CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE AGENDA

Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 12:05 p.m.

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.

Item	Description
1.	Opening Statement: The City of Yellowknife acknowledges that we are located in Chief Drygeese territory. From time immemorial, it has been the traditional land of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of all other Indigenous Peoples including the North Slave Métis, and all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.
2.	Approval of the agenda.
3.	Disclosure of conflict of interest and the general nature thereof.
ANNEX A 4.	A memorandum regarding Response to Council's request made at the GPC meeting on November 10, 2025, regarding the draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 and implementation details for 2026 and 2027 actions.
ANNEX B 5.	A memorandum regarding whether to adopt a Public Engagement Policy.
6.	City Facility Water Testing Update.

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

MEMORANDUM TO COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE: Governance and Priorities

DATE: February 4, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Development

ISSUE: Response to Council's request made at the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting on November 10, 2025, regarding the draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 and implementation details for 2026 and 2027 actions.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt for information the draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036, as amended.

BACKGROUND:

Administration presented the draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 ("the Plan") to Council at the November 10, 2025 Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meeting accompanied by a staff memo, attached. Minor amendments have been made to the Plan, per Council's request, and a revised version is attached. Notably, action 5.2 a) has been revised to eliminate the creation of a committee of council. Instead, implementation of the Plan will be guided by an implementation working group made up of representatives of local Indigenous governments, youth, environmental organizations, and private business. Other changes include minor adjustments to the implementation timeline.

In addition, further implementation details for actions to be taken in 2026 and 2027 are outlined in attached schedules A and B. To facilitate the budgeting and delegating of duties, the schedules include the lead department(s) and budget required for that year.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTION/RESOLUTION/POLICY:

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 1.3 — Liveable Community

	Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.
Key Initiative 1.3.3	Supporting design standards that are multi-modal including recognizing Yellowknife's advantages as a winter city.
Key Initiative 1.3.4	Providing public transit that meets user needs.
Key Initiative 1.3.5	Advocating for enhanced outreach and social support services.
Key Initiative 1.3.6	Working with all partners towards a safe, supportive and compassionate community for all.
Strategic Direction #2:	**Service Excellence**
Focus Area 2.1	Asset Management Planning, implementing and maintaining assets to reliably, safely and cost effectively deliver services for current and future community needs.
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.
Key Initiative 3.1.1	Advancing energy initiatives, including district energy options to energy retrofits.
Key Initiative 3.1.2	Implementing the Solid Waste Management Plan.
Focus Area 3.2	Growth Readiness Ensuring land development supports economic readiness and community priorities.
Key Initiative 3.2.2	Completing land development tools and strategies that support growth readiness.
Key Initiative 3.2.4	Sustaining infrastructure capacity for future growth.
Focus Area 3.3	Robust Economy Doing our part to stimulate and amplify economic development opportunities.
Key Initiative 3.3.4	Implementing the Food and Agriculture Strategy.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BY-LAWS, STUDIES, PLANS:

1. *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*;
2. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act SNWT 2003, c.22*;
3. *GNWT 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan*[1]*;*
4. *GNWT 2030 Energy Strategy*[2];
5. Community Plan (2020), By-law No. 5007, as amended;
6. Corporate and Community Energy Plan 2015-2025; and
7. Draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 (DM#808057).

CONSIDERATIONS:

Plan Implementation

Revised changes in the implementation section of the Plan will ensure long-term actions are initiated in the short-term, they are broken into feasible annual tasks, that budget is allocated where necessary, and that actions from the Plan make their way into the appropriate department work plans.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:

That the Climate Action Plan 2026-2036, as amended, be referred to the Administration for further review.

RATIONALE:

The amendments to the Climate Action Plan and the provision of implementation details are at the request of Council. They will help ensure that the Climate Action Plan is successfully implemented and will improve transparency in the process.

Further, with the revised implementation details, the Plan will become a tool to implement impactful solutions that reduce our emissions while enhancing resilience to climate change to make Yellowknife a healthy, resilient community for all, now and into the future (Strategic Direction #3).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036, as amended (DM#815017).
2. Schedule A – Climate Action Plan Implementation 2026 (DM#814999).
3. Schedule B – Climate Action Plan Implementation 2027 (DM#815006).
4. Memorandum to GPC November 10, 2025 (DM# DM#807101-v3).

Prepared: December 10, 2025; GS
Revised: December 10, 2025; TS

[1] https://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/sites/ecc/files/resources/128-climate_change_ap_proof.pdf
[2] https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/sites/inf/files/resources/gnwt_inf_7272_energy_strategy_web-eng.pdf

City of Yellowknife

Climate Action Plan

2026-2036

February 4, 2025

Executive Summary

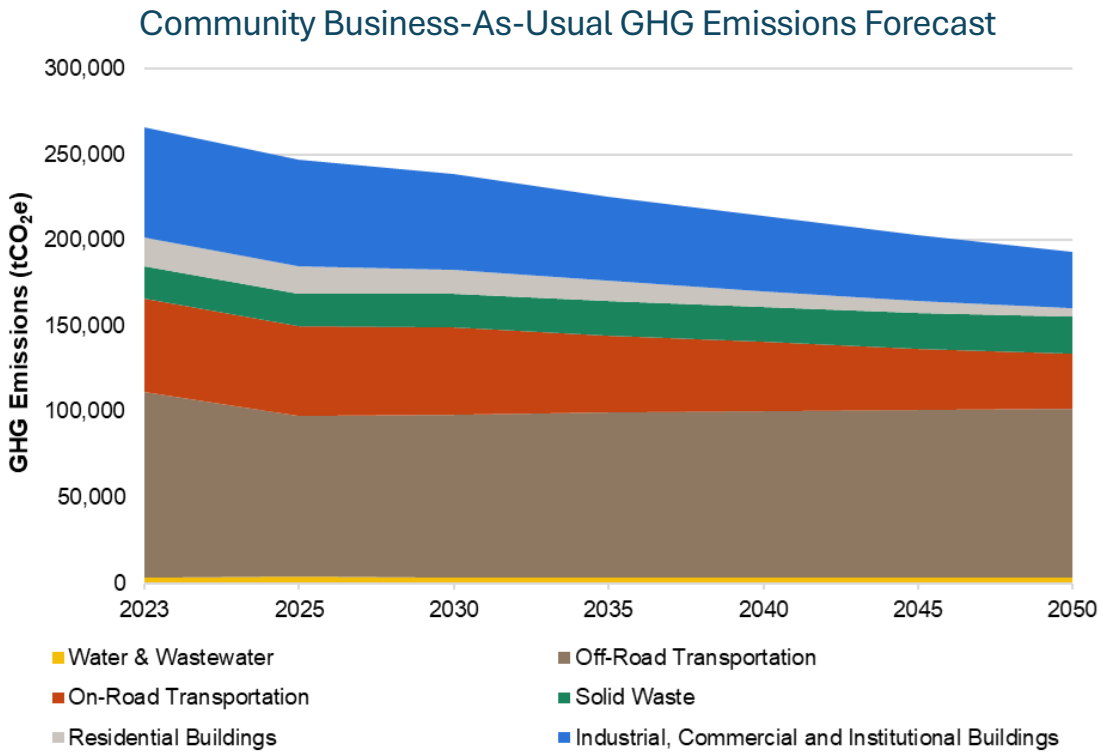
Our climate is changing and so must we

Human-caused climate change poses serious risks to our natural environment and human health and well-being. Addressing the causes of climate change requires that all levels of government take immediate action. The City of Yellowknife, along with the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories, are committed to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

Reducing our emissions

Prior action has led to a gradual decrease in Yellowknife's GHG emissions since 2009, **but there's a long way to go to net zero.**

Continuing with business-as-usual is not an option; substantial additional action is needed to put us on track.



Adapting to our changing climate

Yellowknife is experiencing the impacts of climate change. These include community-wide evacuations from wildfires, costly infrastructure damage due to permafrost thaw, and changes to our way of life. In the coming years, Yellowknife is expected to see **increasingly warmer and shorter winters, more precipitation in the form of snow, further permafrost degradation, hotter and drier summers, more intense wildfires, and more extreme weather** among other climate hazards. By proactively planning for climate change, we can be better prepared for, and have increased capacity to respond to, the impacts of climate change – and save money down the road. Acting now will help prevent disruptions to our daily lives, service delivery, and economy, and keep Yellowknife safe for all.

The Plan

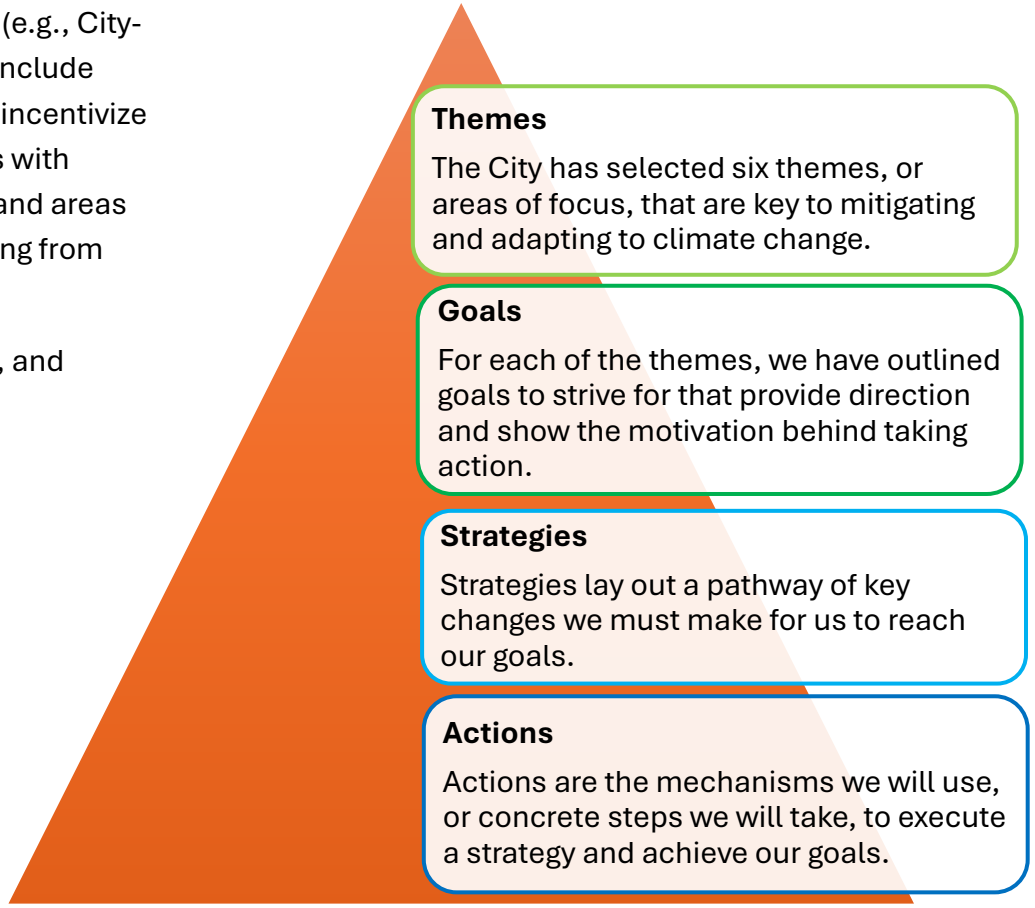
Together, we can make Yellowknife a healthy, resilient community for all, now and into the future. Through this 10-year Climate Action Plan, the City of Yellowknife will foster partnerships and implement impactful solutions that reduce our emissions while enhancing resilience to climate change.

The actions within this plan were designed to align with the following guiding principles, building upon existing City approaches and Council's Strategic Directions 2023-2026:

a) *Partnership-Driven Action*
b) *Feasible, Measurable, and Impactful Projects*
c) *Advocacy and Policy Support*
d) *Community Engagement and Education*
e) *Resilience and Adaptation*
f) *Community Wellbeing and Social Capital*

Actions within this plan focus on both corporate (e.g., City-owned or operated) and community assets and include direct actions the City will take, opportunities to incentivize and educate residents, prospective partnerships with community groups or Indigenous governments, and areas to advocate for policy changes or resource-sharing from other levels of government.

The Plan is made up of themes, goals, strategies, and actions.



Theme	Strategies
Sustainable Transportation Page 40	• Incorporate sustainable transportation in land-use planning • Enhance City operations and services • Enhance active transportation infrastructure • Increase low and zero-emission vehicle use and infrastructure
Waste Management Page 46	• Increase re-use of waste materials • Divert and reduce waste • Plan for emissions-capture in future Solid Waste Facility cells
Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure Page 50	• Transition to renewable energy sources • Decarbonize and increase climate resilience of City buildings and infrastructure • Decarbonize and increase climate resilience of community buildings and infrastructure • Connect developers, building owners and residents with the resources they need
Responsible Land-Use and Planning Page 73	• Increase resilient and efficient land development • Increase the use of nature-based solutions • Increase local food production
Governance and Accountability Page 80	• Integrate climate action in all City departments • Implement the Climate Action Plan and report on progress • Improve communication and public engagement
Community Preparedness and Emergency Response Page 84	• Ensure equitable provision of support and resources • Communicate with residents on how to prepare for climate impacts • Support our neighbouring communities

Implementing the Plan

Over the next 10 years, the City will allocate staff time and budget to ensure the Plan is implemented as efficiently as possible. This will require input from the public and support from all City departments as well as the GNWT.

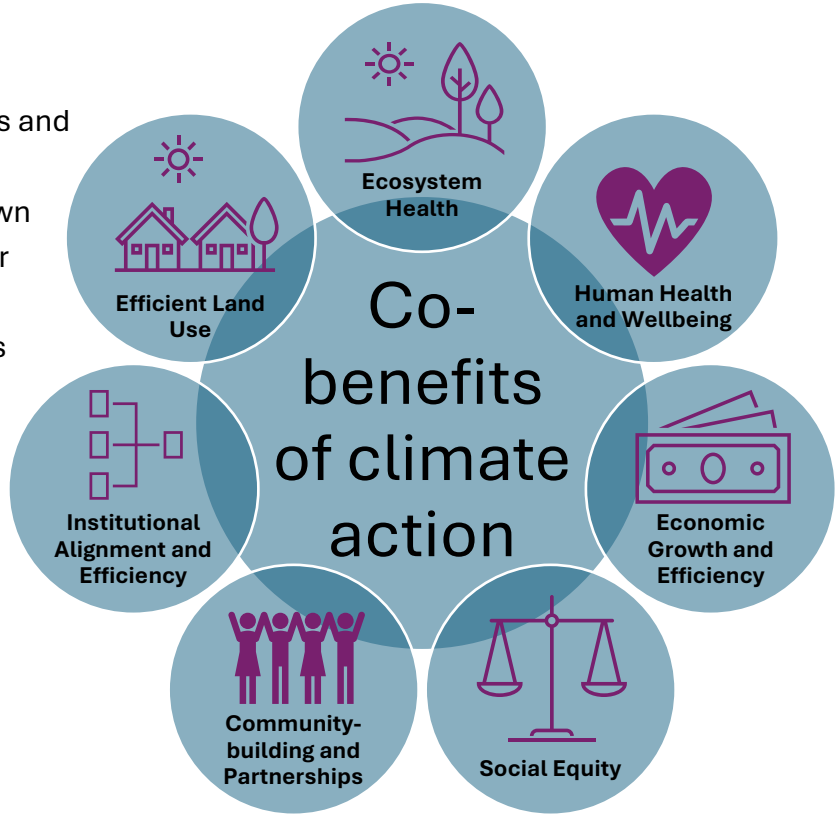
Throughout the implementation process, the City will:

- Report annually to Council;

- Regularly communicate updates with the public;
- Conduct a midway review of the Plan in 2031; and
- Conduct a final review in 2036.

Climate action is good for all of us

This Climate Action Plan, while intended to drive emissions reductions and help Yellowknife adapt to our changing climate, brings a host of other benefits, or co-benefits, for our community. This includes bringing down energy costs, making life more affordable for tenants, protecting water quality and availability, physical and mental health benefits, and community-building opportunities. Other benefits include efficiencies for the City as a corporation and land-use planning.



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Message from the Mayor

Every Yellowknifer feels the seasons in their daily life. Our lakes, trails, and neighborhoods change with each season, shaping the routines and traditions that make our city home. Our northern environment is something we cherish, but it is also on the front lines of climate change, with warmer winters, unpredictable weather, and growing pressures on our homes, streets, and natural spaces.

The 2026–2036 Climate Action Plan responds directly to these challenges. It reflects the voices of residents, local organizations, and Indigenous governments, translating shared priorities into practical actions that can be taken across city operations, workplaces, homes, and daily life. From enhancing active transportation and public transit, to expanding composting and recycling, to improving energy efficiency in buildings, this Plan provides concrete steps to reduce emissions, increase resilience, and protect the natural spaces that define Yellowknife.

Over the past several years, we've learned more about how climate change is impacting our city. We've created plans, taken action, and adapted along the way. As these changes increasingly touch our daily lives, our Plan continues to evolve, becoming more rooted in our reality, better suited to our northern environment, and more achievable through our collective efforts.

This Plan is really about shaping our City's future together. Each of us has a role to play. By acting collectively and with integrity, we strengthen our neighborhoods, protect our lakeshores and green spaces, and create a healthier, more resilient city for today and for future generations.

The Climate Action Plan aligns with the Council's Strategic Direction and our vision for 2050: a healthy, inclusive, and resilient Yellowknife that embraces sustainable growth, innovation, and well-being for all. I want to thank everyone who contributed their time, insights, and ideas. Our collective action today safeguards the experiences, places, and traditions that make Yellowknife home.

Ben Hendriksen

Mayor, City of Yellowknife

Glossary

- **Adaptation –** Adjusting decisions, activities and behaviours to prepare for current and future impacts of climate change.
- **CAP –** Climate Action Plan
- **Climate –** The weather conditions prevailing in an area in the long term (i.e. over decades).
- **Climate change –** Long-term shifts in average weather conditions of a region.
- **EV –** Electric vehicle
- **GHG –** Greenhouse gas
- **GNWT –** Government of the Northwest Territories
- **ICI –** Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional
- **Mitigation –** Efforts to avoid further climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from human activities.
- **Net Zero –** The total amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced is less than the amount being removed from the atmosphere.
- **Resilience –** Ability to cope with, respond to, and recover from climate-related changes that are occurring or yet come.
- **SWF –** Solid Waste Facility
- **Vulnerability –** The extent to which a community, region, or city is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, the negative effects of climate change.
- **Weather –** The state of the atmosphere at a specific time. It is the short term or instantaneous variations of the atmosphere, as opposed to the long term, or climatic changes.
- **YKDFN –** Yellowknives Dene First Nation
- **ZEV –** Zero-Emission Vehicle

Context for Climate Action

Over the past century, the rise in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions has led to significant and unprecedented changes in our climate. Human activities, primarily burning fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal, have produced more GHG emissions than our planet's natural systems can handle.[1] This has resulted in climate change: a long-term shift in the range of expected weather conditions.

This poses serious risks to our natural environment which is critical for human health and well-being. Climate change has already resulted in devastating climate events, causing loss of life, displacing thousands of people from their homes, disrupting livelihoods, and forever changing our natural environment. Recovery efforts have cost billions of dollars globally[2]. These changes are also worsening existing issues, such as social inequities, aging infrastructure, and exposing weaknesses in our emergency preparedness and response systems.

As the likelihood of more frequent and severe climate-related hazards increases, translating to increased risks to society, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a special report in its sixth assessment, highlighting the significant and severe global consequences associated with a rise in global temperature beyond 1.5°C by the year 2100. Continuing with implemented policies only puts us on track to see a 2.2-3.5°C global increase by 2100. The report concludes that **we must reach net-zero GHG emissions** and that "**rapid and far-reaching transitions across all sectors and systems are necessary to achieve deep and sustained emissions reductions and secure a liveable and sustainable future for all**." Fortunately, feasible, effective, and low-cost options are already available and, if we act now, we can avoid the worst-case scenario.

Every level of government has a role to play in tackling climate change. In recent years, the federal government has implemented both industrial and consumer-focused regulations to drive emissions reductions and has supported a shift to green energy through targeted investments. Throughout the territory, the Government of the Northwest Territories has invested in communities and through supporting energy production and adaptation measures particularly for wildfire management. The

[1] IPCC, AR6 Synthesis Report Climate Change 2023
[2] World Economic Forum, Climate change is costing the world $16 million per hour: study

City of Yellowknife has targeted efforts on reducing corporate emissions from transportation and buildings and plays a vital role in bringing residents together to foster community resilience.

Yellowknife's GHG emissions

As of 2022, the Northwest Territories' per capita GHG emissions were the highest of the three northern territories at 30.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).[3] This is 67% higher than the Canadian average of 18.2 tCO2e per capita.

As part of the Climate Action Plan project, the City of Yellowknife released a report of 2023 corporate and community GHG emissions and energy data. Corporate emissions include emissions from infrastructure assets managed by the City (e.g., street lighting, City-owned buildings, and corporate fleet and public transit vehicles). Community emissions encompass all emissions that occur within the City's geographic boundaries, including all corporate emissions.

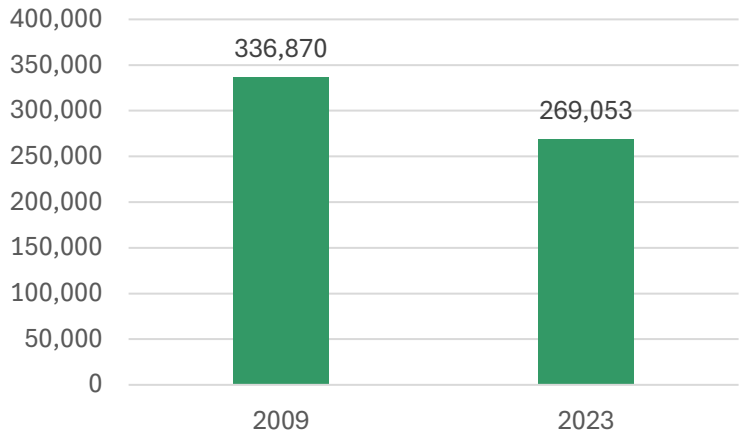
For more information on Yellowknife's GHG emissions, see the full Corporate and Community Energy and GHG Emissions Inventory Report in Appendix A.

Recent GHG emissions

Community GHG emissions decreased by 20% from 2009 to 2023 (Figure 1) due to reductions from transportation and residential buildings. Transportation, namely air travel, emissions decreased as flight counts from the Yellowknife Airport in 2023 were lower relative to the 2009 baseline year. Residential buildings saw a decrease in emissions due to fuel switching from heating oil to biomass for building heating. Opposite to the overall Community trend, 2023 GHG emissions from Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional (ICI) buildings increased by approximately 40% of 2009 baseline levels as a result of a 55% increase in ICI building floor area.

