



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

Monday, December 8 2025 at 12:05 p.m.

Report of a meeting held on Monday, December 8 2025 at 12:05 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber.
The following Committee members were in attendance:

Chair: Mayor B. Hendriksen,
Councillor S. Arden-Smith,
Councillor G. Cochrane,
Councillor R. Fequet,
Councillor R. Foote,
Councillor C. McGurk,
Councillor T. McLennan,
Councillor S. Payne, and
Councillor R. Warburton.

The following members of Administration staff were in attendance:

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

<u>Item</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.	(For Information Only) Mayor Hendriksen read the Opening Statement.
2.	(For Information Only) Committee agreed unanimously to amend the agenda by moving Item No. 6, a memorandum regarding consideration of an Exploratory Committee regarding the 2035 Canada Winter Games, to the beginning of the agenda.



(For Information Only)

3. There were no disclosures of conflict of interest.

(For Information Only)

4. Committee read a memorandum regarding consideration of an Exploratory Committee regarding the 2035 Canada Winter Games.

Committee noted the City of Yellowknife has been advised by the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) that the Canada Winter Games Committee (CWGC) is considering the City of Yellowknife as a host for the 2035 Winter Games. This is very similar to the opportunity that was presented to the City in late 2014/early 2015, at which time a Canada Winter Games Working Committee was established by Council.

Should this opportunity come to fruition, it will be with many partners involved including the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), the Tłı̨chǫ Government, the GNWT, local business leaders, Education Districts and City Council. The structure of an Exploratory Committee would benefit from representatives from the same cohort including key political leaders, members from the business community, Education District representatives, the Chiefs from the YKDFN, City and GNWT staff.

The CWGC has initially indicated that they would like confirmation from the City by March 31, 2026 however in discussions with representatives from MACA a written request will be submitted indicating that an extension to June 30, 2026 is necessary for proper due diligence to be carried out.

The CWGC have a very specific set of criteria that a Host Committee must adhere to including such items as sport and non-sport venue specifications; listing mandatory and optional sports; funding and sponsorship criteria; broadcast/media requirements and other aspects that lead to a successful Games operation.

In addition to addressing the requirements as stipulated by the CWGC, an Exploratory Committee will also be responsible for gauging public's opinion and willingness to host the Games. The commitment from the City, the GNWT and the community is significant in the years leading up to Games and the Games themselves.

The development of an Exploratory Committee will be required to investigate the criteria established by the CWGC and develop a report and recommendation for Council's consideration.

Council Strategic Direction/Resolution/Policy include:

Strategic Direction #1: People First



Focus Area 1.1	<u>Reconciliation</u> 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.
Focus Area 1.3	<u>Liveable Community</u> Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.
Key Initiative 1.3.1	Providing affordable and diverse recreation and arts opportunities for residents.
Key Initiative 1.3.2	Pursuing diverse community engagement methods.
Strategic Direction #2:	Service Excellence
Key Initiative 2.2.2	Aligning organizational service capacity with service levels.
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.
Key Initiative 3.3.1	Supporting all aspects of tourism and visitor services, including the accommodation levy and creation of the destination marketing organization.
Key Initiative 3.3.2	Implementing and renewing strategic economic diversification options.
Key Initiative 3.3.3	Aligning with regional and territorial economic opportunities.



Applicable legislation, by-laws, studies, plans include:

1. Reconciliation Framework (2021) & Action Plan (annual);
2. Economic Development Strategy 2020-2024 & Implementation Plan;
3. Yellowknives Dene First Nation & City of Yellowknife Joint Economic;
4. Development Strategy & Implementation Plan (2020);
5. Council Procedure By-law No. 4975, as amended; and
6. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*.

Legislative

Council Procedure By-law No. 4975, as amended, outlines the procedures required to establish a committee. The By-law states that members must be approved by Council.

The *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* provides Council the authority to establish subcommittees of Council.

Committee noted that the Canada Winter Games Exploratory Committee will be responsible for carrying out a review of the Canada Games Council requirements for hosting the 2035 Games and develop a detailed feasibility study on how the requirements will be addressed including financial, human and infrastructure resources. The Canada Game Council has specific criteria for all aspects of the Games and have indicated that there is a possibility of small Games to suite the capacity of the City. The Terms of Reference for the Committee will include a broad range of community members to ensure that a full spectrum of issues and requirements can be researched and discussed, and to ensure that the Committee may ultimately provide a recommendation for Council's consideration.

Gary Brennan, Deputy Minister MACA, was in attendance to answer questions.

