plan Comprehensive Update is approved by MACA, a Third Reading of the By-law will be required by the Council. This will complete the approval process. However, some segments of the updated Community Plan will not be in effect until earlier of:

- i. The effective date of an amendment of the Zoning-By-law that conforms with the new Community Plan.
- ii. The day that is six months after the day of the new Community Plan comes into effect.



A Zoning-By-law amendment to align with the new Community Plan is the last step to complete the comprehensive update.

Committee noted that:

1. **Vision Statement:** The foundational element of the Community Plan should articulate a clear, future-oriented vision for the city for a long-range planning horizon, reflecting how Yellowknife will evolve. This vision will integrate smart growth principles, prioritizing innovation, sustainability, affordability and livability while aligning with the aspirations of Yellowknife's residents and the City's strategic priorities. The vision statement provides an aspirational roadmap that captures a shared future, fostering a city that is prosperous, inclusive, and resilient.
2. **Thematic Goals:** Thematic goals provide a structured framework for achieving the vision. These high-level objectives guide the city's development over the next 25 years and facilitate strategic planning.

Examples of Thematic Goals:

- **A Growing City:** Promote balanced, sustainable population, housing and economic growth.
- **A Cultural City:** Provides a strong sense of identity and community through culture and heritage.
- **A Connected City:** Enhance transportation networks, and mobility.
- **A Healthy City:** Prioritize health and well-being through green spaces and active living.
- **An Inclusive City:** Ensure equity and accessibility for all residents. This may include affordability and housing for all, fostering social cohesion for all Yellowknifers.
- **A Safe City:** Advance community safety through infrastructure, design, and services.
- **A Resilient City:** Can effectively adapt to and recover from challenges such as natural disasters, economic shocks, and social disruptions.
- **A Beautiful City:** That captivates architectural charm, clean environment, and harmonious urban design.
- **A Safe City:** Where residents and visitors feel secure, with a strong sense of community safety.

Engagement with residents, stakeholders, and City Council will refine these goals, ensuring alignment with local priorities and strategic directions.

3. **Strategic Policies:** Strategic policies are designed to translate thematic goals into actionable guidelines. Each policy framework provides clear direction on land use,



infrastructure, housing, economic development and environmental stewardship to manage future growth and development.

Examples of Strategic Policies:

- **Land Use Policy:** To define specific land-use designations, intensification targets, and urban form.
 - **Intensification and Infill Policy:** To promote sustainable, efficient land use by in-fill development and increased density within existing urban areas, reducing sprawl, and optimizing infrastructure.
 - **Housing Policy:** To promote a diverse housing mix, affordability strategies, and innovative housing solutions.
 - **Work Camp Policy:** To regulate the development and operation of temporary accommodation for workers, ensuring they align with local land use, infrastructure capacity, health, safety, and community impact considerations.
 - **Transportation Policy:** To develop multi-modal transportation networks and active transportation and transit-oriented development.
 - **Servicing and Infrastructure Policy:** To ensure efficient use of existing infrastructure while planning for future growth and development.
 - **Environmental and Natural Heritage Policy:** Advance sustainability, resource conservation, and public safety and controlled development.
 - **Economic Development & Tourism Policy:** Strengthen economic diversification and tourism strategies.
 - **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Policy:** Integrate renewable energy and climate risk reduction measures.
 - **Public Health and Safety (Wildland Fire Policy, Human Made Hazards):** To mitigate risks to communities, infrastructure, and ecosystems from wildfires while safeguarding public health through proactive planning and community resilience strategies integrating City's other strategic plans.
4. **Implementation Strategies:** This component outlines operational tools and processes to realize the vision, goals, and strategic policies.

Example of Implementation Tools:

- **Zoning By-law Amendment Process:** Streamline rezoning to support strategic objectives.
- **Strategic Area Development Planning:** Identify future growth and improvement areas with area specific policies, land use and urban design guidelines.
- **Streamlined Subdivision Process:** Opportunities to improve current subdivision process to streamline approval and implementation.



- **Modernization of Development Permit Process:** To streamline development approvals that aligns with strategic goals and priorities.
- **Development Incentives By-law:** Define procedures for regular update in alignment with strategic goals by encouraging investment through targeted incentives.
- **Public Consultation & Engagement:** Integrate enhanced engagement frameworks into development approval process.

Committee noted that the proposed workplan outlines a structured, sequential approach to the comprehensive update of the Community Plan, divided into five phases. Each phase corresponds to a milestone and involves delivering one or more reports to the Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) for the Council's direction. Below are the phases, their objectives, specific tasks and timelines.

Phase 1: Project Initiation and Visioning (Q1-Q2, 2025)

Objective: Establish the project's foundation and develop a Vision Statement through comprehensive public and stakeholder engagement.

Tasks:

- Create a unique branding for the Community Plan to enhance public recognition.
- Conduct public outreach initiatives to raise awareness and gather initial input.
- Organize extensive engagement sessions with key stakeholders.
- Meet statutory requirements through Indigenous Governments & community engagements.
- Define Vision Statement and Thematic Objectives through community feedback
- Complete a demographic and Employment projection to long-range planning horizon

Phase 2: Background Research and Working Reports (Q2-Q4, 2025)

Objective: Conduct in-depth research and produce working reports based on thematic objectives and associated policy directions.

Tasks:

- Perform background studies to inform each thematic objective.
- Collaborate with technical experts, external consultants, NWT staff, community organizations, and Indigenous Governments.
- Develop working reports for each thematic goal and policy direction.
- Present reports to the GPC to obtain Council's guidance and feedback.



Phase 3: Mapping, Policy Details, and Requirements (Q3-Q4, 2025)

Objective: Develop detailed policy requirements and mapping analyses aligned with established thematic goals and strategic policies.

Tasks:

- Conduct mapping analysis and produce a series of thematic maps.
- Draft detailed policy frameworks and associated requirements.
- Host technical workshops and continue stakeholder engagement to refine policies.
- Organize a public open house to showcase maps and related policy details.
- Submit a Phase-3 report to the GPC for Council direction.

Phase 4: First Draft of Community Plan Update (Q1-Q2, 2026)

Objective: Present the first draft of the updated Community Plan for public review and hearings.

Tasks:

- Prepare the initial draft of the Community Plan Update.
- Facilitate a public hearing in compliance with Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) requirements.
- Continue engaging stakeholders to incorporate amendments and revisions.

Phase 5: Approval of the Community Plan, in-principle (Q2-Q3, 2026)

Objective: Finalize and approve the Community Plan through Council readings pending the approval of the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA).

Tasks:

- Update the draft by-law of the Community Plan based on Council and stakeholder feedbacks.
- Proceed with the First and Second Readings of the draft plan by Council.
- Conclude community engagement.

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

Strategic Direction #1:

People First

Focus Area 1.1

Reconciliation

Continuing to nurture positive and respectful relations with Indigenous governments, organizations and peoples.

Focus Area 1.2

Housing for All

Doing our part to create the context for diverse housing and accommodation options.



Focus Area 1.3	<u>Liveable Community</u> Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.
Strategic Direction #3:	Sustainable Future
Focus Area 3.1	<u>Resilient Future</u> Enhancing Yellowknife as a great place to live, visit, work and play now and into the future.
Focus Area 3.2	<u>Growth Readiness</u> Ensuring land development supports economic readiness and community priorities.
Focus Area 3.3	<u>Robust Economy</u> Doing our part to stimulate and amplify economic development opportunities.

7. The meeting adjourned at 1:13 p.m.