[3] Canada Energy Regulator, Provincial and Territorial Energy Profiles – Northwest Territories

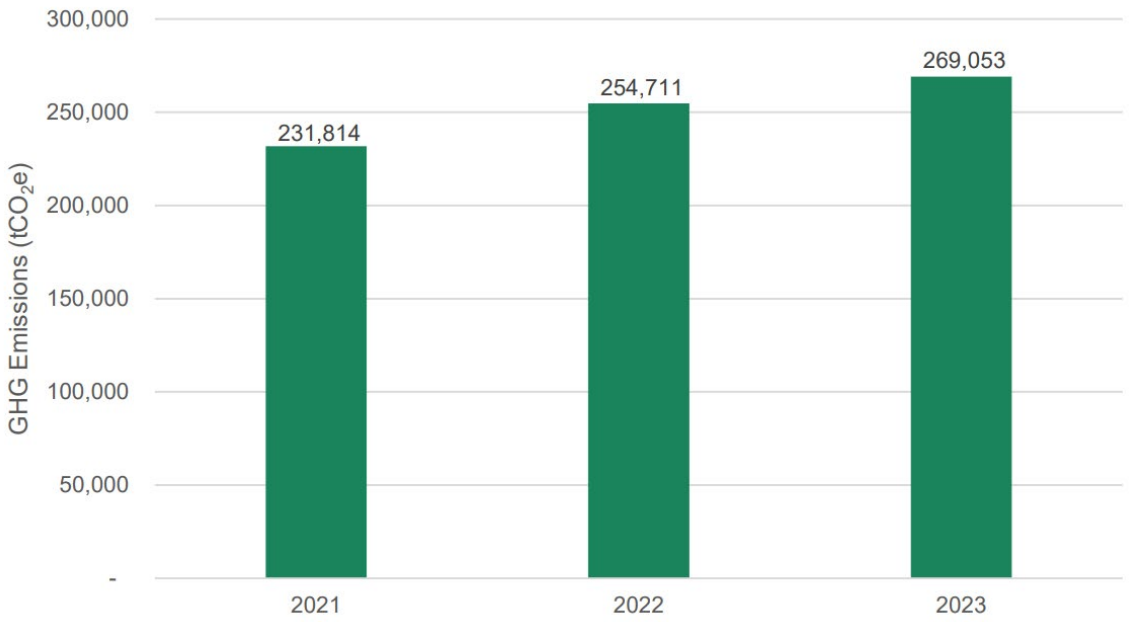
Figure 1 City of Yellowknife Community 2023 GHG emissions versus 2009 baseline



The Community GHG emissions trend from 2021 to 2023 is illustrated in Figure 2. Total Community GHG emissions increased from 231,814 tCO2e to 254,711 tCO2e (approximately 10%) from 2021 to 2022 and 254,711 tCO2e to 269, 053 tCO2e (approximately 6%) between 2022 and 2023. The increase in total Community emissions estimates between 2021 and 2023 is likely attributable to increased operations following shutdowns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.[4]

[4] Community emissions activities, such as on-road and off-road travel, were significantly impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns. This led to a large rebound in total Community GHG emissions post COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2 City of Yellowknife Community GHG Emissions Trend 2021 – 2023



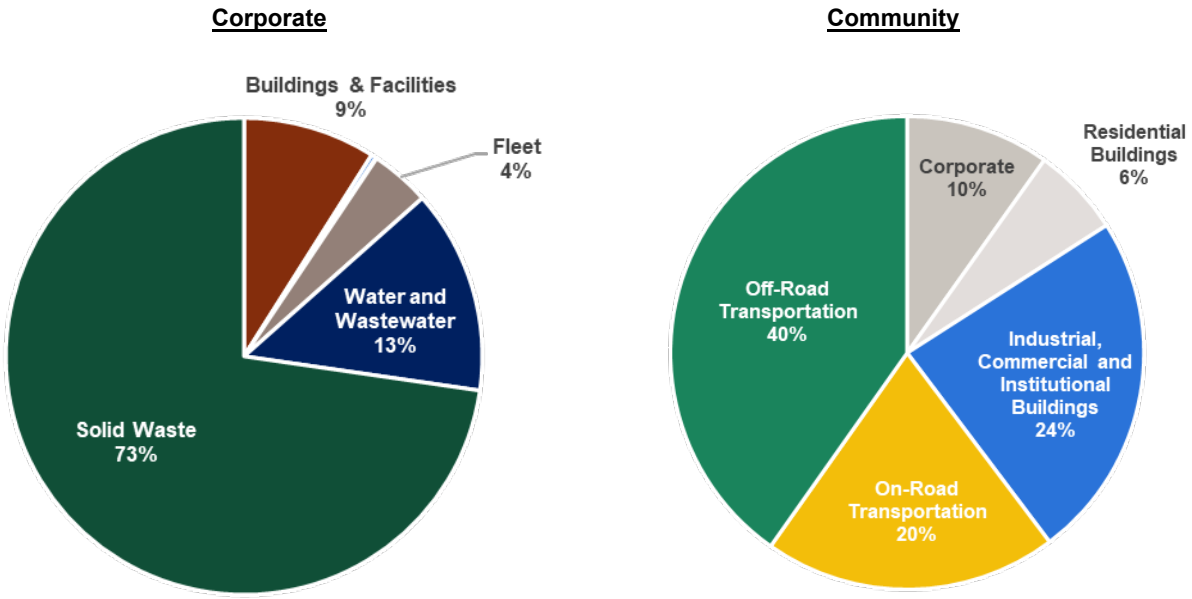
Corporate emissions

2023 Corporate GHG emissions amount to 26,472 tCO2e, which represents 10% of the total 2023 Community GHG emissions of 269,053 tCO2e (Figure 3). Water and Wastewater facilities and Solid Waste are the primary contributors to the City's 2023 Corporate emissions profile. These sources account for approximately 13% (3,522 tCO2e) and 73% (19,402 tCO2e) of the total 2023 Corporate GHG emissions respectively. It should be noted that not all waste that is received at the Solid Waste Facility is collected from within City boundaries. In addition, the City is currently undergoing a Landfill Gas Assessment that will provide further clarity on fugitive methane emissions from solid waste. 2023 Corporate activities required consumption of 99,800 Gigajoules (GJ) of energy. Electricity and heating oil represent the largest contributors to 2023 Corporate energy use.

Community emissions

GHG emissions from off-road transportation[5] (40% or 108,195 tCO2e), industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) buildings (24% or 64,026 tCO2e) and on-road transportation (20% or 53,965 tCO2e) represent the major contributing sectors to the City's 2023 Community GHG emissions estimates (Figure 3). Together, these three sources account for approximately 84% of the City's Community GHG emissions and approximately 89% of Community energy use. All Community activities led to over 3.6 million GJ of energy.

Figure 3 2023 Corporate (Left) and Community (Right) GHG Emissions Profile



[5] Off-road transportation emissions include from aviation turbojet fuel.

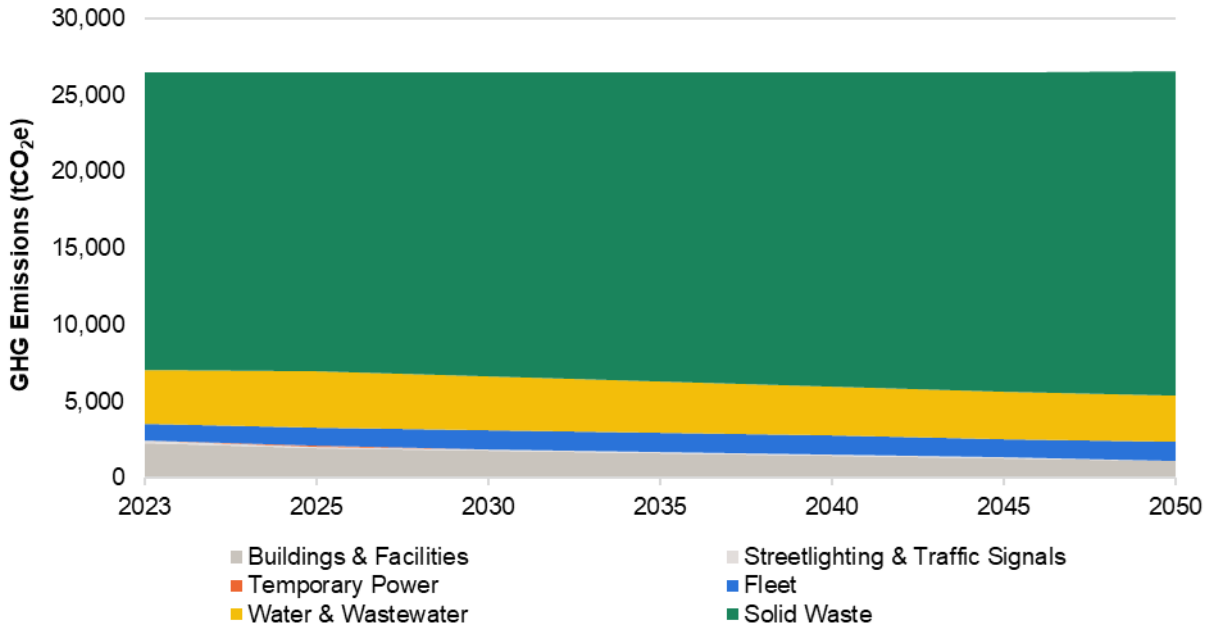
Business-as-usual GHG emissions forecast

To forecast future emissions, the report analyses 2023 emissions to determine how they will evolve to 2050 with only current and planned policies in place, or a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario.

Corporate BAU forecast

The Corporate forecast by sector (Figure 4) shows that most sectors' emissions will remain relatively constant under the BAU scenario. The forecast accounts for both the reduced electricity grid GHG intensity expected in the NWT and population growth-related energy and GHG emission increases. Solid Waste is the largest contributor to Corporate emissions as fugitive methane emissions from the landfill are expected to rise to 80% of total Corporate emissions by 2050, an increase from 73% in the City's total 2023 Corporate emissions inventory.

Figure 4 Business-As-Usual City of Yellowknife Corporate GHG Emissions by Sector



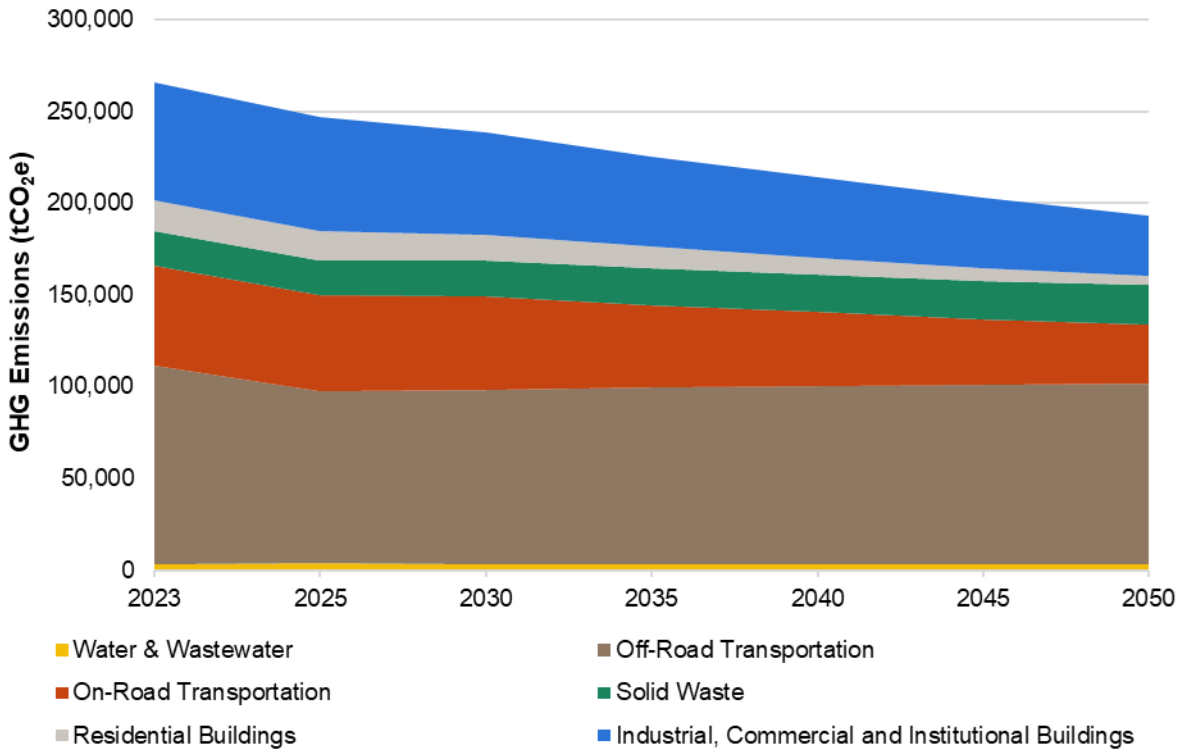
Community BAU forecast

The forecast of Community GHG emissions to 2050 (Figure 5) shows an estimated decrease of 27% from 2023 to 2050. This forecast assumes that emissions will increase with growing energy demand associated with population growth, while emissions reductions will be seen from natural aging out of fossil fuel powered building heating systems, reduced GHG intensity of the NWT electricity grid and increased vehicle fuel efficiencies and battery-electric vehicle purchases.

By the year 2050, gasoline emissions from on-road passenger vehicles are expected to decrease by 56% due to regulatory improvements and a shift to electric vehicles[6], while heating oil emissions from residential and ICI buildings are projected to decline by 34% as buildings transition to lower carbon alternatives such as biomass. No reductions are expected from jet fuel combustion for community air travel.

[6] The BAU forecast was conducted prior to the announcement that the federal EV availability standard would be paused. Pausing or eliminating this policy could slow the adoption of EVs and potentially slow progress on reducing emissions from on-road transportation.

Figure 5 City of Yellowknife Business-As-Usual Community GHG Emissions Forecast[7]



Local climate change projections

As a result of increasing GHG emissions globally and locally, Canada's North is warming around two to four times faster than global average temperatures[8].

[7] Sectors that contribute less than 1% of total Community GHG emissions are excluded from Figure 3. This includes GHG emissions from the following Corporate owned assets: City owned buildings, streetlighting and traffic signals, temporary electricity and fleet transportation.

[8] Nature, The Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the globe since 1979

To better understand the complexities of how Yellowknife's climate is changing, the City conducted a Climate Vulnerability Assessment for the Climate Action Plan. The assessment followed international best practices[10] to analyze future climate projections and evaluate the susceptibility of Yellowknife's infrastructure, assets, and systems to climate-related hazards today and in the future. For more information on climate impacts in Yellowknife, see the full Climate Vulnerability Assessment in Appendix B.

In the coming years, Yellowknife is expected to see increasingly warmer and shorter winters, more precipitation in the form of snow, further permafrost degradation, hotter and drier summers, more intense wildfires, and more extreme weather among other climate hazards. Table 1 outlines the trends in climate hazards from the baseline period[11] to the end of the century, using arrows to represent whether we expect the climate hazard to increase (↗), decrease (↘), or remain stable (↔).

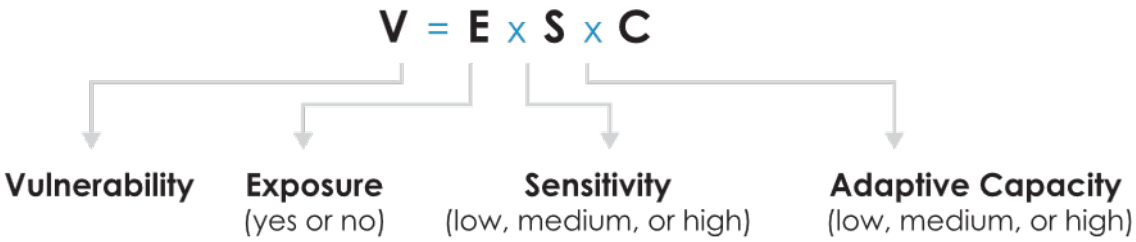
Table 1 Yellowknife Climate Hazards and Trends

Climate Hazard	Trend (Baseline to End of Century)
Extreme Heat	↗
Relative Humidity	↔
Wildfire Interface	↗
Wildfire Smoke	↗
Drought	↗
Changes in Lake Level[9]	↔
Short Duration High Intensity Rainfall	↗
Long Duration Rainfall	↗
Extreme Cold	↘
Cold Snap	↘
Freeze Thaw - Winter	↗
Freezing Rain	↗
Snowstorms	↗
Permafrost Thaw	↗
High Winds	↗

[9] Annual average lake level changes are steady to slightly decreasing, however there is high variability in the year-to-year high and low lake level extremes.
[10] ISO 14091:2021 *Adaptation to climate change: Guidelines on vulnerability, impacts and risk assessment* and ISO/TS 14092:2020 *Adaptation to climate change: Requirements and guidance on adaptation planning for local governments and communities*.
[11] The baseline used for most climate hazards was 1991-2020. To align with previous studies and literature, 1981-2010 was used as the baseline for wildfire.

Vulnerability of City assets

The Climate Vulnerability Assessment uses the following formula to gauge the vulnerability of assets within the city to projected climate impacts:



- **Vulnerability**
  - Extent to which assets, infrastructure systems and services are susceptible to, or unable to cope with, the impacts of climate-related hazards
- **Exposure**
  - Nature or degree to which assets, infrastructure systems, or service areas would interact with climate-related hazards
- **Sensitivity**
  - Degree to which assets, infrastructure systems, or service areas are positively or negatively affected by climate-related hazards
- **Adaptive Capacity**
  - Ability to prepare for and respond to impacts and consequences

Based on the evaluations of sensitivity and adaptative capacity of identified assets, infrastructure, and systems within the city, twelve were identified to have high vulnerability as shown in the Table 2.

Table 2 Results of the Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Asset/Archetype	Sensitivity	Adaptive Capacity	Vulnerability
Transportation Networks	High	Medium	High
Land Use	Medium	Medium	Medium
Cemetery	Medium	Medium	Medium
Stormwater Systems	Medium	Medium	Medium
Water Treatment Plant and Collection/ Distribution Network	High	Medium	High
Wastewater Treatment Network	High	Medium	High
Solid Waste Facility	Medium	Medium	Medium
Parks	High	Medium	High
Recreational Facilities and Associated Equipment	High	Medium	High
City-Owned Administrative/ Operational Buildings	Medium	Medium	Medium
Yellowknife Firehall	High	Medium	High
Commercial/ Industrial Buildings	Medium	Medium	Medium
Residential Buildings	High	Medium	High
Yellowknife Airport	High	Medium	High
Power Supply	High	Medium	High
Telecommunications and IT Networks	High	Medium	High
North Slave Correctional Facility	High	Medium	High
Stanton Territorial Hospital	High	Medium	High

Community impacts

Below are examples of some of the anticipated community impacts identified in the Climate Vulnerability Assessment. These impacts associated with climate change are already occurring and causing adverse impacts in and around our community.

Ecosystem services

- Warmer temperatures are shortening the ice road season because the ice is freezing later and thawing earlier. This has impacted winter recreation and hunting. A shorter ice road season also increases costs for transporting fuel and goods and reduces access to services in communities or mine sites otherwise inaccessible by all-season roads.

Community-wide evacuations

- As of the time of writing, two communities have been forced to evacuate due to wildfires in 2025: Whatì and Fort Providence. An evacuation alert was issued for Jean Marie River.
- In 2023, wildfires in the region resulted in the evacuation of 12 communities in the NWT including approximately 20,000 people from the Yellowknife area. Insured losses in Yellowknife and Behchokǫ̀ were roughly $30 million[12]. While no buildings were lost within the city, the evacuation of residents was costly as were the economic losses of businesses.
- In 2022, Hay River and the Kátł'odeeche First Nation were ordered to evacuate due to flooding caused by an ice jam. Flooding resulted in at least six sites contaminated with petroleum hydrocarbon concentrations above the NWT criteria. The flood damage was estimated at $174 million, not including costs covered by private insurance.[13]
- Wildfires in 2014 burned 3.4 million hectares of land[14] in the NWT. Most residents of Hay River were forced to evacuate. Firefighting alone cost $56.1 million.

Infrastructure damage

- In September 2025, a wildfire destroyed the Nechalacho mining camp, including cabins, a dock and boat, and ignited a diesel storage tank, 100 km southeast of Yellowknife.

[12] Insurance Bureau of Canada, Behchokǫ̀-Yellowknife and Hay River wildfires cause over $60 million in insured damage
[13] Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly, Debates of October 19, 2022 (day 123)
[14] Government of Northwest Territories, Report of the 2014 Fire Season Review now available

- 85-90% of the Hamlet of Enterprise burned, including homes and businesses, during the 2023 wildfire season.[15]
- Following issues with shifting land at the Yellowknife airport runway in January 2023, the GNWT commissioned a geotechnical study that determined the shifting ground conditions were caused by thawing permafrost.
- In 2018, the Northern Frontier Visitor Center was forced to close due to sinking and shifting from permafrost thaw that led to structural problems.
- Permafrost thaw has damaged local paved roads that consequently required repairs.
- Extreme cold weather has caused pipes and water mains to freeze.

Disrupted services

- Highway 3 to Yellowknife was routinely closed, often with little or no notice, throughout the summer and fall of 2025 due to smoke and active wildfires. Highway closures have been a common occurrence during major wildfire years including 2014, 2015, and 2023.
- In September 2022, a tree collapsed on transmission lines at Snare Hydro during a high wind event which resulted in two days of power outages.
- Wildfires have also led to power outages, such as the city-wide power outage in July 2016, when a nearby fire damaged power lines.
- Climate impacts such as snowfall and freezing rain have led to delayed public transportation and caused dangerous driving conditions.

Need for mitigation and adaptation

Based on the results of the BAU GHG emissions for Yellowknife and considering that the GNWT has committed to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, we know we must reduce our emissions drastically. With the results of the Climate Vulnerability assessment, we also have a good idea of what impacts are already occurring and others that we can expect in the near future.

[15] CBC News, Enterprise, N.W.T., '90 per cent gone' after wildfire ravages community

Combined, these results underscore the need for comprehensive climate action to both reduce further climate change through mitigation efforts and to prepare for the impacts of climate change with adaptation measures.

Prevention pays off

By proactively planning for climate change, we can be better prepared for, and have increased capacity to respond to, the impacts of climate change – and save money down the road. Taking action now will help prevent disruptions to our daily lives, service delivery, and economy, and keep Yellowknife safe for all.

Prior climate action by the City

The Climate Action Plan ("the Plan") builds upon previous municipal plans, actions, strategies, bylaws and other policies focused on sustainability and climate resilience. The climate actions already undertaken and currently in progress by the City lay the groundwork for Yellowknife to further reduce its emissions and increase resilience.

Key municipal climate-related documents and their policy and action highlights include:

- **City of Yellowknife Community Energy Plan 2006-2014 (2006)**
    - Lays the foundation for energy and GHG reduction initiatives. The Community Energy Plan provides 12 recommendations to reduce energy consumption-based GHG emissions by adopting ambitious reduction targets, increasing renewable energy generation and use, and improving energy efficiency across various sectors. This first version of the City's energy plan was followed by more detailed plans and actions in subsequent years. The plan included three main targets:
        - Corporate energy use: 10% reduction by 2014 from 2004 levels.
        - Corporate GHG emissions: 20% reduction by 2014 from 2004 levels.
        - Community GHG emissions: 6% reduction by 2014 from 2004 levels.
    - The plan led to significant results including:
        - Corporate GHG emissions reduction of 26% by 2014 from 2004 levels.
        - Cumulative annual savings of over $650,000 from plan implementation projects in 2014.

        - 130 tonnes of CO_2 were reduced from optimizations at the Multiplex and increased insulation and monitoring of the Ruth Inch Memorial Pool's pellet boiler.
- **City of Yellowknife Smart Growth Plan (2009)**
    - Outlines Yellowknife's 50-year vision to guide growth and development in Yellowknife. The vision co-created by residents demonstrates a strong focus on protecting the environment and suggests development and transportation strategies to achieve the vision.
- **City of Yellowknife Corporate and Community Energy Action Plan 2015-2025 (2017)**
    - Aims to achieve significant reductions in GHG emissions, increase renewable energy use, and decrease the carbon intensity of energy use through sector-specific actions across transportation, heating and electricity, waste, and future innovation and legislative changes. The plan included the following emissions targets:
        - Corporate: 50% emissions reduction by 2025 from 2009 levels.
        - Community: 30% emissions reduction by 2025 from 2009 levels.
    - These emissions reduction targets were missed; however, the plan did result in several projects that were successfully completed including:
        - A centralized biomass boiler was installed at the Multiplex.
        - Building envelope upgrades were completed at the baling facility.
        - The City entered into an agreement with the Yellowknife Carshare Co-operative and an EV charger was installed at City Hall.
        - A hybrid vehicle was added to the City fleet.
- **City of Yellowknife Climate Change Engagement Summary Report (2022)**
    - In the summer of 2022, the City sought input on the interests and priorities of local industry and residents with respect to City actions on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resiliency, gathered through different engagement methods including virtual and in-person formats. That engagement laid the foundation for this CAP.
    - Actions ranked top priority by engagement participants included:
        - Adaptation: Implementation of food security projects, review and revision of municipal plans and policies.