Committee recommended that Council directs Administration to develop a Terms of Reference for Council's consideration to establish a 2035 Canada Winter Games Exploratory Committee.

Committee noted that this matter would be discussed under New Business at this evening's Council Meeting.

(For Information Only)

5. Committee recessed at 12:29 p.m. and reconvened at 12:31 p.m.

(For Information Only)

6. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to repeal and replace Council Procedures By-law No. 4975 and repeal the Council Administration Round Table Policy.

Committee noted a draft by-law is being presented for Council's consideration to address several concerns. The proposed by-law aims to ensure agenda packages are provided to Council members well in advance, allowing for thorough review and preparation. It also incorporates plain language and gender-neutral terminology throughout to promote clarity



and inclusivity. Additionally, the by-law proposes a change to the regular meeting day to better accommodate scheduling needs / allow for preparation and includes provisions to reinforce decorum within the Council Chamber, fostering a respectful and professional environment during all proceedings. The Council Procedures By-law was last reviewed in 2018.

Council Strategic Direction/Resolution/Policy include:

Strategic Direction #1: People First

Strategic Direction #2: Service Excellence

Focus Area 2.3

Organizational Culture

Providing a positive and productive workplace environment for effective governance and service excellence.

Applicable legislation, by-laws, studies, plans include:

1. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*;
2. Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, as amended; and
3. Council Governance and Committees Report (2019) (Presentation).

Legislative

The *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* states that every Council, shall, by by-law, make rules respecting the calling of meetings of Council and its Committees and also provides that Council shall hold at least one regular meeting each month at the time and place that council fixes by resolution.

Procedural Considerations

Agenda packages are currently released by noon the Friday preceding Council and its Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings, which are scheduled for Mondays. This leaves only the weekend for Members of Council to review the materials and give Administration advance notice of questions they will present during the meeting. Modifying the meeting date and providing for additional time between when the agenda package is released and the meeting will allow for more thorough review and preparation for Council members and provide Administration time to review, research and prepare to answer questions.

Committee noted the proposed by-law responds directly to Council's priorities for improving governance and operational efficiency. Providing agenda packages farther in advance will enhance Council's ability to review materials thoroughly, leading to more informed decision-making and productive discussions. Incorporating plain language and gender-neutral terminology ensures that the by-law is clear, accessible, and inclusive, reflecting best practices in municipal governance. Adjusting the meeting day will improve scheduling flexibility and support greater participation. Finally, establishing clear expectations for decorum in the Council Chamber promotes a respectful and professional



environment, which is essential for maintaining public confidence and fostering constructive dialogue. Collectively, these changes strengthen transparency, accountability, and the overall effectiveness of Council proceedings.

The draft by-law provides for GPC meetings on the first, second and third Wednesday of the month at noon and Council meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month at noon, with the exception of July, August and December. Agenda packages will be released the Friday before, which allows for further preparation time. Meetings in the months of July, August and December are reduced in keeping with current practice.

In addition to the schedule change, the draft by-law introduces gender neutrality and plain language; provides for the recording of Council Member attendance at meetings; provides that, unless otherwise required, members of the senior leadership team are excused from attending meetings unless there is an item relevant to their responsibilities; addresses public participation and decorum of meetings; and clarifies how items are included on agendas.

Committee suggested several amendments and left it with the Mayor/Administration to finalize.

Committee recommended that By-law No. 5119, a by-law to repeal and replace Council Procedures By-law No. 4975, be presented for adoption and that the Council Administration Round Table Policy be repealed.

(For Information Only)

7. Committee accepted for information the minutes of the Human Resource and Compensation Committee meeting of November 7, 2025 and November 28, 2025.

(For Information Only)

8. Committee read a memorandum regarding whether to amend Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended, to reflect changes approved in Budget 2026.

Committee noted that fees and charges are collected, managed, and used in the delivery of programs and services across most City departments; in 2026 they are expected to constitute around 17.76% of the City's overall revenues.

Prior to 2007, user fees and charges were embedded in the individual by-laws associated with the programs and services provided by the City. In 2007, all fees and charges were consolidated into a new by-law, Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, to improve transparency and to simplify the associated administration.

Each spring, Administration conducts an annual review of all Fees and Charges and based on this review brings forward annual amendments for Council's consideration. Administration also reviews the Fees and Charges By-law in the context of budget decisions, and when necessary, brings forward amendments in conjunction with the Budget approval.