- Mitigation: Electrification of municipal vehicles, installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and retrofitting government/municipal buildings to increase energy efficiency.
- Resilience: FireSmart projects and improvements to public safety communications.

Aligning City plans

Climate change affects nearly all aspects of the City's operations and planning in some form, from how Public Works designs our roads and sidewalks to how Asset Management forecasts lifecycle costs. Therefore, climate action must be a collaborative effort from all City departments and be integrated into all City plans. The Climate Action Plan aims to align with and build upon the work in existing City plans to streamline energy and emissions reductions and adaptation measures.

Other plans that are set to be released in the near future also provide an opportunity to incorporate a climate lens across departments. The Climate Action Plan outlines avenues to build mitigation and adaptation efforts into these forthcoming plans.

Existing plans

- **City of Yellowknife Strategic Waste Management Plan (2018)**
  - Aims to improve waste management by focusing on waste reduction and diversion initiatives. These efforts will help reduce GHG emissions from the Solid Waste Facility.
- **GROW: Yellowknife Food and Agriculture Strategy (2019)**
  - Sets out a long-range plan for increasing community and commercial urban food and agriculture opportunities. Its goal is to support the local economy, build connections to land and culture, improve food security, increase local food production, and link to regional and territorial initiatives. The Climate Action Plan seeks to support these ongoing efforts and find synergies for effective support, advocacy, and resource alignment.
- **City of Yellowknife Community Plan (2020)**
  - Encourages sustainability and resilience across sectors including climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives, energy efficiency incentives, smart growth and redevelopment, emergency management, waste management,

urban agriculture, transportation, and others. These principles will guide the development, evaluation, and prioritization of proposed Climate Action Plan actions.

- **City of Yellowknife Council Strategic Directions 2023-2026 (2023)**
  - Outlines key initiatives for managing growth with environmental responsibility and economic diversity. These include advancing energy initiatives, implementing the City's Food and Agriculture Strategy and Solid Waste Management Plan.
  - Built on the following principles, these principles also served to guide the development of the Climate Action Plan:
    - People First - Facilitate a safe, accessible and inclusive community that supports the well-being of all through a focus on reconciliation, equitable housing and providing a liveable community.
    - Service Excellence - Optimize resource capacity to ensure reliable services and infrastructure for current and future needs through a focus on asset management, capacity and organizational culture.
    - Sustainable Future - Manage growth for environmental responsibility and economic diversity through a focus on promoting a resilient future, growth readiness and a robust economy.
- **City of Yellowknife Community Emergency Plan (2025)**
  - Outlines the City's plan to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies or disasters, including those caused by climate change. The 2025 updated version includes lessons learned and recommendations following the 2023 wildfire season that led to a community-wide evacuation.
- **City of Yellowknife Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2025)**
  - Provides practical and operational wildland/urban interface risk mitigation strategies to reduce the threat of wildfire to development in the City. It provides a progress update since the 2019 version of the plan and includes specific recommendations for the City to take that have informed actions within this Climate Action Plan.

Forthcoming plans

- **Transportation Plan (2026)**
  - The City's forthcoming Transportation Plan will provide strategies to enhance active and public transportation in practical and cost-effective ways. The Transportation Plan will provide more elaborate detail on Climate Action Plan measures that relate to active and low-carbon transportation, and safe, reliable and sustainable public transportation networks.
- **Community Plan Comprehensive Update (2026)**
  - The City of Yellowknife is updating its Community Plan, our roadmap for how the city grows, moves, and thrives from now to 2050. The Community Plan update will lay the foundation for Yellowknife to:
    - Grow Together, Sustainably - Use land, housing, and infrastructure wisely so we can welcome new residents, strengthen communities, and avoid stretching our services too thin.
    - Care for the Environment - Protect the land, water, and natural spaces we love. Tackle climate change with thoughtful, responsible choices.
    - Build a Strong, Resilient Economy - Support local businesses, create good jobs, and grow key sectors like tourism and mining so everyone benefits from a thriving economy.
- **Asset Management Plan (2027)**
  - A new Asset Management Plan is being developed. It will guide how the City sets levels of service and approves capital projects. It will also provide guidance about the long-term costs of owning and operating assets that will help ensure the City's long-term financial stability. Incorporating a climate lens in the Asset Management Plan will ensure that decision-making regarding all City assets incorporates the current and future costs of climate change.
- **Water Master Plan and Sewage Master Plan (TBD)**
  - Both water and sewage master plans are under development with timelines to be determined.

Aligning with territorial and federal efforts

Federal climate action

The Government of Canada, through the *Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, has legislated a commitment to reach net-zero emissions by 2050[16] and an interim target of a 45-50% reduction from 2005 levels by 2035[17]. Key policies to achieve this level of emissions reduction include:

- *Electric Vehicle Availability Standard*[18] – requires 100% of light-duty vehicle sales be zero-emissions vehicles by 2035. The EV mandate is currently paused and will be waived for 2026 models as the government reviews the policy.
- *Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act*[19] – includes the Output-Based Pricing System, an industrial carbon price on heavy emitters. The consumer carbon price was repealed in April 2025.
- *Clean Fuel Regulations*[20] – to lower the carbon intensity of liquid fuels.
- *Reduction of Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Coal-fired Generation of Electricity Regulations*[21] – to phase out coal-fired electricity by 2030.
- *Clean Electricity Regulations*[22] – a proposed emissions performance standard, beginning in 2035, to establish a net-zero electricity system by 2050.
- *Regulations Respecting Reduction in the Release of Methane and Certain Volatile Organic Compounds*[23] – this regulation, which limits the oil and gas sector's methane emissions, is expected to be amended in 2027 to achieve a 75% reduction from 2012 levels by 2030.

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[16] Government of Canada, Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act
[17] UNFCC, Canada's 2035 Nationally Determined Contribution
[18] Government of Canada, Canada's Electric Vehicle Availability Standard (regulated targets for zero-emission vehicles)
[19] Government of Canada, Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act
[20] Government of Canada, Clean Fuel Regulations
[21] Government of Canada, Reduction of Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Coal-fired Generation of Electricity Regulations
[22] Government of Canada, Canada Gazette, Part I, Volume 157, Number 33: Clean Electricity Regulations
[23] Government of Canada, Regulations Respecting Reduction in the Release of Methane and Certain Volatile Organic Compounds (Upstream Oil and Gas Sector)

Aside from regulatory tools, the government has also invested nearly $10 billion in clean energy infrastructure programs such as the Smart Renewables Electrification Pathways Program and offers low-interest financing for clean electricity projects including the $15 billion Canada Growth Fund and $10 billion through the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

These, and other regulatory and incentive tools implemented by the federal government, are critical to guiding climate action in Yellowknife and the territory more broadly. These policies help ensure that our grid is powered with clean energy, there are clean jobs available and a thriving green economy, we have access to innovative science and technology, and that there is funding for municipal initiatives that make a difference in our community.

GNWT climate action

The GNWT has committed to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050, and, as Yellowknife makes up roughly half of the NWT's population, it is critical that Yellowknife take substantive action for this goal to be achieved. The GNWT has also been "working with Indigenous governments and other partners to improve flood mapping, support wildfire mitigation, and help communities adapt to a changing climate"[24]. The GNWT also recently reached a new milestone by completing the Electric Vehicle Corridor that makes EV charging feasible from Yellowknife to the Alberta border.[25]

The GNWT has invested approximately $45 million[26] to carry out their *2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan*[27] and the *2030 Energy Strategy*[28]. Actions in these plans that are particularly relevant for Yellowknife include:

- Supporting participation in community scale renewable generation.
- Offering a low or zero-emissions vehicle pilot program for communities serviced by hydroelectricity.
- GNWT fleet management including right-sizing and integrating low and zero-emission vehicles.
- Supporting community-based initiatives such as for public transit and active transportation.
- Delivering energy efficiency programs and services through the Arctic Energy Alliance.

[24] Government of Northwest Territories, Minister Macdonald Highlights Climate Action, Resilience, and Clean Energy on Earth Day Media Statement
[25] Government of Northwest Territories, Electric Vehicle Corridor
[26] Government of Northwest Territories, NWT Reports on Climate Action and Energy for 2022-2023
[27] Government of Northwest Territories, 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework 2019-2023 Action Plan
[28] Government of Northwest Territories, 2030 Energy Strategy

- Working with communities to identify potential cleaner air shelters and modifications required to reduce impacts of wildland fire smoke on human health.
- Monitoring changes to forest growth, productivity, health, and regeneration after disturbances.

The GNWT released a draft *2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework: 2025-2029 Action Plan*[29], an update to their 2019-2023 Action Plan. After releasing the draft in November 2024, the GNWT announced in May 2025 that it is shifting directions and will release an integrated climate adaptation and energy strategy in Spring 2026[30].

The GNWT is also working to encourage waste reduction and diversion through their *Waste Resource Management Strategy and Implementation Plan*[31]. Highlights include:

- Updating and amending the Waste Reduction and Recovery Act, (WRRA) to enable an extended producer responsibility (EPR) framework.
- Working with the ICI sector to explore and implement options to reduce Construction, Renovation and Demolition waste (e.g. design for future deconstruction).

The GNWT has been and will continue to be a critical partner in the ongoing success of Yellowknife's Climate Action Plan. In order for Yellowknife to meaningfully contribute to the GNWT's goals, and to implement the Plan, support is needed in the following areas:

- **Financial and Staff Resources**
    - The City of Yellowknife, like many municipalities, has limited financial and human resources. Implementing comprehensive climate change strategies requires substantial investment in infrastructure, technology, and human capital, which the City alone cannot afford.

- **Scale of Infrastructure and Environmental Impacts**

[29] Government of Northwest Territories, 2030 NWT Climate Change Strategic Framework Draft 2025-2029 Action Plan for Public Engagement
[30] Government of Northwest Territories, Jay Macdonald: Government of the Northwest Territories' New Approach to Energy and Climate Change
[31] Government of Northwest Territories, Northwest Territories Waste Resource Management Strategy and Implementation Plan

    - Much of Yellowknife's infrastructure and buildings was designed for historical weather events and standards and may not be compatible with future climate conditions. The potential loss of infrastructure in the Northwest Territories from permafrost thaw alone is estimated at $1.3 billion over the next 75 years[32]. The GNWT's involvement is crucial in providing the necessary funding and technical support to upgrade and maintain infrastructure to withstand climate impacts.
- **Coordination and Data Sharing**
    - Effective climate action requires coordination and data sharing across different levels of government. The GNWT has access to broader climate data and resources that can help Yellowknife target climate action where it is needed most.
- **Policy and Legislative Support**
    - The GNWT plays a critical role in setting policies and regulations that guide climate action across the territory. The GNWT's *Climate Change Action Plan* and *Energy Strategy* include initiatives such as flood mapping, wildfire mitigation, and transitioning to renewable energy sources. These policies provide a framework within which Yellowknife can develop its local strategies.
- **Economic and Social Dependencies**
    - The economic and social well-being of Yellowknife is closely tied to the broader NWT region. Climate change impacts such as wildfires, permafrost thaw, and extreme weather events have widespread effects that transcend municipal boundaries. Collaborative efforts with the GNWT ensure that climate actions are aligned and mutually supportive, reducing the risk of isolated actions that may not be as effective. This is especially important to consider in the context of recent evacuations and the role neighbouring communities play in supporting one another.

[32] Canadian Climate Institute, Tip of the Iceberg: Navigating the Known and Uknown Costs of Climate Change for Canada

Plan Development Process

In winter 2024, the City officially launched the development of the Climate Action Plan and began working with a consultant, Stantec Consulting Ltd. Over the course of seven months, Stantec completed a literature review, produced two key background reports, and began the engagement process. From there, the City drafted actions for the Plan and completed a second round of engagement. City staff from various departments supported the development of the Plan throughout the entire process and participated in targeted staff workshops. See table 4 for an overview of the development process.

Table 3 Climate Action Plan Development Timeline

	2024		2025									
	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Project launch												
Background & best practice review Existing mitigation & adaptation actions review												
Climate Vulnerability Assessment												
Energy & GHG Emissions Inventory												
Public & stakeholder engagement												
Selection of mitigation and adaptation actions Draft Climate Action Plan												
Public & stakeholder engagement on draft actions												
Update draft Climate Action Plan												
Draft Climate Action Plan prepared for Council												

Literature review

As part of background information gathering, Stantec completed a literature review of existing City, Territorial, and Federal policies and documents outlining prior actions and guidance pertaining to climate change, mitigation, and adaptation. See Appendix C for all documents reviewed.

Background reports

In preparation for developing the Plan, Stantec created two key background reports: the Corporate and Community Energy and GHG Emissions Inventory and Forecast Report and the Climate Vulnerability Assessment Report.

- The emissions inventory report, in Appendix A, outlines recent energy use and emissions from corporate and community sources and projects future emissions in a business-as-usual scenario to 2050.
- The vulnerability assessment, in Appendix B, highlights current and future climate changes for Yellowknife, assesses the vulnerability of City assets and anticipates how these assets will be impacted.

Rightsholder, stakeholder, and public engagement

The first phase of engagement aspired to:

- Find out how residents, community organizations, Indigenous governments, and the GNWT are acting on climate change.
- Invite residents, community organizations, local Indigenous governments, and the GNWT to share their perspectives on the City's current plans and help the City to establish vision and goals of the new Climate Action Plan.
- Discuss possible mitigation and adaptation strategies and collect feedback to understand the barriers and opportunities of each strategy.

Engagement tactics in this phase included a public roundtable, public survey, meetings with two GNWT departments, the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, utilities, and local NGOs.

Phase one culminated in the What We Heard Report – Phase 1 that is available on the City's website. The report finds that residents would like to see the City:

Lead by example

- Improve composting, recycling, and energy efficiency at City facilities.
- Invest in EV fleet, alternative energy, and active transportation.

Communicate with the public

- Provide updates on Climate Action Plan actions.
- Share data on climate change, emissions, and initiatives.
- Celebrate successes.

Educate and inform

- Provide guidance on preparing for climate impacts (like wildfire and smoke).
- Inform residents on reducing emissions practices.

Improve food security and local food production

- Explore opportunities to increase local food growing initiatives.
- Mitigate emergency supply chain disruptions.

Improve active transportation

- Invest in network improvements and maintenance.
- Encourage residents to use active transportation.

Improve waste diversion

- Share information and raise awareness about waste management practices.
- Invest in waste-to-energy systems.
- Expand the composting program.

The City used the feedback from phase 1 of engagement to inform the creation of draft actions for the Plan. Draft actions were released publicly in June 2025.

The goal of the second phase of engagement was to report back on the results of the phase one engagement, share key findings from the Energy and GHG Emissions Inventory and the Climate Vulnerability Assessment, and seek feedback on the

draft actions. This phase included a public roundtable, public survey, a booth at the Spring Tradeshow, presentation to the True North Rotary Club, and meetings with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, North Slave Métis Alliance, two GNWT departments, and local NGOS.

Phase 2 culminated in the What We Heard Report – Phase 2 that is available on the City's website. Among other recommendations, residents proposed the following:

Sustainable Transportation

- Increase the availability of bike storage and make long-term investments in active transportation infrastructure including protected bike lanes and improved winter maintenance.
- Improve the bus service by increasing their frequency, expanding hours of operation, improving safety and cleanliness on board, and reducing bus fares.
- Promote the Yellowknife Car-share Co-op and require EV-ready charging in new multi-unit residential buildings.
- Improve communication and signage regarding active transportation.

Waste Management

- Consider establishing a re-use store while also examining other options for diverting construction waste and furniture.
- Target incentives or requirements for businesses and industry to reduce waste.
- Support recycling locally including the use of recycled materials.
- Expand compost collection to multi-unit residential buildings and businesses.
- Improve communication and awareness on composting, recycling, and waste reduction.

Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

- Provide support for property owners to retrofit existing buildings and require more stringent energy efficiency and climate resilience standards in new developments.
- Adapt critical infrastructure with nature-based solutions.

Responsible Land-Use and Planning

- Create an urban forest management plan and/or natural asset management plan and preserve existing greenspaces and natural assets.
- Update the Development & Design Standards to improve greenery along streets.
- Fund the implementation of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture Strategy and support existing food-producing organizations and businesses.
- Address water level changes and protect our stormwater management system by increasing the use of permeable surfaces.

Governance and Accountability

- Improve accountability by including a timeline and prioritization of actions within the plan itself.
- Target communication of the Plan's implementation for different groups via different messaging and channels.
- Maintain healthy relationships with local Indigenous governments by enacting clear knowledge-sharing and mutual accountability protocols.
- Encourage council ownership of the Plan and implementation by creating a committee of council.
- Share full progress reports on the Plan's implementation every other year and regularly communicate progress in the interim.

Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

- Support community-led food systems and clarify the roles and responsibilities of each level of government in ensuring food and energy supply during emergencies.
- Clarify how the City defines vulnerability and design climate resilience support to reach vulnerable individuals.
- Designate shelters for poor air quality or extreme weather events, establish clear criteria for their use, and ensure adequate social support is available on site.

These results were used to inform revisions to the draft actions and finalize the Plan.

Internal workshops with City staff

The project team held two workshops with staff of various City departments, the first focusing on adaptation and the second on mitigation. Each workshop was designed to inform staff of the current state of climate change in Yellowknife, as it related GHG emissions or climate impacts, and provide highlights of future projections. Staff then brainstormed possible solutions and what resources or policy changes would be necessary to achieve the desired mitigation or adaptation outcomes. Once draft actions for the Plan were created, City staff who had participated in the initial workshops attended another working session and had the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed actions.

The Plan

Our Climate Action Plan provides a framework for the City to mitigate and adapt to climate change while also improving the quality of life and wellbeing of Yellowknife residents. As such, the Plan was developed to focus on actions within the City's authority and with a careful attention to resources the City owns, follow best practices of municipal climate policy, and reflect what we heard during public, stakeholder, and rightsholder engagement.

Vision

Our vision is to foster partnerships and implement impactful solutions that reduce our environmental impact while enhancing resilience to climate change through proactive planning, effective collaboration, and clear communication. Together, we can make Yellowknife a healthy, resilient community for all, now and into the future.

Guiding principles

The following guiding principles lay the foundation for the Plan and will provide direction as we strive to turn our vision into reality. They reflect and build upon existing approaches and guidelines established by the City, including Council's Strategic Directions 2023-2026.

a) Partnership-Driven Action

We will collaborate with the GNWT, local Indigenous governments, NGOs, local businesses, and community members to drive meaningful climate action.

The City recognizes that climate action requires collective effort. By fostering strong partnerships, we will pool resources, share expertise, and implement practical solutions.

b) Feasible, Measurable, and Impactful Projects

We will focus on identifying and championing shovel-ready projects that deliver measurable results.

The City will prioritize projects that can be implemented quickly and effectively and increase our ability to measure and report progress. These projects will lay the groundwork to reduce energy use and GHG emissions, while also increasing community resilience to climate change.

c) Advocacy and Policy Support

We will advocate for other levels of government to adopt policy that advances climate action and supports local solutions that fit the Yellowknife context.

The City will work to secure the necessary legislative reforms and financial support from the territorial and federal governments. Advocacy efforts will focus on ensuring Yellowknife has the frameworks and resources needed to implement climate action successfully.

d) Community Engagement and Education

We will engage residents to ensure they are informed, involved, and empowered to contribute to climate action.

Through clear communication and educational initiatives, the City will foster a sense of shared responsibility. We will ensure that all community members understand their role in addressing climate change and are equipped with the information required to take action.

e) Resilience and Adaptation

We will enhance the community's resilience to the impacts of climate change using an equity lens.

The City will proactively address climate-related risks by adapting infrastructure and systems to be more resilient. We will prioritize actions that enhance equitable access to resources and protect public health, infrastructure, and the environment from the increasing effects of climate change.

f) Community Wellbeing and Social Capital

We will enhance the quality of life of our residents through climate action that maximizes co-benefits, including connecting residents with each other to increase social resilience and support networks.

The City's climate action will ensure that we can provide reliable services, affordable solutions, and accessible supports that keep people healthy and foster community-building.

Scope of the Plan

Mitigation and adaptation

The scope and purpose of the Plan is to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing climate change through both mitigation, avoiding further climate change by reducing the emission of GHGs, and adaptation efforts, preparing for the impacts of climate change that are already underway.

Mitigation includes approaches such as:

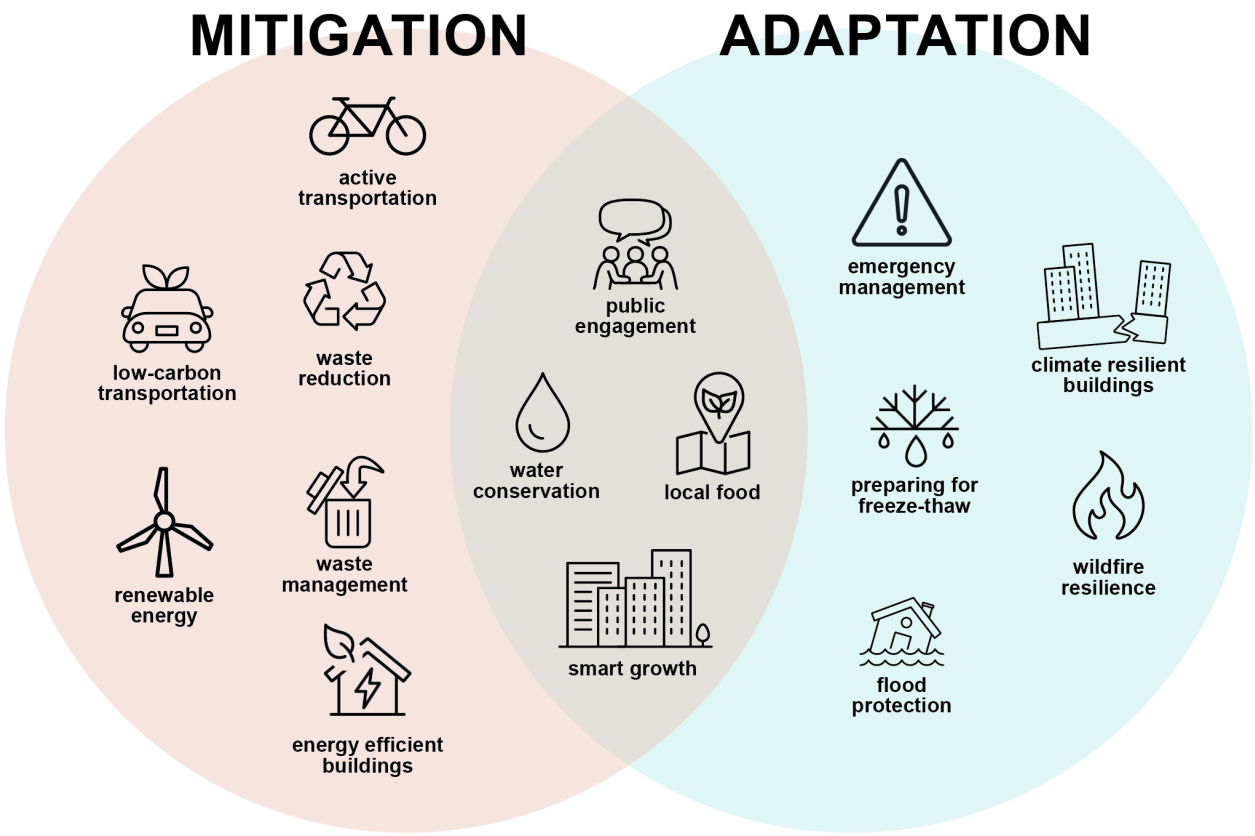
- Changing fuel sources used for energy production (e.g., switching from oil to renewable energy sources such as biomass, hydroelectric, solar, and wind, or other alternative energy sources).
- Improving the energy efficiency of vehicles, buildings, and appliances to reduce consumption.
- Improving resource use processes (e.g., materials extraction, processing, and manufacturing) and exploring models such as circular economies, to improve resource recovery and reduce landfill waste.