Budget 2026 includes changes to the Building Fees, Cemetery Fees, Parking Meter Rates, Land Application Fee, Recreation and Parks Related Fees, Service Connection Failure Assistance Program Fees, Water and Sewer Rates, Tipping and Solid Waste Related Fees, Development Permit Fees and Fess for other City Programs and Services. These are reflected in the amending by-law being brought forward now for implementation January 1, 2026, with effective dates between January 1 and September 1, 2026.

Council Strategic Direction/Resolution/Policy include:

Strategic Direction #1:

People First:

Focus Area 1.3

Livable Community:

Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.

Strategic Directions #2:

Service Excellence:

Focus Area 2.2

Capacity:

Balancing service levels with human and fiscal resources.

Strategic Directions #3:

Sustainable Future:

Resilient Future:

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

Applicable legislation, by-laws, studies, plans include:

1. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* section 72 (e); and
2. Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended.

During Budget 2026 deliberations, Council approved the following recommendations to:

- 1) Permanently remove admission fees for the Fieldhouse track and playground starting in January 2026.
- 2) Increase burial plot fees as follows: Adult - \$703.25 Infant - \$421.75 Military - \$421.75 Cremation and Columbarium - \$421.75 effective September 1, 2026.
- 3) Increase parking meter fees to offset revenue decrease to the General Fund for the increase in parking meter fees transferred from the General Fund to the Downtown Development Reserve from 25% to 50%.
- 4) Increase parks and recreation fees by three percent (3%) for all rentals and recreation facilities including the Visitors Information Centre.
- 5) Increase building fees, development permits and land application fees.
- 6) Increase User Fees of Piped and Trucked water by two-point six percent (2.6%) in 2026, by three percent (3.0%) in 2027, and by three-point five percent (3.5%) in 2028.



- 7) Increase the monthly Infrastructure Replacement Levy per equivalent residential unit (ERU) from \$18.50 to \$21.00 in 2026, \$23.50 in 2027 and \$26.00 in 2028.
- 8) Increase User Fees for Solid Waste Management by nine percent (9%) in 2026, by ten percent (10%) in 2027 and by eleven percent (11%) in 2028.
- 9) Increase the insurance premium per equivalent residential unit (ERU) for Service Connection Failure Assistance from \$12.50 to \$16.50 in 2026, \$20.50 in 2027 and \$24.50 in 2028.

Committee noted that these amendments arise from the requirement to incorporate changes to Building Fees, Cemetery Fees, Parking Meter Rates, Land Application Fee, Recreation and Parks Related Fees, Service Connection Failure Assistance Program Fees, Water and Sewer Rates, Tipping and Solid Waste Related Fees, Development Permit Fees and Fees for other City Programs and Services included in Budget 2026.

In response to a question from Committee, Administration undertook to provide the amount of lost revenue for residential development permits should the \$1.50 Gross Floor Area (GFA) be altered or removed.

In response to a question from Committee, Administration undertook to provide information on the fees collected for canoe storage at the Yvonne Quick Heritage Wharf (former Government Dock).

Committee recommended that By-law No. 5118, a by-law to amend Part 2 – Building Fees, Part 4 – Cemetery Fees, Part 8 – Parking Meter, Parking Certificate and Orderly Use of Highway Permit Rates, Part 9 – Land Application Fee, Part 12 – Recreation and Parks Related Fees, Part 14 – Service Connection Failure Assistance Program Fees, and Part 15 – Water and Sewer Rates, Part 17 – Tipping and Solid Waste Related Fees, Part 18 – Development Permit Fees and Part 20 – Fees for Other City Programs and Services of Fees and Charges By-law No. 4436, as amended, to reflect changes approved in Budget 2026 be presented for adoption.

Committee noted that this matter would be discussed under New Business at this evening's Council Meeting.

(For Information Only)

9. Councillor Cochrane moved,
Councillor Foote seconded,

That Committee move in camera at 1:43 p.m. to discuss a matter still under consideration and a personnel matter.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

(For Information Only)

10. Committee recessed at 1:43 p.m. and reconvened at 1:53 p.m.



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- (For Information Only)
11. Committee discussed a matter still under consideration.
- (For Information Only)
12. Committee discussed a personnel matter.
- (For Information Only)
13. Councillors Arden-Smith and Payne left the meeting at 3:01 p.m.
- (For Information Only)
14. Committee continued its discussion regarding a personnel matter.
- (For Information Only)
15. Councillor Cochrane moved,
Councillor Foote seconded,

That Committee return to an open meeting at 3:18 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- (For Information Only)
16. There was no business arising from the in camera session.
17. The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.