Adaptation measures include:

- Designing or retrofitting buildings and infrastructure using projected future climate scenarios.
- Preparing to respond to emergencies caused by extreme weather events.
- Increasing community resilience, or peoples' capacity to cope, to climate impacts (e.g., relationship-building or resource-sharing).

The Plan includes measures that are specifically geared for mitigation or adaptation or that accomplish both simultaneously, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 Example of the differences and synergies between climate change mitigation and adaptation measures



Spheres of influence

The City has direct control over its own infrastructure, assets, programming, budget prioritization, and internal policies. As such, the City has the ability to make decisions and take action in these areas on its own.

For areas outside the City's jurisdiction, or beyond the City's means or capacity, the City can effect change by:

- **Incentivizing** – promote or encourage others to act by making the action more attractive or easier to do.

- **Educating** – improve understanding and awareness of how to take action and the benefits of acting.
- **Partnering** – collaborate with others to pool resources, share data, and take action together.
- **Advocating** – encourage others to create the policy environment, or provide the resources necessary, for the City to take action.
- **Leading by example** – demonstrating what is possible and modelling climate action can influence others to follow our lead.

The Plan outlines direct actions the City can take, but also identifies opportunities to incentivize and educate residents, prospective partnerships with community groups or Indigenous governments, and areas to advocate for policy changes or resource-sharing from other levels of government.

Corporate and community focus

The Plan includes mitigation and adaptation actions for both Corporate and Community domains. *Corporate* refers to that which is within the direct control of the City; i.e., it owns and operates the asset. *Community* encompasses assets within the City's geographic boundary, including but not limited to residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings, as well as transportation. The City has a responsibility to lead by example and support residents to make changes in their activities and behaviours that reduce GHG emissions and build resilience to climate change.

Co-benefits of climate action

Although the actions described in this Climate Action Plan are mitigation and/or adaptation focused, several actions that reduce GHGs or increase resiliency also provide additional benefits, or co-benefits, to the broader community and environment.

For example, improving active transportation options results in GHG reductions, but also has numerous co-benefits like reducing air pollution, improving health and well-being, and reducing indirect impacts to water ways.

Potential co-benefits of actions are listed under each theme of the Plan and are grouped into the following categories:


Ecosystem Health
• Benefits the local ecosystem by protecting freshwater quality or availability, biodiversity and their habitat, or soil quality.
Human Health and Wellbeing
• Benefits physical or mental health by reducing rates of chronic disease, improving air quality, lowering heat stress, or reducing stress and anxiety.
Economic Growth and Efficiency
• Boosts the local economy by creating jobs, reducing costs, stimulating economic activity, or supporting the efficient use of resources and infrastructure.
Social Equity
• Improves social equity by reducing disparities, providing access to opportunities and resources to equity-deserving groups, or ensuring fair distribution of benefits and burdens.
Community-building and Partnerships
• Fosters a sense of community by building trust and capacity among community members, creating opportunities for new or enhanced relationships, or fostering a spirit of collaboration.
Institutional Alignment and Efficiency
• Improves internal consistency and efficiency by enhancing coordination across departments or organizations, streamlining processes, or reducing redundancies and duplicated efforts.
Efficient Land Use
• Makes efficient use of our land by promoting compact and connected land development, reducing sprawl, preserving natural areas, or maximizing use of existing infrastructure.

Structure of the Plan

The Plan is made up of themes, goals, strategies, and actions:

Measuring success

The City will use both primary and secondary indicators to track and measure the overall impact of implemented actions. Primary indicators directly track progress towards the desired reduction outcome of energy consumption and GHG emission levels. For example, as outlined in the Governance and Accountability theme below, the City will establish corporate energy and emissions targets for 2036 that would put us on track to reach corporate net zero by 2050. Progress towards these targets will be assessed in terms of tCO2e reduced from a baseline.

Secondary indicators provide an additional method of understanding whether progress is being made towards increasing climate resilience which is a challenging concept to measure. Examples of secondary indicators include tree cover, number of Net Zero Energy-Ready buildings, or total area of green infrastructure.

The City can also assess the successes and shortcomings of the Plan by observing co-benefits in the community and taking stock of public perceptions and feedback.

All of these indicators will tell us where we are succeeding, what challenges we face, and how we can refine our approach.

Resources required

Each of the actions in the Plan is categorized by resources required to show what is necessary for the action to be implemented. Resources required could include financial investment, staff time, or hiring additional staff.

- **Existing resources** – the action can be implemented within the existing budget and staff capacity.
- **Additional resources** – additional financial or staff resources will likely be required for the action to be implemented.
- **To be budgeted as required** – the action itself may not require additional resources for it to be implemented, though implementation of the action is likely to result in associated costs down the road.

1. Sustainable Transportation

Overview

On-road transportation accounts for 20% of 2023 community GHG emissions. The City fleet makes up 4% of 2023 corporate GHG emissions.[33] Embracing active transportation and public transit and decarbonizing our fleet is key to reducing a significant amount of emissions while offering several co-benefits to the community.

Nearly a third (28.8%) of Yellowknife residents did not have a driver's license in 2023,[34] [35] and the actual number of residents who do not drive is likely higher. Therefore, planning for people, and not cars, but children, the elderly and others who do not own or drive a vehicle brings greater benefits to the community. The forthcoming Transportation Plan, to be released in 2026, will contain more details on the City's active and public transportation strategies.

Goals

- Community transportation emissions are reduced by diversifying transportation modes.
- Residents have better access to low or zero-emission vehicle infrastructure.
- The City leads by example with plans for low and zero-emission fleet vehicles to reduce corporate emissions.
- Active and public transportation and resilient infrastructure are prioritized throughout City departments and plans.

Co-Benefits

Human Health and Wellbeing | *Social Equity* | *Community-building and Partnerships* | *Institutional Alignment and Efficiency* | *Efficient Land-Use* | *Economic Growth and Efficiency*| *Ecosystem Health* |

Implementation Timeline

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
1.1 c)	1.1 c)	1.2 b)	1.1 b)	1.1 b)	1.3 d)	1.3 a)	1.4 e)	1.4 a)	1.4 e)
1.1 d)	1.3 c)	1.3 b)	1.2 b)	1.3 a)	1.3 e)				
	1.3 f)	1.3 c)	1.3 d)	1.4 b)	1.4 b)				
	1.4 f)	1.4 f)	1.3 e)	1.4 d)	1.4 c)				
			1.4 d)						

[33] See Figure 3 on page 7 for the breakdown of corporate and community emissions.
[34] NWT Bureau of Statistics, Number of Drivers' Licenses by Region and Age, 1990 to 2023
[35] NWT Bureau of Statistics, Population Estimates by Community, Community Totals, 2001-2024

Strategies and Actions

1.1 Incorporate sustainable transportation in land-use planning

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Integrate a climate lens in the Transportation Plan, Community Plan update, and other forthcoming plans by prioritizing active and public transportation, mixed-use development, intensification along active and public transportation corridors, and policies for increased ZEV infrastructure.	- Advocate for these objectives in the development of the Community Plan update, Transportation Plan, and other plans and policies - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	To be budgeted as required
b) Adopt a Complete Streets[36] policy and guide to prioritize active transportation and public transit in street design for new and refurbished streets when opportunities present.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - Policy and guide adopted by 2030	To be budgeted as required
c) Update the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to expand areas without off-street parking minimums and increase the minimum requirements for bicycle parking.	- Initial research complete by 2026 - Zoning By-law updated by 2027	Existing resources
d) Prioritize school zones and commuter routes to and from schools for trail development and active transportation infrastructure in the Community Plan update.	- Advocate for these objectives in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	Existing resources

[36] A Complete Streets policy is a formal commitment for streets to be planned, built, and maintained to serve all users – regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation – safely and efficiently.

	- Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	

1.2 Enhance City operations and services

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Continue to improve the convenience of public transit, including by increasing the frequency of buses and expanding the hours of operation, in the Transportation Plan.	- The Transportation Plan includes measures for improving public transit convenience - Monitor for, and record instances of, improvements to convenience	Additional resources
b) Update road maintenance budgets to reflect the costs of climate impacts outlined in the Climate Vulnerability Assessment.	- Initial research complete by 2028 - Budget 2029 includes updated costs	To be budgeted as required

1.3 Enhance active transportation infrastructure

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Partner with local organizations and other levels of government to provide incentives for active transportation such as bicycles, e-bikes, e-bike charging outlets, studded tires, or bike storage.	- Develop the incentive and identify partners by 2030 - Implement the incentive by 2032	Additional resources
b) Partner with local organizations to promote bike-share programs, such as SHIFT, and explore other micro mobility-sharing initiatives.	- Identify strategies to support local bike-share programs by 2028 - Initial research to explore other micro mobility-sharing initiatives complete by 2029	Additional resources
c) Ensure consistent signage is used for designating all multi-use paths and bike routes and increase wayfinding signage along active transportation routes.	- Identify locations for additional path markings and wayfinding signage updates by 2027 - Install signage by 2028	Additional resources
d) Expand the Highway Traffic By-law's sidewalk snow-clearing section (No. 5055, 95) to all areas of the City, investigate compliance rates, educate the public on their responsibility to clear sidewalks, and improve enforcement.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - The By-law is updated by 2031 - Education and enforcement begin in 2031	Additional resources

e) Update the Highway Traffic By-law (No. 5055) to clarify where e-bikes, e-scooters, and other micro mobility vehicles may be operated and which vehicles may be operated on multiuse paths.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - The By-law is updated by 2031 - Education and enforcement begin in 2031	Existing resources
f) Advocate for the GNWT and federal government to increase funding for active transportation infrastructure and programming.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for these objectives by 2027 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources

1.4 Increase low and zero-emission vehicle use and infrastructure

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Work with utilities and the GNWT to develop a community EV charging infrastructure strategy including projecting future charging demand, utility requirements to increase EV charging capacity, and determining suitable charging locations.	- EV charging infrastructure strategy complete by 2034	Additional resources
b) Develop a corporate procurement policy, a funding plan, and a staff retraining plan to replace on- and off-road city fleet vehicles with low or zero-emission vehicles at the end of their lifespan.	- Initial research complete by 2030 - Corporate procurement policy, funding and staff retraining plans in place by 2031	To be budgeted as required

c) Assess the availability and feasibility of using biodiesel or alternative fuels where replacement with low or zero-emission vehicles is not possible for City fleet.	- Initial research complete by 2031	Existing resources
d) Implement a Right-Sizing policy[37] for City fleet vehicles to follow fleet management best practices.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - Policy developed and implemented by 2030	To be budgeted as required
e) Review the Development Incentives By-law to create a program to encourage EV-ready charging in multi-unit residential buildings or where opportunities exist and connect applicants with practical information on installing chargers.	- Initial research complete by 2033 - Development incentive in place by 2035	To be budgeted as required
f) Support car-share program providers in promoting EV use and improving public education on EV functionality in cold climates.	- Establish contact with the car-share provider by 2027 - Implement additional programming and education by 2028	Existing resources

[37] A Right-Sizing policy is a formal framework that ensures the City maintains the appropriate number, type, and capacity of fleet vehicles to match operational needs while minimizing costs, fuel use, and emissions. The policy sets expectations for evaluating asset utilization and guides procurement, retention, or retirement decisions.

2. Waste Management

Overview

Based on the GHG emissions inventory, solid waste was the largest contributing source of emissions, making up 73% of 2023 corporate GHG emissions. Solid waste emissions are high due to fugitive methane emissions generated from the buildup of waste since the landfill commenced as a community-operated, non-licensed, and unmonitored dump site in 1974. Although these emissions fall within the direct control of the City, they are logistically challenging to reduce.

It is, however, possible to limit the growth of these emissions. The Business-As-Usual (BAU) forecast[38] indicates that with no additional interventions, solid waste emissions are to account for 80% of corporate emissions by 2050. Reducing the amount of waste we produce, as well as diverting as much as possible – particularly organic materials – will limit the growth of solid waste emissions, lessen landfill impacts on our surrounding ecosystem, and increase the longevity of our landfill cells.

Goals

- Reduce Solid Waste Facility (SWF) GHG emissions by:
  - Producing less waste as a community;
  - Increasing re-use; and
  - Increasing diversion.

Implementation Timeline

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
2.2 b)	2.2 a)	2.1 b)	2.1 a)	2.1 a)
	2.2 c)	2.2 a)	2.2 f)	2.2 e)
		2.2 d)		

Co-Benefits

Ecosystem Health | *Economic Growth and Efficiency* | *Community-building and Partnerships* | *Institutional Alignment and Efficiency* |

[38] The Business-As-Usual forecast projects that corporate emissions will remain relatively constant from the 2023 baseline to 2050 at just over 26,000 tCO2e.

Strategies and Actions

2.1 Increase re-use of waste materials

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Create an incentive for an operator of a re-sale store for building materials in a new location to encourage systematic disassembly over demolition in the construction sector.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - Incentive in place by 2030	Additional resources
b) Advocate for the GNWT to support business development for the use of Recycled Crushed Aggregate[39] and re-use of other waste such as building materials, plastic, or tin.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for these objectives by 2028 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources

2.2 Divert and reduce waste

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Update the Solid Waste Management By-law (No. 4376) to require all multi-unit residential buildings and any businesses that generate organic waste to provide compost collection and support small businesses in the transition.	- Initial research complete by 2027 - Solid Waste By-law updated and support in place for small businesses by 2028	Additional resources

[39] Recycled Crushed Aggregate is construction material produced by processing and crushing reclaimed concrete, asphalt, or other demolition debris into granular form. It serves as a substitute for natural aggregates (such as gravel or crushed stone) in construction applications.

b) Support the Bottle Shop to run pop-up bottle and e-waste recycling collection or information-sharing booths at community events whenever feasible.	- Inform the Bottle Shop of where to find information on upcoming events and how to reach event organizers in 2026	Existing resources
c) Update the City's Event Guide and make it a requirement that garbage, recycling, and compost receptacles be available, clearly marked, and accessible at all events.	- Update the Event Guide by 2027 - Remind event organizers of their responsibilities on an ongoing basis	Existing resources
d) Upgrade all public waste receptacles to include clearly labeled garbage, recycling, and, where feasible, compost bins, and update signage at blue bin stations to align with actual processing streams.	- Public waste receptacles and blue bin station signage updated by 2028	Additional resources
e) Advocate for the GNWT to support development of a regional Material Recovery Facility[40] (MRF) and a plastic processing and remanufacturing facility.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for these objectives by 2030 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources
f) Advocate for the GNWT to implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)[41] policies.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2030 - Monitor for, and record instances of,	Existing resources

[40] A Material Recovery Facility is a specialized plant where mixed recyclables or waste materials are received, sorted, processed, and prepared for marketing and sale to end-users. Its purpose is to maximize recovery of recyclable commodities while minimizing contamination and residual waste.
[41] Extended Producer Responsibility is a policy approach that makes producers (such as manufacturers, brand owners, or importers) responsible for the entire lifecycle of their products — including for take-back, recycling, and final disposal, thus incentivizing them to design products and packaging that are easier to reuse, recycle, or safely dispose of.

	advancement of these objectives	

2.3 Plan for emissions-capture in future Solid Waste Facility cells

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Incorporate solid waste fugitive emissions data into decision-making rationale for implementing emissions-capturing technology in future landfill cells.	- Incorporate into decision-making during planning stages of the next new landfill cell	Existing resources

3. Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

Overview

With climate-related hazards becoming increasingly common, and due to the high vulnerability of our buildings, we must rethink and redesign our buildings and infrastructure to withstand future projected climate for the continued safety and resiliency of residents and City service delivery.

Buildings are also a major source of GHG emissions. As of 2023, they account for approximately 30% of community emissions. Heating oil represents the major contributing source of these building emissions, and as such transitioning to lower carbon alternatives for heating and increasing energy efficiency will be vital to reducing our emissions and will save residents money on their monthly bills.

Goals

- Our built environment is powered by greener energy sources.
- Our buildings and infrastructure are energy efficient and are designed to withstand future climate impacts.
- Developers, private property owners, and residents have access to resources to affordably decarbonize buildings and increase their resilience to climate change.

Implementation Timeline

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2034	2035
3.1 a)	3.1 a)	3.1 c)	3.2 c)	3.1 b)	3.1 b)	3.2 d)	3.1 a)	3.1 b)
3.3 a)	3.4 b)	3.3 c)	3.4 a)	3.2 a)	3.2 a)	3.3 b)	3.2 b)	3.2 b)
		3.3 d)	3.4 c)		3.2 c)		3.2 d)	
		3.4 a)			3.3 b)			
		3.4 b)						

Co-Benefits

Human Health and Wellbeing | *Economic Growth and Efficiency* | *Social Equity* | *Community-building and Partnerships* |

Strategies and Actions

3.1 Transition to renewable energy sources

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Adopt and implement the recommendations of the District Energy[42] Policy Framework (2022) including updates to the Community Plan and Zoning By-law (No. 5045).	- Initial research complete by 2026 - The Community Plan and Zoning-By-law updated by 2027 - Other recommendations implemented by 2034	Additional resources
b) Identify funding opportunities and partnerships to expand solar PV at City facilities and assess eligibility to participate in net metering programs.	- Initial research complete by 2030 - Funding and partnerships identified by 2031 - Solar PV installed at identified City facilities by 2035	Existing resources
c) Advocate for the GNWT to review and remove regulatory barriers to clean energy technologies such as the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) approval system for European Union biomass boilers.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2028 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources

[42] District Energy is a centralized system that produces thermal energy and distributes it through a network of insulated underground pipes to multiple buildings. The system can be fueled by renewable or non-renewable energy sources.

3.2 Decarbonize and increase climate resilience of City buildings and infrastructure

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Establish a process and allocate resources to regularly conduct building condition assessments, including assessment of climate change resilience and energy audits, for all City buildings.	- Process for regularly conducting assessments established by 2030 - Building assessments begin by 2031	Existing resources
b) Create a schedule to retrofit City facilities for improved energy efficiency and climate resilience for all impacts outlined in the Climate Vulnerability Assessment.	- Schedule is created by 2034 - Retrofits of City facilities begin by 2035	Additional resources
c) Incorporate Climate-Adjusted Design Criteria[43] into the construction and renovation of all City assets including stormwater drainage systems, water distribution networks, the wastewater treatment system, and road infrastructure.	- Initial research complete by 2029 - Design criteria updated and implemented by 2031	Additional resources
d) Develop adaptation plans for existing infrastructure known to be on discontinuous permafrost.	- Initial research complete by 2032 - Adaptation plans created by 2034	Additional resources

[43] Climate-Adjusted Design Criteria are engineering and planning standards that incorporate projected climate change impacts—such as increased rainfall, higher temperatures, permafrost thaw, or extreme weather—into the design, construction, and operation of infrastructure and buildings. They move beyond historical climate data to include future climate scenarios.

3.3 Decarbonize and increase climate resilience of community buildings and infrastructure

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Update the Zoning By-law (No. 5045, 11.3.3) to require the use of fire-resistant materials for building façades that fit the character of the neighbourhood and ensure the Building By-law (No. 4469) requires fire-resistant façade materials for all buildings.	- Zoning By-law updated by 2026 - The Building By-law requires fire-resistant façade materials	Existing resources
b) Introduce a retrofit incentive program for multi-unit residential buildings to make renewable energy, energy efficiency, water conservation, and climate resilience improvements to existing buildings.	- Initial research complete by 2031 - An incentive program was created by 2032	Additional resources
c) Advocate for the GNWT to increase funding for energy audits in Yellowknife.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2028 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources
d) Advocate for the GNWT to increase the local workforce of contractors and energy advisors/professionals to meet rising demand and address existing backlogs.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2028 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources

3.4 Connect developers, building owners and residents with the resources they need

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Partner with community organizations to host workshops for residents to learn how to improve their energy efficiency, water consumption, FireSmart their homes and businesses, or take other measures to increase their climate resilience.	- Identify partners and workshop opportunities by 2028 - Workshops begin by 2029	Existing resources
b) Share resources on energy efficient and climate resilient design practices with development applicants during the application process, such as the FireSmart Residential Development Guide and Arctic Energy Alliance's Guide for New Energy Efficient Buildings.	- Identify resources to share and changes needed to internal development application process by 2027 - Begin sharing resources with developers by 2028	Existing resources
c) Partner with the GNWT to provide incentives to residents for increasing at-home climate resilience such as air purifiers, fans, and air conditioners.	- Establish contact with the GNWT on this objective by 2029 - Monitor development and delivery of the program	Existing resources

4. Responsible Land-Use and Planning

Overview

Natural areas have a high vulnerability to climate hazards such as wildfires and drought. Incorporating nature-based solutions through land-use and planning can have multiple benefits for adapting to a changing climate and sequestering emissions.

Food insecurity is already high in Yellowknife and the NWT more broadly. Climate change compounds this issue by increasing the cost of food and causing delays or disruptions to transportation systems. Increasing local food production through land-use and planning can help build our community's resilience and improve food security while also reducing emissions produced by trucking food to Yellowknife.

Goals

- Land-use and planning enhance the ability of natural assets to improve community resilience to climate impacts.
- Infrastructure and natural assets are protected from future climate impacts.
- Community food security is enhanced.

Co-Benefits

Ecosystem Health | *Human Health and Wellbeing* | *Economic Growth and Efficiency* | *Social Equity* | *Community-building and Partnerships* | *Institutional Alignment and Efficiency* | *Efficient Land Use* |

Implementation Timeline

2026	2027	2028	2030	2031
4.1 a)	4.2 b)	4.1 c)	4.2 a)	4.2 a)
4.1 b)	4.3 a)	4.2 b)		4.2 c)
4.1 c)	4.3 b)			4.3 b)
4.2 b)				
4.3 c)				

Strategies and Actions

4.1 Increase resilient and efficient land development

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Update the Community Plan to require that decisions for greenfield development factor in the value of maintaining greenspace for community resilience and carbon sequestration.	- Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	Existing resources
b) Update the Community Plan to require that all development and rezoning applications demonstrate conformity with the Climate Action Plan's goals.	- Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	Existing resources
c) Review and update the City's Community Plan, Development & Design Standards, and the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to reflect FireSmart NWT best practices including landscaping standards and wildland fuels treatment.	- Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update - Initial research to amend the Development & Design Standards and the Zoning By-law complete by 2026 - Development & Design Standards and the Zoning By-law are updated by 2028	Existing resources

4.2 Increase the use of nature-based solutions

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Create an Urban Forest Management plan to enhance and protect City-owned natural spaces, including maintenance of new and existing trees, and incorporate FireSmart NWT best practices.	- Initial research complete by 2030 - Urban Forest Management plan created by 2031	Additional resources
b) Include green street design requirements, such as the use of green boulevards, new street trees, and permeable paving where feasible in the Transportation Plan, the Community Plan update, and Development & Design Standards.	- Advocate for this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update and the Transportation Plan - Initial research to amend the Development & Design Standards complete by 2027 - Development & Design Standards are updated by 2028	Existing resources
c) Advocate for the GNWT to adopt urban forest management principles and FireSmart NWT best practices, that align with the City's, on GNWT-owned land within Yellowknife.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2031 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Existing resources

4.3 Increase local food production

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Fund actions of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture (GROW) Strategy.	- Review GROW actions and prioritize funding for GROW in the 10-year Capital Plan (2027-2037)	Additional resources
b) Partner with local organizations or other levels of government to create a year-round greenhouse initiative.	- Partners identified and initial research initiated by 2027 - Greenhouse in operation by 2031	Additional resources
c) Designate land for the sole purpose of agricultural use in the Community Plan update.	- Advocate for this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	Existing resources

5. Governance and Accountability

Overview

Climate action requires a whole-of-government approach as it cannot be achieved by one single department. Therefore, our ability to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change hinges on interdepartmental collaboration within the City and integrating climate considerations into all operations and financial decision making.

We want to celebrate our wins, identify challenges, and be accountable for our shortcomings. This will require the involvement of our community and transparent communication throughout the implementation phase.

Goals

- Climate action is factored into financial decision making and operations across all departments.
- Measures are in place for reporting on the Plan implementation progress.
- We communicate effectively with the public, and information we share is accurate and accessible.

Co-Benefits

Economic Growth and Efficiency | *Community-building and Partnerships* | *Institutional Alignment and Efficiency* |

Implementation Timeline

2026	2027	2028	2029	2031	2036
5.2 a)	5.1 c)	5.1 c)	5.1 d)	5.2 f)	5.2 f)
5.2 b)	5.2 d)	5.1 d)			
5.2 c)	5.3 b)	5.2 d)			
5.2 e)					
5.3 a)					
5.3 d)					

Strategies and Actions

5.1 Integrate climate action in all City departments

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Integrate mitigation and adaptation principles into the annual budget process and asset management plans, including levels of service, lifecycle management strategies, and capital planning business cases.	- Advocate for this objective in the development of asset management plans - Factor in mitigation and adaptation principles into annual budget planning	Existing resources
b) Create annual Climate Action Plan implementation budgets to ensure actions are funded and to break down long-term actions into manageable yearly projects to 2036.	- Put forth a climate budget in advance of annual budget deliberations	Existing resources
c) Review the current procurement policy and update it to include green purchasing guidelines for energy and emission reductions, waste reductions, and climate resilience improvements.	- Review the current procurement policy and identify green purchasing guidelines by 2027 - Procurement policy updated by 2028	Existing resources
d) Integrate climate literacy into onboarding of all new City staff by including mandatory training on basic climate change science, local impacts, how City departments' work is impacted, and how staff can advance the Plan's goals.	- Identify available climate literacy courses by 2027 - Climate literacy course required for all new hires by 2028	Additional resources

5.2 Implement the Climate Action Plan and report on progress

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Establish an implementation working group consisting of representatives of local Indigenous governments, youth, environmental organizations, and private business, to provide direction, assistance, and feedback on the Plan implementation.	- Determine roles and responsibilities of the committee by Q2 2026 - Recruit members to serve on the committee by Q3 2026 - Launch the first committee meeting by Q4 2026	Existing resources
b) Establish an interdepartmental implementation working group to help coordinate implementation and assign responsibility.	- Determine roles and responsibilities of the working group by Q1 2026 - Identify City staff to join the working group by Q2 2026 - Launch the first working group meeting by Q3 2026	Existing resources
c) Allocate resources to enable ongoing tracking of GHG emissions to compare to our 2023 emissions inventory baseline.	- Funding is allocated by Q2 2026 - A strategy to complete emissions tracking on an ongoing basis identified by Q4 2026	Additional resources
d) Establish corporate energy and emissions targets for 2036, that would put us on track to reach corporate net zero by 2050, and monitor and report progress towards these commitments.	- Initial research complete by 2027 - Targets set by 2028	Existing resources

e) Dedicate resources to identifying and applying for funding from various sources and for all aspects of the Plan.	- Funding identification is ongoing beginning in 2026	Existing resources
f) Communicate updates regularly with the public, report annually to council, publish a midway review of the Plan and make any necessary updates, and publish a final review of the Plan.	- Public updates are ongoing - Report to council annually - Midway review in 2031 - Final review in 2036	Existing resources

5.3 Improve communication and public engagement

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Ensure the city website contains accurate, updated, and accessible information regarding climate and other environmental initiatives as well as Climate Action Plan progress.	- City web pages are reviewed and updated at least quarterly beginning in 2026	Existing resources
b) Create a visual dashboard on the city website to show Climate Action Plan implementation progress and other metrics such as GHG emissions, energy, and water use data.	- A visual dashboard is created by 2027 - The dashboard is updated annually	Additional resources
c) Maintain ongoing communication, partnership, and information-sharing on climate and other environmental issues with local Indigenous governments.	- Communication is ongoing	Existing resources
d) Target communication on Climate Action Plan implementation and opportunities for participation with specific messaging and outreach methods, including non-digital formats, to reach youth, Indigenous, and vulnerable members of our community.	- Communication plan, with methods and target audiences, complete by the end of 2026	Existing resources

6. Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

Overview

Yellowknife residents are not affected equally by climate change, nor do they have equal access to resources to adapt to climate impacts. With extreme weather and poor air quality becoming ever more common, we must take steps now so that as a community we are prepared to act when needed.

Regional climate-related emergencies are also becoming more frequent and severe. As such, Yellowknife is increasingly becoming a support hub for neighbouring communities – from accepting regional disaster debris to sheltering evacuees from other communities. Proactive planning can help build our capacity to respond in these situations.

Goals

- Build our community resilience so that all residents are prepared for climate change impacts.
- Increase our capacity to manage and support regional emergency response efforts.

Co-Benefits

Human Health and Wellbeing | *Social Equity* | *Community-building and Partnerships* |

Implementation Timeline

2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
6.1 a)	6.1 a)	6.1 b) 6.2 b) 6.3 a)	6.3 b)	6.3 c)

Strategies and Actions

6.1 Ensure equitable provision of support and resources

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Update and implement the Better Air Facility guideline that allows free access to the Fieldhouse when the Air Quality Health Index is 7+ and: • Add additional better air facility locations; • Include a temperature threshold for access during extreme heat or cold events; • Detail supports available to facility users such as transportation options, access to water, social supports, and accessibility features; and • Share this information through City channels and community organizations.	- Initial research complete by 2027 - Better Air Facility guideline updated and implemented by 2028	To be budgeted as required
b) Advocate for the GNWT and local organizations to support vulnerable residents by: • Defining vulnerability; • Mapping vulnerable populations; • Identifying climate impacts faced by vulnerable residents; and • Addressing inequities and providing support.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2029 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of this objective	Additional resources

6.2 Communicate with residents on how to prepare for climate impacts

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Continue to provide residents with personal preparedness information and resources for climate impacts such as how to make an evacuation plan, power outage plan, extreme weather plan, create a safety kit, how to FireSmart properties, or other resilience-building actions.	- Information and resource sharing are ongoing	Existing resources

b) Create a communication strategy for sharing information on support and resources through non-digital formats for those without access to internet.	- Communication strategy created and implemented by 2029	Existing resources

6.3 Support our neighbouring communities

Action	Success Measure	Resources required
a) Advocate for the GNWT to: • Evaluate the current system for shelter operation and emergency response during regional evacuations; and • Increase funding and support so Yellowknife can continue to host regional evacuees.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2029 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of this objective	Existing resources
b) Advocate for the GNWT and other levels of government to identify strategies to improve food security and distribution and other supply chain issues during emergencies.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2030 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of this objective	Existing resources
c) Advocate for the GNWT to develop a plan to manage disaster debris in anticipation of increasing amounts of debris from regional climate impacts such as wildfires.	- Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for this objective by 2031 - Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of this objective	Existing resources

Implementing the Plan

Over the next 10 years, the City will work diligently to allocate staff time and budget to ensure the Plan is implemented as efficiently as possible. Plan implementation will also require input from the public, Indigenous governments, and support from all City departments as well as the GNWT. Over the course of this work, the City will provide regular updates and reports on progress to ensure transparency and accountability. See Table 5 below for a tentative timeline of next steps in the implementation process. This timeline is subject to change.

Community involvement in implementation

Community involvement in the implementation of the Plan will be a critical success factor in achieving meaningful and impactful change. As such, a diverse range of community members will be invited to contribute their time, expertise, passion, and lived experiences to help implement our Climate Action Plan, in the form of an implementation working group. We will seek out representatives of local Indigenous governments, youth, environmental organizations, and private business.

The overarching goals of this group will be to:

- Provide guidance on action prioritization;
- Support monitoring and measuring progress;
- Cultivate further community involvement and ownership;
- Mobilize resources for implementing the Plan; and
- Hold the City and other actors accountable.

Interdepartmental collaboration

Staff from all departments are required to use the Plan as a guide for decision-making and actions within the Plan are to be led and implemented by various departments. As such, success of the Plan relies on ongoing collaboration and participation across departments and divisions.

The City will establish an interdepartmental working group to help coordinate action and remove silos between departments. This will facilitate assigning responsibility among departments for leading implementation of each of the Plan actions.

Financing the Plan

Implementing the Plan will not be possible without securing and allocating funds. To do so, we will:

- Create annual Climate Action Plan implementation budgets to ensure actions are funded and to break down long-term actions into manageable yearly projects to 2036.
- Explore and secure funding for all aspects of the Plan.

Funding for our Climate Action Plan will be procured via multiple sources and using multiple stages and financing mechanisms. Every effort will be made to ensure the funding solutions that emerge are stable, sustainable, and equitable. Examples of funding opportunities that may be explored include grants, revolving funds, and increased or expanded service fees.

Proposed implementation timeline

The actions within the plan will be implemented over the span of the next ten years. Certain actions have been prioritized, and are set to be implemented sooner, for various reasons including the impact they have on emissions reduction and adaptation, their current feasibility, and support from the GNWT, utilities, the public, and local Indigenous governments. Lastly, some actions must be complete in order for others to be possible. See below for the proposed timeline of action implementation including a breakdown of their steps (timeline subject to change). Not all actions have been assigned a year for implementation.

Table 4 Timeline of action implementation

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
1.1 c)	1.1 c)	1.2 b)	1.1 b)	1.1 b)	1.3 d)	1.3 a)	1.4 e)	1.4 a)	1.4 e)	5.2 f)
1.1 d)	1.3 c)	1.3 b)	1.2 b)	1.3 a)	1.3 e)	3.2 d)		3.1 a)	3.1 b)	
2.2 b)	1.3 f)	1.3 c)	1.3 d)	1.4 b)	1.4 b)	3.3 b)		3.2 b)	3.2 b)	
3.1 a)	1.4 f)	1.4 f)	1.3 e)	1.4 d)	1.4 c)			3.2 d)		
3.3 a)	2.2 a)	2.1 b)	1.4 d)	2.1 a)	3.1 b)					
4.1 a)	2.2 c)	2.2 a)	2.1 a)	2.2 e)	3.2 a)					
4.1 b)	3.1 a)	2.2 d)	2.2 f)	3.1 b)	3.2 c)					
4.1 c)	3.4 b)	3.1 c)	3.2 c)	3.2 a)	3.3 b)					
4.2 b)	4.2 b)	3.3 c)	3.4 a)	4.2 a)	4.2 a)					
4.3 c)	4.3 a)	3.3 d)	3.4 c)	6.3 b)	4.2 c)					
5.2 a)	4.3 b)	3.4 a)	6.1 b)		4.3 b)					
5.2 b)	5.1 c)	3.4 b)	6.2 b)		5.2 f)					
5.2 c)	5.1 d)	4.1 c)	6.3 a)		6.3 c)					
5.2 e)	5.2 d)	4.2 b)	6.3 a)							
5.3 a)	5.3 b)	5.1 c)								
5.3 d)	6.1 a)	5.1 d)								
		5.2 d)								
		6.1 a)								

1. Sustainable Transportation
2. Waste Management
3. Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure
4. Responsible Land-Use and Planning
5. Governance and Accountability
6. Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

Reporting on progress

The City of Yellowknife will report annually to Council and will regularly communicate updates with the public regarding Climate Action Plan implementation and our progress towards mitigation and adaptation more broadly.

To reflect on our successes and challenges, the City's annual reports may include:

- Updated corporate and community energy and GHG emissions inventories;
- Progress towards achieving corporate targets;
- Implementation status of all Climate Action Plan actions;
- Evolving climate impacts and risks; and
- Measurable impact to date (e.g., emissions, risks, co-benefits, and other key indicators).

The City will conduct a review of the Plan at the midway point in 2031 and the Plan will be updated at that time if required. Then, once this Climate Action Plan expires in 2036, a final review will be conducted and future plans for climate action will be discussed.

Table 5 Next steps for Climate Action Plan implementation

YEAR		2026				2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
QUARTER		1	2	3	4										
NEXT STEPS	Establish an implementation working group consisting of local representatives														
	Establish an interdepartmental implementation working group														
	Create annual Climate Action Plan implementation budgets														
	Secure funding for Climate Action Plan actions														
	Report annually to council and provide regular progress updates														
	Midway review														
	Final review and planning for the future														

Appendices

Appendix A: Corporate and Community Energy and GHG Emissions Inventory Report

Appendix B: Climate Vulnerability Assessment

Appendix C: Documents reviewed for literature review

Schedule A – Climate Action Plan Implementation 2026

Actions to be implemented by the end of 2026

Action Number	Action	Success Measure (related to the portion of the action to be taken this year)	Lead Department(s)	Budget
1.1 a)	Integrate a climate lens in the Transportation Plan, Community Plan update, and other forthcoming plans by prioritizing active and public transportation, mixed-use development, intensification along active and public transportation corridors, and policies for increased ZEV infrastructure.	Advocate for these objectives in the development of the Community Plan update, Transportation Plan, and other plans and policies Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	PD and PWE	HAF Funding and Wages and benefits
1.1 c)	Update the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to expand areas without off-street parking minimums and increase the minimum requirements for bicycle parking.	Initial research complete by 2026	PD	Wages and benefits
1.1 d)	Prioritize school zones and commuter routes to and from schools for trail development and active transportation infrastructure in the Community Plan update.	Advocate for these objectives in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	PD and PWE	Wages and benefits
2.2 b)	Support the Bottle Shop to run pop-up bottle and e-waste recycling collection or information-sharing booths at community events whenever feasible.	Inform the Bottle Shop of where to find information on upcoming events and how to reach event organizers in 2026	PD and Comm S	Wages and benefits
3.1 a)	Adopt and implement the recommendations of the District Energy Policy Framework (2022)	Initial research complete by 2026	PD and PWE	Wages and

	including updates to the Community Plan and Zoning By-law (No. 5045).			benefits; future years TBD
3.3 a)	Update the Zoning By-law (No. 5045, 11.3.3) to require the use of fire-resistant materials for building façades that fit the character of the neighbourhood and ensure the Building By-law (No. 4469) requires fire-resistant façade materials for all buildings.	Zoning By-law updated started in 2026 The Building By-law requires fire-resistant façade materials	PD	HAF Funding and Wages and benefits
4.1 a)	Update the Community Plan to require that decisions for greenfield development factor in the value of maintaining greenspace for community resilience and carbon sequestration.	Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	PD	HAF Funding and Wages and benefits
4.1 b)	Update the Community Plan to require that all development and rezoning applications demonstrate conformity with the Climate Action Plan's goals.	Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	PD	HAF Funding and Wages and benefits
4.1 c)	Review and update the City's Community Plan, Development & Design Standards, and the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to reflect FireSmart NWT best practices including landscaping standards and wildland fuels treatment.	Inclusion of this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update Initial research to amend the Development & Design Standards and the Zoning By-law complete by 2026	PD	HAF Funding and Wages and benefits
4.2 b)	Include green street design requirements, such as the use of green boulevards, new street trees, and permeable paving where feasible in	Advocate for this objective in the development of the 2026	PD and PWE	Wages and benefits

	the Transportation Plan, the Community Plan update, and Development & Design Standards.	Community Plan update and the Transportation Plan		
4.3 c)	Designate land for the sole purpose of agricultural use in the Community Plan update.	Advocate for this objective in the development of the 2026 Community Plan update	PD	$3,500
5.1 b)	Create annual Climate Action Plan implementation budgets to ensure actions are funded and to break down long-term actions into manageable yearly projects to 2036.	Put forth a climate budget in advance of annual budget deliberations	PD	Wages and benefits
5.2 a)	Establish an implementation working group consisting of representatives of local Indigenous governments, youth, environmental organizations, and private business, to provide direction, assistance, and feedback on the Plan implementation.	Determine roles and responsibilities of the working group by Q2 2026 Recruit members to serve on the working group by Q3 2026 Launch the first working group meeting by Q4 2026	PD	$1, 000
5.2 b)	Establish an interdepartmental implementation working group to help coordinate implementation and assign responsibility.	Determine roles and responsibilities of the working group by Q1 2026 Identify City staff to join the working group by Q2 2026 Launch the first working group meeting by Q3 2026	ALL	Wages and benefits
5.2 c)	Allocate resources to enable ongoing tracking of GHG emissions to compare to our 2023 emissions inventory baseline.	Funding is allocated by Q2 2026 A strategy to complete emissions tracking on an ongoing basis identified by Q4 2026	PD, PWE, and Corp S	$25,000
5.2 e)	Dedicate resources to identifying and applying for funding from various sources and for all aspects of the Plan.	Funding identification is ongoing beginning in 2026	PD and Corp S	Wages and benefits

5.3 a)	Ensure the city website contains accurate, updated, and accessible information regarding climate and other environmental initiatives as well as Climate Action Plan progress.	City web pages are reviewed and updated at least quarterly beginning in 2026	PD	Website Budget and Wages and benefits
5.3 c)	Maintain ongoing communication, partnership, and information-sharing on climate and other environmental issues with local Indigenous governments.	Communication is ongoing	PD	Wages and benefits
5.3 d)	Target communication on Climate Action Plan implementation and opportunities for participation with specific messaging and outreach methods, including non-digital formats, to reach youth, Indigenous, and vulnerable members of our community.	Communication plan, with methods and target audiences, complete by the end of 2026	PD and EOI	$5,000
6.2 a)	Continue to provide residents with personal preparedness information and resources for climate impacts such as how to make an evacuation plan, power outage plan, extreme weather plan, create a safety kit, how to FireSmart properties, or other resilience-building actions.	Information and resource sharing are ongoing	PD and PS	Public safety budget and Wages and benefits

Comm S: Community Services
Corp S: Corporate Services
EOI: Economic Opportunities and Investment
PD: Planning and Development
PS: Public Safety
PWE: Public Works and Engineering

Schedule B – Climate Action Plan Implementation 2027

Actions to be implemented by the end of 2027

Action Number	Action	Success Measure (related to the portion of the action to be taken this year)	Lead Department(s)	Budget
1.1 a)	Integrate a climate lens in the Transportation Plan, Community Plan update, and other forthcoming plans by prioritizing active and public transportation, mixed-use development, intensification along active and public transportation corridors, and policies for increased ZEV infrastructure.	Advocate for these objectives in the development of the Community Plan update, Transportation Plan, and other plans and policies Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	PD and PWE	$0
1.1 c)	Update the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to expand areas without off-street parking minimums and increase the minimum requirements for bicycle parking.	Zoning By-law updated by 2027	PD	$0
1.3 c)	Ensure consistent signage is used for designating all multi-use paths and bike routes and increase wayfinding signage along active transportation routes.	Identify locations for additional path markings and wayfinding signage updates by 2027	EOI and Comm S	Potentially funded by Feds
1.3 f)	Advocate for the GNWT and federal government to increase funding for active transportation infrastructure and programming.	Establish contact with the GNWT to advocate for these objectives by 2027 Monitor for, and record instances of, advancement of these objectives	Council	$0

1.4 f)	Support car-share program providers in promoting EV use and improving public education on EV functionality in cold climates.	Establish contact with the car-share provider by 2027	PD and EOI	TBD
2.2 a)	Update the Solid Waste Management By-law (No. 4376) to require all multi-unit residential buildings and any businesses that generate organic waste to provide compost collection and support small businesses in the transition.	Initial research complete by 2027	PWE	TBD
2.2 c)	Update the City's Event Guide and make it a requirement that garbage, recycling, and compost receptacles be available, clearly marked, and accessible at all events.	Update the Event Guide by 2027 Remind event organizers of their responsibilities on an ongoing basis	Comm S	$0
3.1 a)	Adopt and implement the recommendations of the District Energy Policy Framework (2022) including updates to the Community Plan and Zoning By-law (No. 5045).	The Community Plan and Zoning-By-law updated by 2027	PD	$0
3.4 b)	Share resources on energy efficient and climate resilient design practices with development applicants during the application process, such as the FireSmart Residential Development Guide and Arctic Energy Alliance's Guide for New Energy Efficient Buildings.	Identify resources to share and changes needed to internal development application process by 2027	PD	$0
4.2 b)	Include green street design requirements, such as the use of green boulevards, new street trees, and permeable paving where feasible in the Transportation Plan, the Community Plan update, and Development & Design Standards.	Initial research to amend the Development & Design Standards complete by 2027	PD and PWE	TBD
4.3 a)	Fund actions of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture (GROW) Strategy.	Review GROW actions and prioritize funding for GROW in	Council and EOI	TBD

		the 10-year Capital Plan (2027-2037)		
4.3 b)	Partner with local organizations or other levels of government to create a year-round greenhouse initiative.	Partners identified and initial research initiated by 2027	PD and EOI	TBD
5.1 b)	Create annual Climate Action Plan implementation budgets to ensure actions are funded and to break down long-term actions into manageable yearly projects to 2036.	Put forth a climate budget in advance of annual budget deliberations	PD	$0
5.1 c)	Review the current procurement policy and update it to include green purchasing guidelines for energy and emission reductions, waste reductions, and climate resilience improvements.	Review the current procurement policy and identify green purchasing guidelines by 2027	PD and Corp S	$0
5.1 d)	Integrate climate literacy into onboarding of all new City staff by including mandatory training on basic climate change science, local impacts, how City departments' work is impacted, and how staff can advance the Plan's goals.	Identify available climate literacy courses by 2027	PD and Corp S (HR)	TBD
5.2 d)	Establish corporate energy and emissions targets for 2036, that would put us on track to reach corporate net zero by 2050, and monitor and report progress towards these commitments.	Initial research complete by 2027	PD	TBD
5.3 b)	Create a visual dashboard on the city website to show Climate Action Plan implementation progress and other metrics such as GHG emissions, energy, and water use data.	A visual dashboard is created by 2027 The dashboard is updated annually	PD and EOI	$0
5.3 c)	Maintain ongoing communication, partnership, and information-sharing on climate and other	Communication is ongoing	PD	$0

	environmental issues with local Indigenous governments.			
6.1 a)	Update and implement the Better Air Facility guideline that allows free access to the Fieldhouse when the Air Quality Health Index is 7+ and: • Add additional better air facility locations; • Include a temperature threshold for access during extreme heat or cold events; • Detail supports available to facility users such as transportation options, access to water, social supports, and accessibility features; and • Share this information through City channels and community organizations.	Initial research complete by 2027	PD and PS	TBD
6.2 a)	Continue to provide residents with personal preparedness information and resources for climate impacts such as how to make an evacuation plan, power outage plan, extreme weather plan, create a safety kit, how to FireSmart properties, or other resilience-building actions.	Information and resource sharing are ongoing	PD and PS	TBD

Comm S: Community Services
Corp S: Corporate Services
EOI: Economic Opportunities and Investment
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CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

MEMORANDUM TO COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE: Governance and Priorities

DATE: November 10, 2025

DEPARTMENT: Planning and Development

ISSUE: Whether to adopt for information the Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 as prepared, and direct Administration to use the plan for long-term decision making and investment in Climate change mitigation and adaptation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Adopt for information the Climate Action Plan 2026-2036, as prepared; and
2. Direct Administration to develop an implementation plan for Council's consideration to guide decision-making and investment in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

BACKGROUND:

The Climate Action Plan ("the Plan") 2026-2036 replaces the Corporate and Community Energy Action Plan (the "CCEAP") 2015-2025 and is the City's first climate plan encompassing both mitigation and adaptation efforts to address climate change and negative impacts on the community. Action items will be brought forward through an implementation plan with budget and/or funding allocations in alignment with the schedule outlined in the Plan.

The review of the CCEAP has revealed the prior actions have led to a 20% decrease in Yellowknife's community GHG emissions from 2009 to 2023. This reduction resulted mainly from a decrease in air travel and decrease in emissions from residential buildings due to fuel switching for heating. However, our emissions are trending upwards from 2021 to 2023, with a 16% increase over two years. GHG emissions from off-road transportation i.e. air travel (40% or 108,195 tCO2e), Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (ICI) buildings (24% or 64,026 tCO2e) and on-road transportation (20% or 53,965 tCO2e) represent the major contributing sectors to the City's 2023 Community GHG emissions estimates. Together, these three sources account for approximately 84% of the City's Community GHG emissions and approximately 89% of Community energy use. There is a long way to go to reach net-zero – a commitment made by both the federal government, through its *Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*, and the GNWT.

Continuing with business-as-usual is not an option; substantial additional action is needed to put us on track. The forecast to 2050 shows a decrease in our emissions of 23% from 2023 which would put us nearly 200,000 tCO2e over our net-zero target.

Yellowknife is experiencing the impacts of climate change. These include community-wide evacuations from wildfires, costly infrastructure damage due to permafrost thaw, and changes to our way of life and individual well-being. In the coming years, Yellowknife is expected to see increasingly warmer and shorter winters, more precipitation in the form of snow, further permafrost degradation, hotter and drier summers, more intense wildfires, and more extreme weather among other climate hazards. By proactively planning for climate change, we can be better prepared for, and have increased resiliency and capacity to respond to, the impacts of climate change – and save money down the road. Acting now will help prevent disruptions to our daily lives, service delivery, and economy, and keep Yellowknife safe for all.

The CCEAP included aspirational emissions reduction targets; the City has not met our own targets and are not on track to reach national and territorial commitments. This has been in part due to a lack of detailed, concrete actions within the plans and a failure to fund initiatives that would substantially reduce our emissions. The Plan, while it does not contain an overarching emissions reduction target – aside from a commitment to net-zero GHG emissions by 2050, has taken a new methodological approach. It outlines feasible and effective actions, qualitative measures for success, mechanisms to report progress and ensure accountability, and opportunities to create realistic but ambitious targets down the road. Budget 2026 includes money to begin the implementation and projects as identified in the Plan. In future years, funding and budget considerations will be required to support the Plan.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTION/RESOLUTION/POLICY:

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 1.3	Liveable Community Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.
Key Initiative 1.3.3	Supporting design standards that are multi-modal including recognizing Yellowknife's advantages as a winter city.
Key Initiative 1.3.4	Providing public transit that meets user needs.
Key Initiative 1.3.5	Advocating for enhanced outreach and social support services.
Key Initiative 1.3.6	Working with all partners towards a safe, supportive and compassionate community for all.

Strategic Direction #2:	**Service Excellence**
Focus Area 2.1	Asset Management Planning, implementing and maintaining assets to reliably, safely and cost effectively deliver services for current and future community needs.
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.
Key Initiative 3.1.1	Advancing energy initiatives, including district energy options to energy retrofits.
Key Initiative 3.1.2	Implementing the Solid Waste Management Plan.
Focus Area 3.2	Growth Readiness Ensuring land development supports economic readiness and community priorities.
Key Initiative 3.2.2	Completing land development tools and strategies that support growth readiness.
Key Initiative 3.2.4	Sustaining infrastructure capacity for future growth.
Focus Area 3.3	Robust Economy Doing our part to stimulate and amplify economic development opportunities.
Key Initiative 3.3.4	Implementing the Food and Agriculture Strategy.
For Information Only	Administration presented the progress update on Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 at the June 24, 2025, Governance and Priorities Committee.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BY-LAWS, STUDIES, PLANS:

1. *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act*;
2. *Cities, Towns and Villages Act SNWT 2003, c.22*;
3. *GNWT 2019-2023 Climate Change Action Plan*[1]*;*
4. *GNWT 2030 Energy Strategy*[2];
5. Community Plan (2020), By-law No. 5007, as amended; and
6. Corporate and Community Energy Plan 2015-2025.

[1] https://www.gov.nt.ca/ecc/sites/ecc/files/resources/128-climate_change_ap_proof.pdf
[2] https://www.inf.gov.nt.ca/sites/inf/files/resources/gnwt_inf_7272_energy_strategy_web-eng.pdf

CONSIDERATIONS:

Plan development process

In fall 2024, the City officially launched the development of the Climate Action Plan and began working with a consultant, Stantec Consulting Ltd. Over the course of seven months, Stantec completed a literature review, produced two key background reports, and began the engagement process.

Multiple public, stakeholder, and rightsholder engagement opportunities took place from December 2024 to March 2025. Strategies for engagement included invitation letters to Indigenous governments from the Mayor (3 sent), a public roundtable (8 attendees), a public survey (149 responses), and stakeholder meetings with NAKA Power, GNWT Energy, GNWT Environment and Climate Change, and several local NGOs including Ecology North, Alternatives North, and Seniors for Climate.

Based on the information collected from the engagement sessions, the City drafted actions for the Plan and completed a second round of engagement from April to July 2025. This round of engagement included rightsholder meetings with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and North Slave Métis Alliance, a public survey (56 responses), a public roundtable (20 attendees), a presentation to the True North Rotary Club, and stakeholder meetings with GNWT Energy, GNWT Environment and Climate Change, Arctic Energy Alliance, Yellowknife Community Garden Collective, and the Bottle Shop Recycling Depot. This phase of engagement informed revisions to the draft Plan.

City administration from various departments provided technical expertise throughout the development of the Plan and participated in targeted staff workshops.

Structure of the Plan

The first section of the Plan encompasses context for climate action in Yellowknife, including the results of the Energy GHG Emissions Inventory, the Climate Vulnerability Assessment, previous City energy plans, and alignment with other City, territorial, and federal plans and policies.

Next, is an outline of the plan development process and the vision and guiding principles. These principles, that build upon existing City approaches and Council's Strategic Directions 2023-2026, include:

a) *Partnership-Driven Action*
b) *Feasible, Measurable, and Impactful Projects*
c) *Advocacy and Policy Support*
d) *Community Engagement and Education*
e) *Resilience and Adaptation*
f) *Community Wellbeing and Social Capital*

The body of the Plan is made up of six themes, each with goals, strategies, and actions. The six major themes are:

1. Sustainable Transportation
2. Waste Management
3. Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure
4. Responsible Land-Use and Planning
5. Governance and Accountability
6. Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

Actions within the Plan focus on both corporate (e.g., City-owned or operated) and community assets and include direct actions the City will take, opportunities to incentivize and educate residents, prospective partnerships with community groups or Indigenous governments, and areas to advocate for policy changes or resource-sharing from other levels of government.

Lastly, the Plan includes implementation processes that provide mechanisms to achieve the actions, timelines, and reporting requirements.

- Energy & Green House Gas Emissions

While this Plan does not provide a specific estimate of GHG emissions reductions to be expected through implementation, actions in the Plan were selected in part for their ability to directly reduce GHG emissions. Through end-use fuel switching, energy efficiency improvements, and energy source decarbonization, these actions are expected to reduce emissions and costs of electricity and fuel bills for the City and residents. The City will continue tracking GHG emissions throughout the implementation of the Plan.

- Environmental

Actions within the Plan are expected to have several benefits for ecosystem health. This includes maintaining, expanding, or improving green spaces, preserving our natural stormwater and sewage management capacity, increasing the longevity of landfill cells at the Solid Waste Facility, and improving air quality.

- Public Safety

Preparing our community members and adapting our infrastructure for the impacts of climate change inherently improves public safety. Actions within the Plan include increasing the fire resistance of buildings, FireSmart landscaping, educating residents on how to prepare for climate impacts, and increasing access to Better Air Facilities during smoke and extreme temperatures.

- Traffic & Transportation

One of six themes in the Plan is geared towards making transportation more sustainable. This includes increasing public transit services, enhancing active transportation infrastructure, and decarbonizing on-road vehicles – both personal vehicles and City fleet. Combined, these actions will reduce GHG emissions, reduce traffic congestion, and advance equity by increasing transportation options for the third of residents who do not have a drivers license in Yellowknife.

- Cost of Living

Several actions within the Plan may lead to reduced cost of living for residents in the long-term. For example, increasing local food production may reduce food insecurity, incentivizing developers to build energy efficient and resilient buildings lowers energy costs for future occupants, and retrofitting existing buildings reduces those costs for existing occupants. In addition, expanding public transit and increasing access to active transportation may reduce the need for individuals to own, operate, and maintain private vehicles. Every effort should be made to ensure that Plan implementation does not result in cost-of-living increases in the short-term.

- Legislative

The *Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act* establishes a legally binding commitment for the Government of Canada to reach net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. The Act also establishes a GHG emissions reduction target of 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030.

The GNWT has committed to reduce GHG emissions 30% below 2005 levels by 2030 and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. The GNWT is also in the process of developing an integrated adaptation and energy strategy expected to be released in Spring 2026.

- Aligning City Plans

Climate change affects all aspects of the City's operations and planning in some form, and therefore climate action must be a collaborative effort from all City departments and be integrated into all City plans. The Plan aims to align with and build upon existing City plans to streamline energy and emissions reductions and adaptation measures. Forthcoming plans, such as the Community Plan Comprehensive Update and the Transportation Plan, also provide an opportunity to incorporate a climate lens across departments. The Plan outlines avenues to build mitigation and adaptation efforts into these forthcoming plans.

- Financial

Related budget will be reviewed and allocated each year according to actions that are planned to be undertaken by responsible departments throughout Plan implementation. The amount required will be presented during annual budgeting process.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:

That the Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 be referred to the Administration for further review.

RATIONALE:

Human-caused climate change poses serious risks to our infrastructure, natural environment, and human health and well-being. Addressing the causes of climate change requires that all levels of government take immediate action. Both the Government of Canada and the Government of Northwest Territories have already committed to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Making up roughly half of the territory's population, Yellowknife has a significant role to play reaching these goals.

The Plan hinges on partnership-driven action, primarily with the GNWT, local Indigenous governments, and community organizations, and was designed in part through engagement with the Yellowknives Dene First Nation and the North Slave Métis Alliance **(Focus Area 1.1)**.

Seeking to advance equity and reconciliation, the Plan includes actions that support those most vulnerable to climate change, including unhoused people, tenants, the elderly, and low-income individuals, by reducing energy and food costs, increasing access to clean air in homes and in the community, and improving access to more affordable modes of transportation **(Focus Area 1.3)**.

The Plan promotes responsible asset management through monitoring and budgeting for climate impacts and rethinking our design and procurement of new assets to ensure resilience to our changing climate going forward **(Focus area 2.1)**.

Finally, the Plan seeks to implement impactful solutions that reduce our emissions while enhancing resilience to climate change to make Yellowknife a healthy, resilient community for all, now and into the future **(Strategic Direction #3)**.

ATTACHMENTS:

Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 (DM#808057)

Prepared: September 22, 2025; GS
Reviewed: September 25, 2025; TS
Reviewed: October 3, 2025; CW
Reviewed: October 8, 2025; CW

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

MEMORANDUM TO COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE: Governance and Priorities

DATE: February 4, 2026

DEPARTMENT: Economic Opportunities & Investment

ISSUE: Whether to adopt a Public Engagement Policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

(i) Adopt the attached Public Engagement Policy; and

(ii) Direct Administration to implement the Public Engagement Framework and internal Guidelines & Toolkit.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Yellowknife recognizes public engagement as a core component of good governance and effective decision-making. While the City has a strong culture of engaging residents, it has not had the benefit of a formal, citywide Public Engagement Policy to ensure a consistent and predictable approach to public participation prior to major initiatives, policy discussions, and decision-making processes.

Creating and implementing a Public Engagement Policy will:

- Establish the City's commitment to meaningful, inclusive, and transparent engagement.
- Provide a standardized framework for public participation across all departments.
- Strengthen trust between the City and the community by ensuring decisions reflect community values and priorities.
- Support informed decision-making and improve overall service delivery.

The Policy will be implemented through the City's Public Engagement Framework, supported by internal Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit, which provide detailed operational guidance. Together, these tools will formalize and enhance the City's existing engagement practices, ensuring consistency and accountability in how the City interacts with residents.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTION/RESOLUTION/POLICY:

Strategic Direction #1: People First

Focus Area 1.3 — Liveable Community
Supporting all residents to participate in the social fabric and physical space of our community.

Key Initiative 1.3.2 — Pursuing diverse community engagement methods.

Council Motion#0063-21 — That:
1. The Community Energy Plan Committee be dissolved and that the City conduct a Community Roundtable annually to report on implementation of the City's Community Energy Plan;
2. The University Post Secondary Advisory Committee be dissolved and that the City support a network of stakeholders;
3. The Terms of Reference for the Heritage Committee be amended to change frequency of meetings;
4. The City conduct a Community Roundtable annually with respect to Reconciliation; and
5. Council direct Administration to draft and bring forward a Framework for Public Engagement that utilizes various approaches to engagement.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BY-LAWS, STUDIES, PLANS:

Cities, Towns and Villages Act SNWT 2003, c.22

CONSIDERATIONS:

Strategic Alignment
Embeds engagement as a core governance practice, advancing Council's priorities for People First, Service Excellence, and Sustainable Future.

Operational Impacts
Provides clarity and consistency for staff, reducing duplication and improving efficiency.

Financial
Minimal cost to adopt; training and toolkit development can be phased within existing budgets.

Risk Management
Reduces risk of public dissatisfaction, project delays, and reputational harm by ensuring predictable and inclusive engagement processes.

Equity & Accessibility
Engagement activities must adhere to inclusive design standards: accessible venues and materials, plain-language summaries, translation/interpretation, culturally appropriate methods, and targeted outreach to underrepresented groups.

ALTERNATIVES TO RECOMMENDATION:

That Council not adopt a Public Engagement Policy.

RATIONALE:

The recommendation to adopt a citywide Public Engagement Policy aligns with Council's strategic commitment to transparency, trust-building, and inclusive governance under its People First and Liveable Community priorities. The need for a formalized approach has arisen because the City is managing increasingly complex initiatives—such as housing strategies, infrastructure planning, and reconciliation partnerships—that require standardized engagement practices to ensure meaningful participation. Currently, ad hoc approaches create inconsistency, reduce predictability, and risk excluding important voices. While the City has a strong culture of engagement, it lacks a formal framework, and best practices across municipalities emphasize the need for a policy to provide consistency and accountability. A citywide policy offers uniform standards and scalability, unlike department-specific or case-by-case approaches. Without this policy, the City risks continued inconsistency, diminished public trust, potential opposition to major projects, and misalignment with strategic objectives.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Public Engagement Policy (DM#794745); and
2. Public Engagement Framework (DM#794877).

Prepared: December 30, 2025; KLT/klt

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

Policy Title:	**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT POLICY**
Approved By:	**Council Motion #00XX-XX**
Effective Date:	**Month XX, 2026**

1 INTRODUCTION

The City of Yellowknife recognizes public engagement as a core component of good governance and effective decision-making. While the City has a strong culture of engaging residents, it has not had a formal, citywide Public Engagement Policy to ensure a consistent, predictable approach to public participation in major initiatives, policy discussions, and decision-making.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to establish the City's commitment to meaningful, inclusive, and transparent public participation in decisions that affect residents. This Policy supports consistent public engagement across the organization to inform decision-making, strengthen trust, and reflect community values and priorities.

This Policy is implemented through the City's Public Engagement Framework, which outlines the City's approach, principles, and processes for engaging the public, and is supported by internal Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit that provide detailed operational guidance.

3 DEFINITIONS

In this Policy:

"**Stakeholders**"	means people, groups, or organizations who are affected by, have an interest in, or can influence a City decision, policy, program, or project. This includes internal stakeholders, such as City staff and elected officials, and external stakeholders, such as residents, Indigenous governments and organizations, businesses, non-profits, and community partners;

"**Community**"	means individuals, groups, or organizations who live, work, study, operate a business, or have an interest in the City of Yellowknife. This includes residents, Indigenous governments and organizations, community groups, businesses, institutions, and visitors;
"**Public Engagement**"	means the process of involving the public in City decision-making through public participation opportunities that inform, consult, involve, collaborate with, or empower residents;
"**Public Engagement Framework**"	means the City's public-facing document that defines the approach, principles, engagement levels, and engagement cycle to guide public participation;
"**Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit**"	means internal resources that provide detailed processes, tools, templates, and best practices to support City staff and partners in planning and delivering public engagement activities; and
"**Public Engagement Plan**"	means a project-specific plan that outlines the objectives, scope, methods, timelines, and responsibilities for a public engagement initiative.

4 POLICY

Grounded in Yellowknife's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan — "Our people matter. Our resources matter. Our future, for generations to come, matters." — The City of Yellowknife is committed to engaging residents in a way that is purposeful, respectful, and transparent.

The City values diverse perspectives and seeks public input to inform municipal decisions, plans, policies, and services. Public engagement supports collaboration, shared stewardship, and sustainable choices that benefit both current and future generations.

The following principles will guide public engagement undertaken by the City:

- **Inclusive**: Welcoming diverse voices and reducing barriers to participation.
- **Clear**: Sharing information openly and explaining how public input is considered.
- **Respectful**: Encouraging constructive dialogue and listening to differing perspectives.
- **Responsible**: Demonstrating how engagement informs decision-making.

- **Purposeful**: Designing engagement with clear objectives and realistic outcomes.

Council, administration, and staff share responsibility for integrating public engagement into how the City plans, decides, and delivers services.

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Public engagement is a shared responsibility between Council, administration, staff, and the community. The following roles outline accountability and expectations for public engagement undertaken by the City of Yellowknife.

Council

- Champions public engagement as a foundation of transparent, accountable, and inclusive governance.
- Considers public input when reviewing recommendations and making decisions.
- Supports early and appropriate public engagement on City initiatives.
- Demonstrates how community perspectives are considered in decision-making.
- Supports continuous improvement in public engagement practices across the organization.

Administration and Departments

- Integrate public engagement into planning and decision-making where appropriate.
- Allocate sufficient time, resources, and capacity to public engagement activities.
- Ensure engagement activities align with this Policy and the Public Engagement Framework.
- Work collaboratively with the Community Engagement Advisor on engagement planning and delivery.

Community Engagement Advisor

- Provides leadership and oversight to support consistent implementation of this Policy.
- Maintains and updates the Public Engagement Framework and internal Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit.
- Advises departments and project leads on engagement planning, methods, and levels of engagement.
- Supports quality, inclusive, and transparent engagement practices across the organization.

Consultants and External Partners

- Conduct public engagement activities in alignment with this Policy, the Public Engagement Framework, and City expectations.
- Coordinate with the Community Engagement Advisor and Department Project Lead when undertaking engagement on the City's behalf.

- Ensure engagement activities and reporting are accessible, unbiased, and transparent.

Residents and Community Members

- Participate in public engagement opportunities to share perspectives, lived experience, and local knowledge.
- Engage respectfully and constructively, recognizing diverse viewpoints.
- Understand that public input is one of several factors considered in City decision-making.
- Provide feedback on engagement processes to support continuous improvement.

4.2 Implementation

This Policy is implemented through the City of Yellowknife's Public Engagement Framework, which establishes the City's approach to public participation, including guiding principles, engagement levels, and the public engagement cycle.

City departments and project teams are responsible for ensuring that public engagement activities align with this Policy and the Public Engagement Framework. Staff are supported by internal Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit, which provide detailed operational guidance, templates, and tools for planning, delivering, and evaluating engagement activities.

The City recognizes that public engagement activities will vary based on project scope, legislative requirements, timelines, resources, and community context. The application of this Policy and its supporting documents will be proportionate and appropriate to the nature of each initiative.

5 APPLICATION

This policy applies to:

- All City of Yellowknife departments and employees involved in engagement activities.
- Elected officials engaged in City projects.
- Consultants and external organizations that are conducting engagement on the City's behalf.

This policy complements, but does not replace or override, legislated consultation requirements by promoting broader community engagement and inclusiveness in the City's decisions.

6 REVIEW

The City of Yellowknife is committed to continuous improvement in public engagement practices.

This Policy will be reviewed at a minimum of every four (4) years, or as required, to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and aligned with Council priorities, organizational capacity, and community expectations.

The Public Engagement Framework and internal Public Engagement Guidelines & Toolkit may be updated as needed to reflect evolving best practices, lessons learned, and community feedback, without requiring formal amendments to this Policy.

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

Public Engagement Framework

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INTRODUCTION

As Yellowknife continues to grow and evolve, so too must the ways the City connects with its residents. Community expectations are changing: people want greater transparency, clearer information, and more meaningful opportunities to contribute to shaping their city. This Public Engagement Framework responds to that need by setting out how the City will engage with the public in a consistent, deliberate, and accessible way.

Public engagement has always been part of how the City plans and delivers services. What is changing is the intention behind it. This Framework marks a shift toward being more strategic and purposeful in how we engage, grounding our efforts in best practices, clear processes, and a commitment to follow-through. With a dedicated Community Engagement Advisor in place, the City is strengthening its capacity to ensure engagement is not just present, but meaningful, inclusive, and built into the way we work.

This framework reflects best practices adopted in municipalities across Canada, where structured frameworks define roles, center accessibility and inclusion, and apply the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Engagement to guide decision-making. Yellowknife's Framework builds on these models, but is tailored to our northern context, community size, and available resources. It is designed to be practical, clear, and realistic, while ensuring that every opportunity for engagement adds value for both residents and the City.

By adopting this Framework, the City affirms that public engagement is a core way the City serves its residents and strengthens trust in local government.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement is how the City of Yellowknife involves people in decisions that affect them. It includes a wide range of activities, from sharing timely information to creating opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, all to make better, more inclusive decisions.

It is the formal process of inviting people to share their ideas, perspectives, and experiences to inform City decisions, plans, and policies. Engagement opportunities may take many forms, such as surveys, open houses, workshops, roundtables, online platforms, and community events. What they all have in common is providing space for meaningful input and showing how that input shapes outcomes.

TYPES OF INITIATIVES

Different types of City initiatives require different levels of public engagement, depending on factors such as priority, scope, budget, and the potential to influence decisions. Not every project will involve the same level of community input, and engagement is tailored to ensure it is meaningful and effective.

Types of Initiatives:

- City-wide plans and policies (e.g., community plans, strategic plans)
- Neighborhood plans and policies (e.g., local planning, zoning updates)
- Facility capital planning (e.g., recreation facilities, libraries)
- Infrastructure projects (e.g., roads, utilities, parks)
- Legally required engagement (e.g., financial planning, land use bylaws)

GOALS OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The goals of public engagement guide how staff plan, deliver, and follow up on engagement activities. They ensure engagement is meaningful, inclusive, and aligned with the City's priorities:

- Provide equal opportunities: Ensure all residents and stakeholders can contribute meaningfully.
- Build trust**:** Engage sincerely and consistently to enhance public confidence in City decisions and processes.
- Communicate clearly**:** Share accurate, accessible information about projects, decisions, and next steps.
- Leverage community knowledge: Use local insights to inform policies, programs, and services that address real community needs.
- Acknowledge input**:** Demonstrate how feedback has been considered and incorporated so residents feel heard and valued.
- Maintain ongoing presence**:** Participate in community spaces, listen attentively, and build relationships beyond formal engagement initiatives.
- Be responsive: Address community concerns thoughtfully, guiding and supporting residents where possible within the City's capacity.

WHEN WE WILL ENGAGE

Public engagement is used when the community has a genuine opportunity to influence or inform a decision. These opportunities are most suitable for:

- Shaping decisions that affect residents, such as planning, policies, or service improvements.
- Projects with multiple options or potential outcomes, where public values and trade-offs are important.
- Issues affecting specific neighbourhoods, communities, or groups, where local knowledge matters.
- Legislative or regulatory requirements that require public involvement.
- High-impact or high-interest projects, where early involvement can build trust, reduce resistance, and improve outcomes.
- Emerging issues or community concerns where prompt listening can prevent larger problems.

WHEN WE WON'T ENGAGE

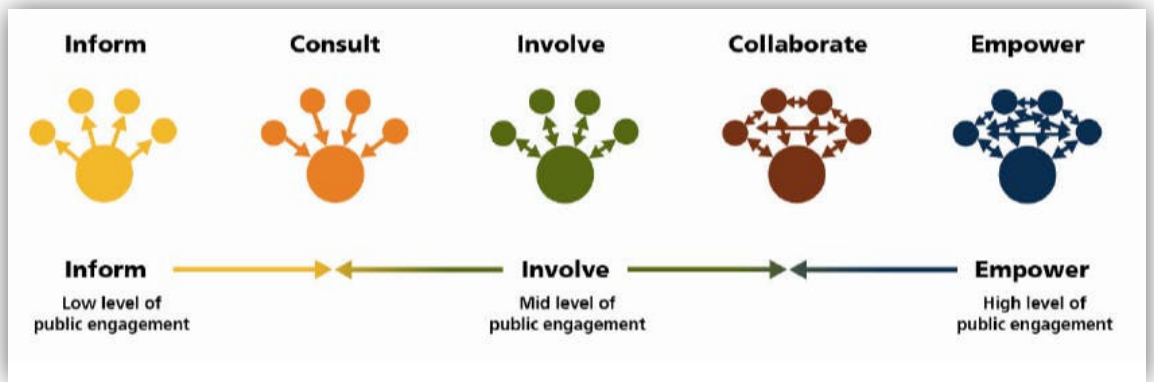
Sometimes, engagement is not appropriate or necessary. In these cases, the City may share information directly without asking for input. Examples include:

- When laws or regulations already determine the outcome.
- For routine tasks that do not impact residents.

- During emergencies that require quick action.
- If public input will not change the decision.
- When the community was recently surveyed on the same topic.
- If involving the public would delay urgent work.
- Even when engagement is not used, the City is committed to clear and timely communication to keep residents informed.

IAP2 SPECTRUM

The City of Yellowknife utilizes the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) to inform its approach to community engagement in decision-making. IAP2 is a global leader in public engagement, providing standards that promote transparent, inclusive, and effective practices in government and public service.



One of IAP2's key tools is the Spectrum of Public Engagement, which outlines different levels of involvement — from simply providing information to empowering residents to play an active role in decision-making. These levels help City staff determine the appropriate level of public participation for each project or initiative, based on the scope of impact, the decision being made, and the aspects open to public input.

By following this internationally recognized framework, the City ensures engagement is consistent, ethical, and meets the community's expectations. At the same time, Yellowknife tailors its approach to local context, capacity, and community needs, so that residents can meaningfully participate in decisions that affect them.

Level	Definition	Promise to the Public	Sample City Project
Inform	Providing clear and balanced information to help the community understand city initiatives, opportunities, and decisions is essential. This level would be mandatory for all engagement initiatives.	We will keep you informed.	Construction Projects such as road work, transit detours, Annual Traffic Light Maintenance Program, etc.
Consult	At this level, participants provide feedback by sharing their preferences, concerns, or values. Engagement is typically straightforward and structured, allowing for a timely and convenient exchange of information between the City and community members.	We will listen to your input, consider it, and share how it influenced the decision.	Let's Talk YK 2050 – Phase 1
Involve	The City dedicates time and space for meaningful dialogue with relevant stakeholders. This ongoing exchange ensures that concerns and aspirations are fully understood through dialogue, fostering mutual understanding throughout the decision-making process.	We will work with you to ensure your views are understood and considered.	Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 Roundtables (Phase 1) Q1 2025.
Collaborate	At a higher level on the spectrum is collaboration, where the community co-develops solutions and shares decision-making power. Collaboration fosters mutual respect and shared responsibility, aligning with Yellowknife's vision for a thriving, resilient community.	We will look to you for advice and innovation, and include your input as much as possible.	Business Owners Safety Initiative (Jun 2025)
Empower	At the highest level of engagement, the City allows the community to make final decisions on specific matters. Empowerment involves granting decision-making authority to the public, with the City supporting and implementing the outcomes.	We will support you in making the final decision.	Referendum, such as the Aquatic Centre Borrowing.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT?

Public engagement is a shared effort that involves the City, residents, and partners. Key participants include:

- City Staff and Project Leads: Plan and carry out engagement activities, coordinate with the Community Engagement Advisor, and ensure community input informs decisions.
- Elected Officials: Support engagement efforts, participate in key activities, and consider public perspectives when making decisions.
- Community Engagement Advisor: Leads engagement strategy, provides guidance and resources, coordinates city-wide efforts, and helps build relationships with the community.
- Consultants and External Partners: Support engagement in alignment with City policies and frameworks, ensuring transparent and unbiased reporting.
- Residents, Stakeholders, and Community Members: Share feedback, perspectives, and experiences to help shape City decisions.

KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Grounded in Yellowknife's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan — "Our people matter. Our resources matter. Our future, for generations to come, matters." this Framework sets out the principles that guide meaningful, inclusive, and transparent public engagement.

The City values diverse perspectives and seeks input that informs decisions, supports collaboration, and contributes to sustainable choices for current and future generations.

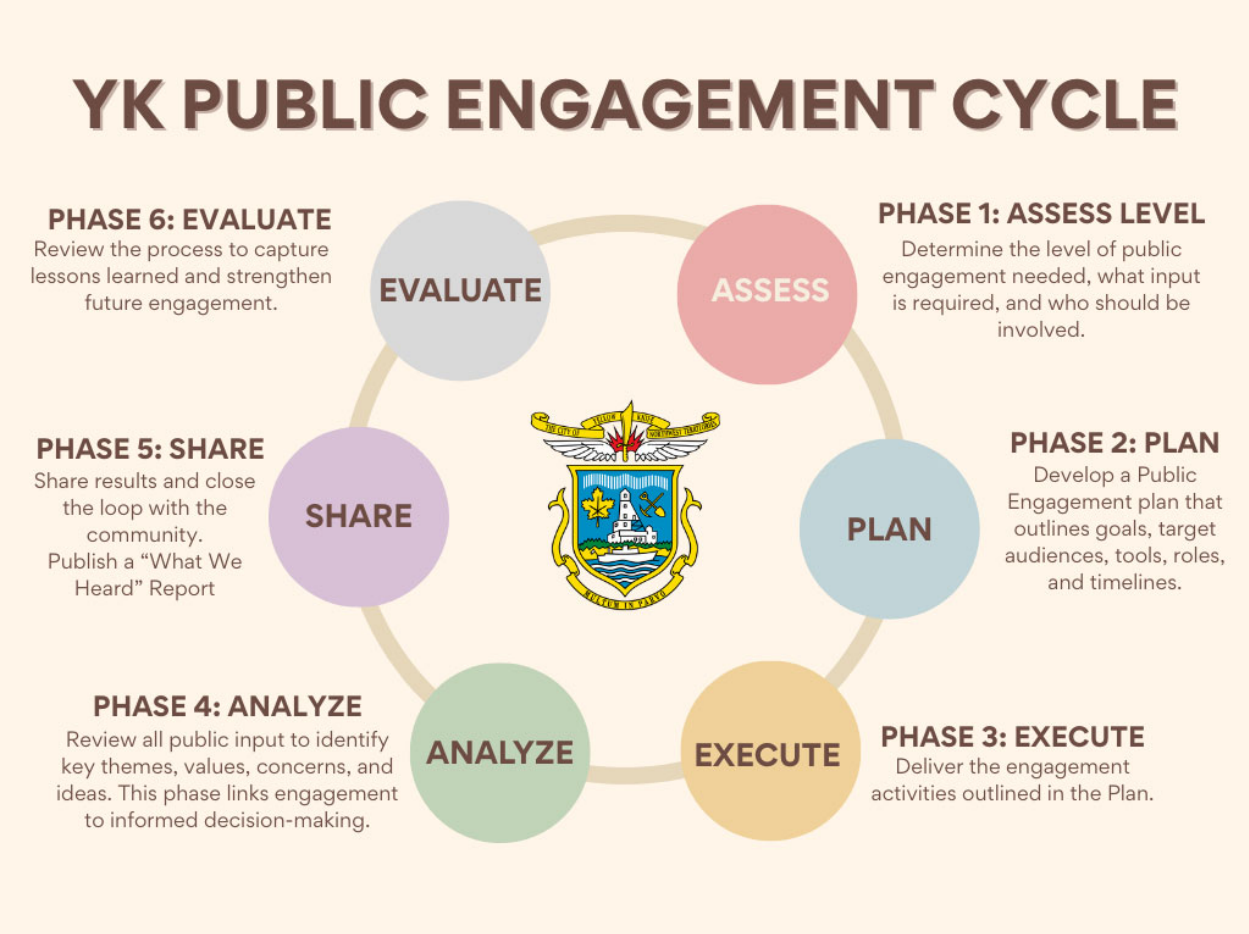
Public engagement will be:

- Inclusive: Welcoming all voices and making it easy for everyone to participate.
- Clear: Sharing information openly and explaining how input is considered.
- Respectful: Listening to everyone and encouraging honest, constructive dialogue.
- Responsible: Showing how feedback influences decisions.
- Purposeful: Planning engagement with clear goals, methods, and outcomes.

The City is committed to ensuring consistent and coordinated engagement across departments and projects. Council, staff, and administration all share responsibility for embedding public engagement into how the City works.

HOW IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CARRIED OUT?

The City of Yellowknife follows a clear five-phase Public Engagement Cycle to plan and deliver activities that are meaningful, inclusive, and effective. This process ensures that community input is respected and thoughtfully integrated into decision-making.



Phase 1: Assess

The City first determines the level of public engagement required, identifies helpful input, and determines who should be involved in the process. This ensures engagement is focused on projects where community input can make a difference.

Phase 2: Plan

A plan is created to guide the engagement, including clear goals, methods, and timelines. Planning ensures that participation is accessible, inclusive, and meaningful.

Phase 3: Execute

Engagement activities are carried out. Residents may be invited to participate through surveys, workshops, meetings, online platforms, or community events. The City provides clear information and creates space for open dialogue.

Phase 4: Analyze

All feedback is reviewed to identify key themes, priorities, and concerns. This helps the City understand community input and use it to inform decisions.

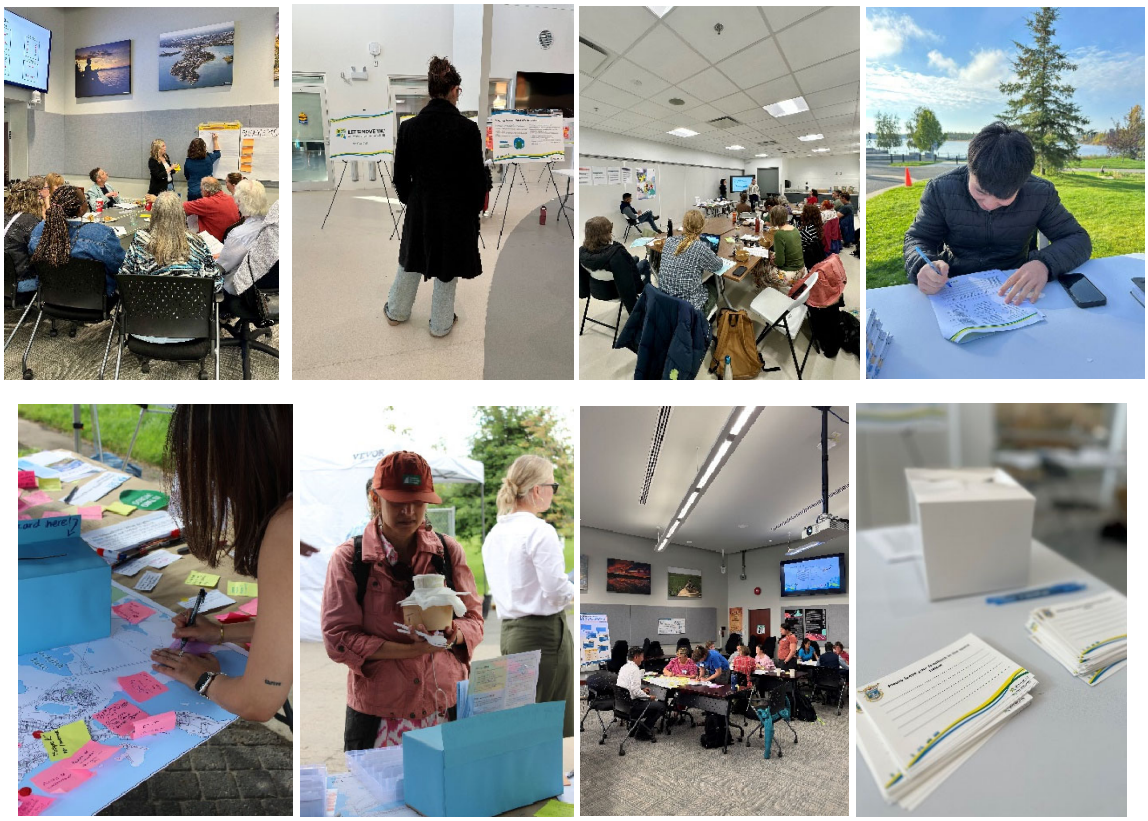
Phase 5: Share

The City shares what was heard and explains how community input influenced decisions. Reports are easy to read, may include visuals, and are shared online, in public spaces, and through other communication channels.

Phase 6: Evaluate

The City reflects on the engagement process to understand what worked well and what could be improved. Lessons learned are documented and shared internally so future engagements are more effective, inclusive, and aligned with community needs.

This process ensures that public engagement is not just an event, but a meaningful part of how the City makes decisions that affect residents.



WAYS TO ENGAGE

Residents can participate in public engagement in many ways, depending on the initiative and their preferences:

- **Attend or watch Council meetings**: Participate in person or online. Council meetings are held every other Monday, and recordings are available afterward.
- **Follow City social media channels**: Stay informed about City news, upcoming projects, and engagement opportunities.
- **Follow projects on the website**: Receive updates, provide input, and track project progress.
- **Participate in focus groups or workshops**: Share ideas and feedback in structured discussions about specific initiatives.
- **Complete surveys or online feedback tools**: Provide input conveniently from home or on mobile devices.
- **Provide feedback directly to City staff:** Contact relevant departments or project leads via email or phone.
- **Community events or pop-up engagement**: Speak with City representatives at local events or gatherings.

Conclusion

Yellowknife is our home, and how it grows and changes affects all of us. Public engagement is your chance to share what matters to you, help shape City decisions, and make a difference in our community.

We invite everyone to participate in engagement opportunities such as attend a workshop, share feedback online, join a conversation, or follow a project to stay informed. Every voice matters, and your input helps create a Yellowknife that reflects its residents.

Together, we can create a city that works for everyone, one where your ideas, experiences, and care shape the future of our community.

APPENDIX E: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Accessibility	The degree to which engagement activities, materials, and communications are usable and inclusive for people of all abilities, including those with disabilities.
Community Engagement Advisor	City staff responsible for providing guidance, tools, and oversight to ensure public engagement is inclusive, consistent, and aligned with City standards.
Engagement Channel	The medium used to reach and interact with the public, including in-person meetings, surveys, social media, websites, and PlaceSpeak.
Equity-Deserving Groups	Communities or individuals who experience systemic barriers to participation due to social, economic, or demographic factors.
Inclusion	Ensuring participation opportunities are accessible and welcoming to diverse voices and perspectives.
IAP2 Spectrum	An internationally recognized framework defining levels of public participation: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.
Public Engagement	The process of actively involving the community in City decisions, planning, and service delivery.
Public Engagement Plan	A documented plan outlining the objectives, scope, methods, timelines, and responsibilities for a specific engagement initiative.
RACI Model	A tool to clarify roles and responsibilities: Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed.
Stakeholder	An individual, group, or organization affected by, or with an interest in, a project or decision.
Transparency	The practice of openly communicating information, decisions, and rationale to the public.

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES & TOOLKIT

Internal Document

January 2026

CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

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INTRODUCTION

As Yellowknife grows and evolves, so must the ways the City connects with its residents. Community expectations are shifting as residents want greater transparency, clearer information, and more meaningful opportunities to contribute to decisions that affect their city. In response, the City has created a dedicated Community Engagement Advisor role and developed these Public Engagement Guidelines to support a consistent, coordinated, and thoughtful approach across departments.

Public Engagement has long been part of how the City operates. What is changing is the approach: these Guidelines work alongside the Public Engagement Framework, which sets out the City's principles and process for engagement. The Guidelines provide staff with the practical tools, templates, and resources needed to plan, deliver, and evaluate engagement activities consistently and effectively.

With these Guidelines, the City aims to strengthen staff capacity to ensure Public Engagement is purposeful, inclusive, and embedded into the way we work, with a focus on clarity, follow-through, and meaningful outcomes.

WHAT IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public Engagement is the process through which the City actively involves the community in decisions, planning, and service delivery. It creates opportunities for dialogue, feedback, and collaboration, ensuring that City decisions are shaped by community perspectives whenever possible.

Engagement activities may include surveys, workshops, open houses, roundtables, online platforms, or community events. Staff are responsible for selecting methods that fit the project's goals, scope, and resources.

While City decisions must also consider technical, financial, legal, and strategic factors, public input adds real-life context and lived experience. Integrating this input leads to stronger, more trusted, and more responsive outcomes.

KEY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Grounded in Yellowknife's 2023–2026 Strategic Plan — "Our people matter. Our resources matter. Our future, for generations to come, matters." — these principles guide how staff plan and deliver public engagement. They ensure engagement is meaningful, inclusive, and consistently applied across the organization.

Public engagement at the City of Yellowknife will be:

- Inclusive: Ensure all relevant voices can participate and remove barriers to participation.

- Clear: Provide accurate, accessible information and clearly explain how input will be used.
- Respectful: Listen to diverse perspectives and encourage constructive, open dialogue.
- Responsible: Follow through on commitments and show how feedback informs decisions.
- Purposeful: Plan and execute engagement activities with clear goals, methods, and expected outcomes.

All staff, Council, and administration share responsibility for embedding these principles into daily work. Adhering to them helps ensure engagement is effective, efficient, and aligned with the City's strategic priorities.

WHEN TO USE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

For City Staff, it is important to ensure that resources are allocated for public engagement efforts in situations where the community has a genuine opportunity to influence or inform a decision. Examples of suitable situations include:

- Decisions that affect residents, such as plans, policies, or service improvements.
- Projects with multiple options or outcomes where public values and trade-offs matter.
- Issues affecting specific neighbourhoods, communities, or groups, where local knowledge is essential.
- Legislative or regulatory requirements that require public input.
- High-impact or high-interest projects where early engagement can build trust and improve outcomes.
- Emerging issues or concerns where listening early can prevent bigger problems.

Tip for staff: Effective engagement takes time and resources. Only use it when the team is ready to act on what they hear.

WHEN NOT TO USE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

It is equally important to recognize that engagement is not always the most appropriate approach. In some cases, it is more effective to share information directly. Examples of such situations include:

- When laws or regulations already determine the outcome.
- Routine tasks that do not impact residents.
- Emergencies requiring quick action.
- Decisions where public input will not change the outcome.
- Topics recently surveyed or consulted on.
- Urgent work that would be delayed by engagement.

Tip for staff: Even if the public is not directly involved in shaping a decision, communication should remain clear, timely, and transparent to keep residents informed.

FRAMEWORKS AND FOUNDATIONS

Public Engagement at the City is guided by best-practice frameworks and internal tools that help staff deliver engagement that is meaningful to the public and well-managed across teams.

One key tool is the **IAP2 Spectrum**, a global standard which identifies levels of public involvement:

- Inform – Provide balanced, accessible information to keep the public informed.
- Consult – Seek public input to understand community preferences and concerns.
- Involve – Engage in dialogue to ensure community views are considered throughout the process.
- Collaborate – Partner with the community to co-create solutions and share decision-making.
- Empower – Delegate decision-making authority to the public for specific matters.

These levels help staff determine the appropriate depth of engagement for each City initiative, based on its scope, public interest, potential impact, and the decision being made. A more detailed breakdown of the IAP2 Spectrum can be found in Appendix A.1

To manage Public Engagement projects internally, the City uses **the RACI model** (DM #799769), a practical tool to clarify roles and responsibilities among multiple stakeholders:

- Responsible – Person(s) carrying out the work
- Accountable – Person ultimately answerable for the outcome
- Consulted – Those whose input is required
- Informed – Those who need to be kept updated

Together, the IAP2 Spectrum and RACI model provide a complementary framework as IAP2 defines the level and intent of engagement, while RACI ensures internal clarity and structure to deliver it effectively.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clear roles are essential for effective Public Engagement. The City uses the RACI model and leverages internal expertise to ensure accountability and coordination. Each engagement project may involve different combinations of staff and partners, with responsibilities shifting based on scope and needs. Key responsibilities include:

- Community Engagement Advisor – Leads the assessment and development of Public Engagement Plans, working closely with departmental leads to gather project details and objectives. Provides guidance on methods, tools, and accessibility, ensures alignment with City standards, and oversees implementation, evaluation, and reporting to ensure engagement is meaningful and consistent.

- Departmental Project Leads – Acts as the decision-maker for the technical and operational aspects of the project. Provides the subject-matter expertise, data, and context needed to inform engagement planning. Oversees delivery of project components, ensures departmental objectives are met, and integrates engagement findings into reports, recommendations, and final decisions.

- Corporate Communications Advisor – Manages information dissemination through City channels and responds to media and public inquiries. Ensures all communications align with City branding, accessibility standards, and strategic objectives, supporting the Community Engagement Advisor and Departmental Project Lead in achieving engagement goals.

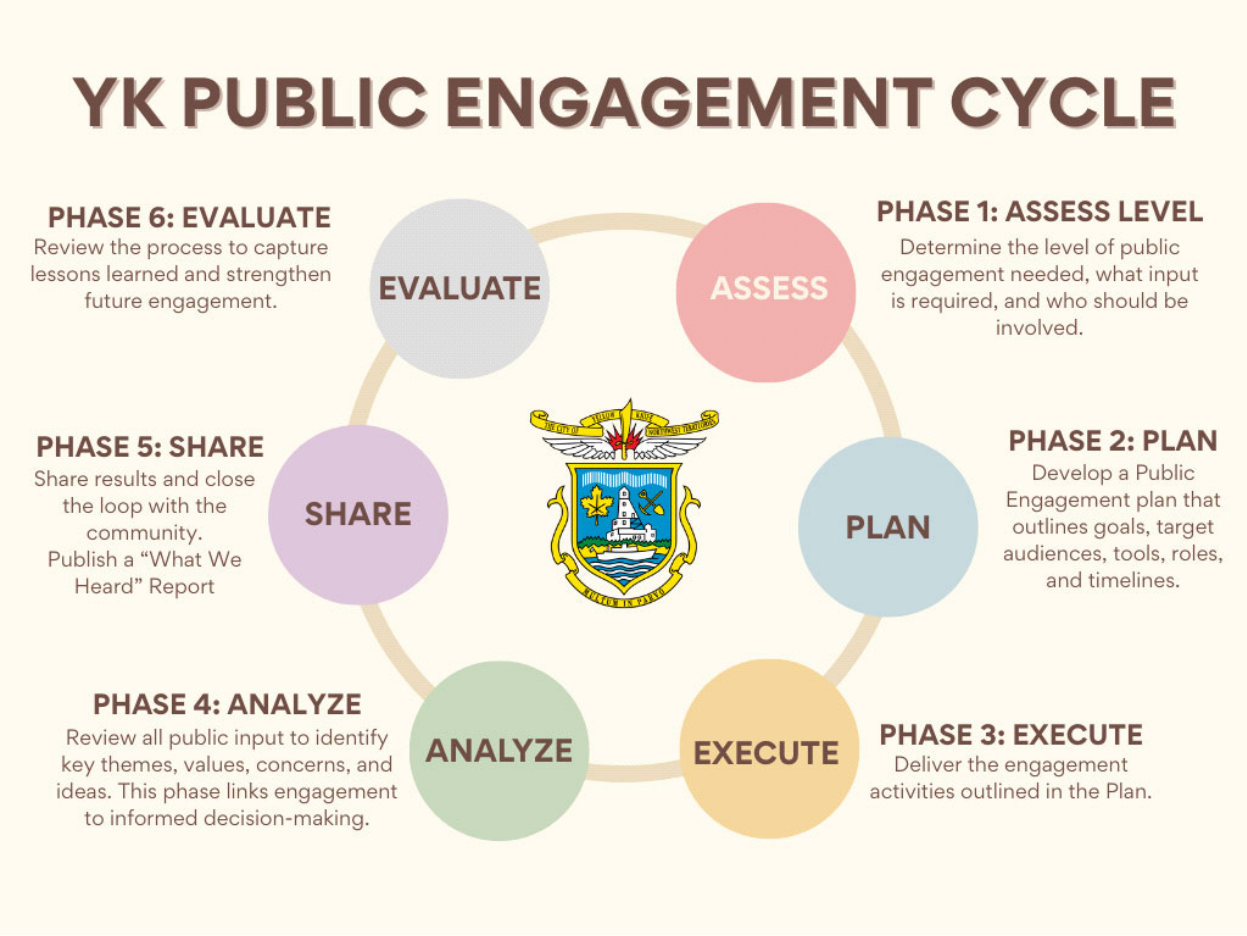
- External Consultants (if applicable) – Deliver engagement activities under City oversight, following the Public Engagement Plan and RACI-defined roles. Ensure alignment with City objectives, standards, and timelines, while providing specialized expertise in facilitation, analysis, or outreach. Support the Community Engagement Advisor and Departmental Project Lead by executing tasks as scoped in contract and the Public engagement plan.

More details in the Appendix A.2.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE

The Public Engagement Cycle is a step-by-step process to help City staff plan and carry out engagement activities clearly and consistently. It guides staff in deciding when and how to engage, reaching the right audience, sharing information, collecting input, and following up.

The Community Engagement Advisor leads the assessment, planning, and coordination of engagement activities, with support from Departmental Project Leads for technical input and external consultants as needed. While details may vary by project, using this cycle ensures engagement is well-planned, meaningful, and respectful of both staff and residents' time and contributions.



PHASE 1: ASSESS LEVEL OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The first step in the Public Engagement Cycle is to determine the appropriate level of engagement (Appendix A.1) for a project — Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, or Empower. Departmental Project Leads work with the Community Engagement Advisor to ensure engagement is meaningful, well-targeted, and aligned with project goals.

Departmental Project Leads should book a 30–60-minute meeting with the Community Engagement Advisor to complete the Public Engagement Assessment. This ensures all relevant project information is considered when deciding the engagement level and approach.

A Quick Checklist Question Set is included in Appendix B.1 to help prepare for this meeting. The full assessment checklist can be found in DM #795477.

Practical Tips for determining Level of Engagement

- Match engagement to project impact: Consider how much the public can influence the outcome. High-impact decisions often require deeper engagement (Involve, Collaborate, or Empower).
- Consider scope and reach: Projects affecting many people or multiple communities may require broader input; smaller, localized initiatives may only need Inform or Consult.
- Factor in resources: Time, budget, and staffing affect what level of engagement is feasible. Adjust the engagement approach accordingly.
- Account for sensitivity and complexity: Sensitive issues or highly technical decisions may need Consult or Involve levels to ensure perspectives are understood without overwhelming participants.

Use these factors to decide the level of engagement (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, Empower) before booking a planning session with the Community Engagement Advisor.

PHASE 2: DEVELOP PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN

After determining the appropriate level of public engagement (Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, or Empower) in Phase 1, the next step is to develop the Public Engagement Plan. The Community Engagement Advisor leads the plan, working with the Departmental Project Lead to gather key information on project scope, stakeholders, objectives, and available resources. If a consultant is involved, they with the Community Engagement Advisor to ensure the plan aligns with City standards, tools, and templates.

Before fleshing out the plan, the team must confirm the project management approach for public engagement. The City uses three standard categories for engagement delivery—Internally Delivered,

Internally Led/Consultant Supported, and Consultant-Led Engagement—which are outlined in Appendix C.1

Project Management Approach Categories (Appendix C.1):

1. Internally Delivered (Small or One-Off Projects): City staff plan and deliver engagement. Suitable for low-risk or localized initiatives (Inform or Consult level).
2. Internally Led, Consultant Supported: City staff lead, consultants provide support for facilitation, analysis, or broader input. Appropriate for Consult to Involve-level activities.
3. Consultant-Led Engagement (Multi-Phase or Complex Projects): Consultants lead under City oversight. Best for Collaborate or Empower-level, city-wide, or high-impact initiatives. City staff retain accountability and ensure alignment with goals.

Once the approach is selected, the team clarifies responsibilities using the RACI Model (Appendix C.2), which identifies who is Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed for each part of the engagement.

Additional guidance on working with consultants (Appendix C.3) provides direction for selecting, managing, and aligning consultant contributions with City standards.

The Public Engagement Plan itself (Appendix C.4 or DM #795477) captures key details such as objectives, timelines, methods, risks, and reporting. The Community Engagement Advisor ensures the plan is complete, actionable, and approved before moving to execution.

To support consistent, high-quality planning, staff are encouraged to draw on the City's Public Engagement Resource Templates (Appendix C.5).

PHASE 3: EXECUTE

The Execute phase is when the City puts the Public Engagement Plan into action. This includes delivering engagement activities, connecting with the right audiences, and creating opportunities for meaningful input. The Community Engagement Advisor leads execution, supporting the Departmental Project Lead and any consultants, ensuring accessibility, inclusivity, and alignment with City standards. Staff and consultants carry out activities according to their roles while being flexible to adapt to feedback or changing circumstances.

Before execution, staff should review the Methods of Engagement (Appendix D.1) to select suitable engagement approaches, process for reaching out to First Nation Governments (Appendix D.2), and reference the Event Preparation Checklist (Appendix D.3) for event-specific planning.

Reaching Out to First Nation Governments

Engagement with First Nation Governments follows formal protocols. Typically, elected officials communicate with elected officials (Mayor to Chiefs), or senior administrators (City Manager to Band Manager/CEO). The Mayor initiates contact by sending letters to the four local governments, followed by the Project Lead emailing staff to confirm interest and next steps.

If a government wishes to engage, they will connect you with the appropriate contact. Staff should then ask about their protocols, which may include preferences for honoraria, sharing a meal, or meeting in person versus virtually. Steps for preparing Outreach letters can be found in Appendix D.2; contact details for each government are available in the Contact List (DM #796503).

Practical Tips for Execution:

- Prepare engagement tools and materials
  - Draft project summaries, survey questions, and discussion topics.
  - Set up engagement platforms and channels (online, in-person, print).
  - Identify spokespersons for media inquiries and ensure availability during launch.
  - Account for approval timelines for assets (see Appendix D.4).
- Ensure accessibility and inclusivity
  - Make materials and activities accessible to all abilities, languages, and backgrounds.
  - Acknowledge collaboration with Indigenous communities where relevant.
- Execute engagement
  - Facilitate sessions respectfully, ensuring two-way dialogue.
  - Document input clearly for reporting and decision-making.
  - Respond promptly to participant questions and concerns.
- Monitor and adjust
  - Track participation in real time.
  - Adjust methods or messaging if participation is low or feedback shows confusion.
  - Maintain consistent, accurate documentation of engagement activities.

Honorariums and Incentives

The City recognizes that residents' time, energy, and input are valuable. Incentives reflect contribution and encourage broad participation. The Community Engagement Advisor determines the appropriate use of incentives, consistent with engagement type, time commitment, and depth of input. Budgets may come from the Communications budget or the project budget.

A tiered Honorarium Framework, including examples and equivalent values, is provided in Appendix D.5, helping staff match engagement type (surveys, focus groups, pop-up events) to appropriate recognition.

PHASE 4 - ANALYZE

Phase 4 focuses on reviewing and understanding the feedback collected through public engagement. After activities are complete, the project team organizes input to identify community values, priorities, concerns, and ideas, and determines how this feedback informs decisions. Analysis should be fair, transparent, and focused on representing participants' voices accurately.

Before creating summaries or reports, staff should reference Appendix E, which provides guidance on structuring outputs, reporting elements, and communicating results effectively.

Practical Tips for the Analyzing Data:

- Collect and Organize Input
  - Use tables, charts, or summaries to compile data from surveys, workshops, or online platforms.
- Identify Key Themes
  - Look for patterns, recurring issues, and unique insights.
  - Flag input relevant to decisions or project goals.
  - Consider context; small but critical perspectives can be just as important as majority trends.
- Assess Feedback Against Project Goals
  - Identify which input influences decisions directly and which falls outside scope.
  - Not all feedback can be implemented; document limits clearly.
- Ensure Inclusive Representation
  - Check that input reflects diverse perspectives, including underrepresented groups.
  - Note gaps in participation for follow-up opportunities.
- Summarize Results
  - Prepare a clear summary of what was heard without interpreting or filtering input.
  - Avoid personal bias; stick to participants' words.
  - Maintain internal records and a public-facing summary in plain language.

What We Heard Reports

A "What We Heard" report captures community input and key themes in participants' own words. It does not include recommendations or decisions. Scale reports appropriately: short surveys may need a one-page summary, while multi-phase projects may require detailed reports.

PHASE 5 – SHARE

This phase closes the loop and ensures transparency by showing how public engagement influenced decisions. It also helps the City improve future engagement practices. Clear reporting builds trust and accountability, while evaluating the engagement process ensures continuous improvement.

Practical tips for sharing outcomes:

- Finalize the "What We Heard" Report
  - Ensure it is clear, accessible, and written in plain language.
  - Avoid interpreting or filtering feedback; focus on accurately summarizing participant input.
  - Use visuals (charts, infographics) where helpful.
  - Clearly indicate how input influenced decisions
  - Report Outline can be found in Appendix F.1

- Publish and Share Results Widely
  - Post the report on the City's website with a high-level summary and downloadable full version.
  - Promote through social media and project pages if applicable.
  - Share printed summaries or posters with QR codes at City Hall and other public spaces.

- Connect Engagement to Decisions
  - Include a brief recap of how input was used in Council meetings, press releases, and public announcements.
  - Highlight which feedback informed the final decisions and where limits or constraints applied.

- Notify Participants Directly
  - Email updates to participants who signed up for notifications
  - Thank participants and provide next steps, if any.

- Evaluate the Engagement Process
  - Review what worked well and what could improve for future engagement.
  - Identify gaps in reach, inclusivity, or effectiveness of methods.

To ensure timely transparency and consistent follow-up, the City has established standard reporting timelines (Appendix F.2) for different types of engagement projects.

PHASE 6 - EVALUATE

After sharing engagement results with the public, it's important to reflect internally on how the process was planned and delivered. Evaluation helps the City improve future engagement, ensure inclusivity, and strengthen the link between engagement and decision-making. This step supports a culture of continuous learning and accountability.

- Evaluate the Engagement Process
    - Gather feedback from staff and partners on what worked well and areas for improvement.
    - Focus on practical insights regarding planning, execution, communication, and overall experience.
    - Keep the evaluation concise, objective, and actionable.

- Conduct an Internal Debrief
    - Hold a short meeting (virtual or in-person) to review successes, challenges, and lessons learned.
    - Discuss operational and strategic takeaways that can enhance future engagement planning.
    - Encourage open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving.

- Document Lessons Learned
    - Record key reflections, insights, and recommendations in an internal evaluation log.
    - Use the findings to update templates, tools, training, and internal guidance for future engagements.
    - Ensure documentation is clear and easily accessible to project teams.

To support staff in applying evaluation practices, Appendix G includes key resources that can be adapted to project scale and team needs:

- Public Engagement Evaluation Survey (Appendix G.1 or DM # 795610)– Example questions covering overall experience, planning, execution, accessibility, feedback loop, and final reflections.
- Internal Debriefing Agenda Guide (Appendix G.2)– Suggested agenda for reflecting on project objectives, outcomes, and lessons learned, with discussion prompts to capture practical insights and improvements.

CONCLUSION

Public engagement is a shared responsibility and a vital part of how the City of Yellowknife makes decisions that affect its residents. These Guidelines, alongside the Public Engagement Framework and supporting templates, provide staff with clear steps, tools, and resources to plan, execute, and evaluate engagement consistently and effectively. By following these practices, staff help ensure engagement is purposeful, inclusive, and impactful, while building trust and transparency with the community. Engagement is an ongoing process, reflecting, learning, and adapting ensures that the City's approach continues to evolve alongside the needs and expectations of residents. As this is the City's first comprehensive set of Guidelines, staff should also recognize that the process will be refined over time, based on lessons learned and feedback from both staff and the community.

APPENDIX A

A.1 IAP2 FRAMEWORK REFERENCE

The City of Yellowknife uses the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) to guide how it engages with the community. IAP2 is a global standard for public engagement, providing tools and frameworks that promote transparency, inclusivity, and effective community involvement.

The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Engagement helps staff determine the appropriate level of engagement for each project based on complexity, impact, and public interest. By using this spectrum, staff can:

- Be clear with residents about how their input will be used.
- Ensure engagement is meaningful and aligned with City priorities.
- Tailor approaches to local context, resources, and community needs.

IAP2 SPECTRUM SUMMARY CHART

Level	Goal	Promise to the Public	Example Methods
Inform	Provide clear, timely, and accessible information to help the community understand the issue, process, or decision.	We will keep you informed.	City website updates, social media posts, public notices
Consult	Gather feedback on options, plans, or decisions to inform the City's direction.	We will listen to your input, consider it, and share how it influenced the decision.	Surveys, public comment forms, open houses, community meetings
Involve	Work closely with stakeholders to ensure concerns and ideas are heard, understood, and considered throughout the process.	We will work with you to ensure your views are understood and considered.	Workshops, focus groups, roundtables, recurring advisory sessions
Collaborate	Partner with the community in decision-making, including developing alternatives and identifying solutions.	We will look to you for advice and innovation, and include your input in decisions as much as possible.	Co-design sessions, citizen task forces, joint planning committees
Empower	Place final decision-making in the hands of the public where appropriate.	We will support you in making the final decision.	Public voting, participatory budgeting, referendums, delegated decision-making bodies

A.2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following outlines the key roles and responsibilities of staff, Council, consultants, and community members involved in public engagement at the City of Yellowknife.

Community Engagement Advisor

- Maintains the City's Public Engagement Framework, Guidelines, and related tools.
- Advises departments, project leads, and Communications on engagement strategy and planning.
- Collaborates with teams to develop engagement plans and supporting communication materials.
- Ensures engagement is inclusive, respectful, and effective.
- Coordinates with consultants and external partners conducting engagement on behalf of the City.
- Reviews engagement results and reports to support informed decision-making.
- Builds and maintains relationships with community stakeholders to foster trust and inclusion.
- Continuously improves practices by researching best practices and participating in professional networks.

Departments / Project Leads and Staff

- Integrate engagement into planning and decision-making for relevant projects, programs, and policies.
- Notify and collaborate with the Community Engagement Advisor early in the project lifecycle.
- Allocate adequate resources (time, staff, budget) for engagement activities.
- Develop and implement engagement plans using the City's Framework and Guidelines.
- Ensure engagement is inclusive, transparent, and aligned with project goals.
- Support creation of "What We Heard" reports and communicate results to the public.
- Incorporate public input into decisions while balancing technical, legal, financial, and broader community considerations.
- Participate in training and ongoing learning to strengthen engagement capacity.

Consultants

- Coordinate directly with the Community Engagement Advisor to align with City policies and expectations.
- Use approved engagement tools and methods reflecting best practices in inclusion and transparency.
- Provide timely and accurate reporting of engagement findings.
- Support clear, unbiased, and accessible communication with participants.
- Reflect the City's values of respect, clarity, and purposefulness in all engagement activities.

Council

- Champion engagement as essential to good governance and transparent decision-making.
- Encourage early and ongoing engagement with residents, Indigenous governments and organizations, and community stakeholders.
- Consider public input when reviewing recommendations and making decisions.
- Participate in City-led engagement activities as appropriate.
- Promote respectful dialogue and demonstrate how feedback influences outcomes.
- Uphold the City's commitment to inclusion and transparency in public forums.
- Support continuous improvement in engagement practices across the organization.

Residents / Community Members

- Participate in engagement opportunities to share feedback, ideas, and experiences.
- Respect differing viewpoints and contribute to constructive dialogue.
- Understand that input is one factor among many in decision-making (along with technical, legal, and financial considerations).
- Stay informed about engagement opportunities and City initiatives through available channels.
- Encourage diverse participation by sharing opportunities with others.
- Request alternative formats or supports to ensure accessibility when needed.
- Provide feedback on the engagement process to help improve future efforts.

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 1: ASSESS LEVEL

Quick Assessment Checklist (for preparation):

Before meeting with the Community Engagement Advisor, the Project Lead can review the following areas:

- Decision Context:
  - What decision is being made?
  - Are some elements already decided or flexible?
  - What stage is the project at (early, mid, final)?
- Purpose & Impact:
  - What input is needed from the public?
  - What are the key messages that need to be communicated?
  - Are there recent or relevant data sources?
  - Who will be affected, and are there sensitive issues?
  - How much influence will public input have on outcomes?
- Stakeholders & Inclusion:
  - Who should be involved?
  - Are there specific groups needing targeted outreach?
- Timing & Readiness:
  - Is there enough time and support for meaningful engagement?
  - Does engagement align with broader City goals?
  - What other City projects should be considered in terms of timing (consider engagement fatigue if multiple City engagement activities happen at the same time.)

A more thorough checklist can be found in DM #795477.

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 2: PLAN

C.1. PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT			
Category	**Internally Delivered** ***(Small or One-Off Projects)***	**Internally Led, Consultant Supported**	**Consultant-Led Engagement** ***(Multi-Phase or Complex Projects)***
Description	Engagement is designed and delivered entirely by City staff.	City leads and oversees, with consultant support for facilitation or analysis.	Consultant firm leads design and delivery, with City oversight.
Project Lead	Departmental Project Lead	Departmental Project Lead	Project Lead and Consultant
Support Roles	Community Engagement Advisor Corporate Communications Advisor	Community Engagement Advisor Corporate Communications Advisor	Community Engagement Advisor Corporate Communications Advisor (advisory roles)
Consultant Involvement	Not involved	Consultant supports specific tasks	Consultant leads engagement planning and delivery
When to Use	Appropriate for **Inform** or **Consult** levels of engagement; usually a one-of project.	Suitable for **Consult** to **Involve** levels of engagement. Used when broader input is needed, or when internal capacity, expertise, or time is limited.	Best for **Collaborate** or **Empower** levels of engagement. This is often used for long-term, multi-phase, city-wide or high-impact strategic initiatives.
Key Considerations	- Use City templates and tools - Quick turnaround - Low public risk	- City owns strategy - Consultant supports execution - Scope must be clearly defined	- Consultant must align with City goals - Engagement scope included in RFP - City retains final accountability

C.2. RACI METHOD

The RACI model is a practical project management tool that helps clarify roles and responsibilities within teams. It ensures accountability and coordination during all stages of engagement planning and delivery. RACI stands for:

- Responsible (Task Owner): This person/team will lead/do the work to complete the task.
- Accountable (Final Decision Maker): The person who has ultimate ownership of the task, approves the final output.
- Consulted (Contributor): Individuals or roles who provide input, guidance, or subject matter expertise.
- Informed: Individuals/roles who are not directly involved but need to be kept in the loop.

RACI helps staff determine who leads, supports, approves, and communicates throughout the engagement process. It is especially useful when projects involve multiple departments or third-party consultants.

Public Engagement Deliverables – RACI MODEL				
	Responsible	**Accountable**	**Consulted**	**Informed**
Digital Assets				
Website Content				
Social Media Content Plan				
General Project Materials				
Project Summary/Briefing Document				
Communication (Channel) Plan				
Key Visual (Design)				
Media Release/Advisory				
Stakeholder List				
Roundtable/Discussion Related Public Engagement				
Spokesperson Speech				
Spokesperson Media Briefing				

Information Board Content				
Information Board Design				
Presentation Slide deck				
Other Event Materials				
Activation related Project Materials				
Leave Behind Materials				
Other Event Materials				

**Itemized list can change depending on the project*

C.3 WORKING WITH EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT CONSULTANTS

For projects involving consultants, the City retains oversight and ensures alignment with standards, values, and expectations. Key things to consider are as follows:

- Pre-RFP Planning
  - Departments complete the Engagement Assessment Checklist and consult with the Community Engagement Advisor to determine if a public engagement is appropriate.
  - If needed, develop a clear RFP scope detailing expectations, deliverables, coordination, and alignment with City guidelines

- After Consultant Selection
  - Introduce the consultant to the Community Engagement Advisor and Communications Team for onboarding.
  - Align roles and responsibilities using the RACI template (DM #799769, or Appendix B) and share it with all parties.
  - Share communications templates, approval timelines, and engagement platforms to ensure consistency. DM Templates can be found in Appendix B.

- During Implementation
  - Departments remain engaged in key activities, respond to technical questions, and support adjustments if needed.
  - Consultants execute activities, monitor progress, and report findings.
  - Community Engagement Advisor ensures standards are upheld, supports platform setup, and reviews messaging for appropriateness, accessibility, and inclusivity.
  - Corporate Communications coordinates messaging, promotional assets, and public inquiries.

- After Engagement
  - Departments integrate findings into decision-making and participate in internal debriefing and evaluation
  - Consultants submit summaries and reports.
  - Community Engagement Advisor ensures follow-up communication with the public and leads the evaluation process.

To support consultant work, key templates, tools, and resources, along with estimated timelines for approvals and sign-offs, are provided in Appendix B. These should be referenced during consultant onboarding and the first project meetings to establish clear expectations for communication, engagement, and reporting.

C.4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN TEMPLATE

**some might have been already answered during the Assessment Phase*

- Project Overview
  - Project Title
  - What is the project and decision to be made?
  - How does it align with Council priorities or City strategies?

- Define the Purpose of the Engagement
  - Why do you need to engage the public?
  - What input are you seeking from the public?
    - Ideas, priorities, concerns, solutions, or validation?
  - How will input be used in the decision-making process?

- Select Level of Engagement in accordance to IAP2 framework
    - Consider Impact, Timeline, Authority, and what's negotiable.

- Stakeholders and Inclusion
  - Identify who must be involved, including underrepresented or equity-deserving groups
  - Define how to ensure accessibility and inclusivity

- Project Management Approach
  - Internal-led, consultant-supported, or consultant-led engagement?
  - If using consultants, clarify scope and RFP requirements

- Engagement Methods, Activities and Tools
  - What activities and tools will be used to reach the audience?
  - Which communication channels will support these methods?
  - Why are these methods appropriate to the audience and goals?

- Key Messages
  - Draft 3–5 clear, plain-language messages explaining the project and engagement purpose.
  - Ensure alignment with Council priorities, City strategies, and overall communications.
  - Identify which messages are internal (for staff/consultants) and which are public-facing.
  - Highlight messages that proactively address anticipated concerns or risks.

- Resources
  - Confirm budget, staffing, venues, materials, and technical needs
  - Secure third-party vendors if necessary

- Timelines
  - Define key dates such as planning, engagement start/end, analysis, reporting, decision deadlines

- Risks and Mitigation
  - Are there sensitive topics, risks, or tensions to be aware of?
  - How will we prepare for or manage those risks?
  - What messages would manage those risks?

- Tracking and Follow up
  - How will feedback be collected and analyzed?
  - How will results and decisions be reported back to the public?

C.5. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE DM FILES

- City/Brand Guidelines – DM 391500
- City Logos
- Survey Template – DM # 695467
- Web Content Template – DM #792262
- Communication Plan – DM #597271
- City Approval Timelines – DM # To be created
- RACI Model for the Project – DM # to be 799769
- General Seeding list – DM #796503
- Other necessary Communications templates for Website and Social media
    - City Letterhead Template – DM # 354406

APPENDIX D: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 3: EXECUTE

D. 1. METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

Method or Activity	What it is	When to use it	Applicable IAP2 Levels
Websites	The City's online platform provides updates, background information, and resources about the City.	For broad access to information at any time.	Inform
Fact Sheets	Concise, accessible, written materials outlining information or updates in an easily digestible format and language.	When informing the public about a project, policy or decision.	Inform
Newsletters	Digital or print subscriptions about the City	For ongoing communication and transparency, especially for long-term initiatives	Inform
Media Advisories	Brief notices to the media about an upcoming event or announcement	When alerting media outlets to public meetings or key updates.	Inform
Press Releases	Formal Written communications announcing decisions, milestones or events	When you want to broadcast key information widely through local media.	Inform
Social Media Posts	Short updates, graphics or polls on the City's social media channels like Facebook and Instagram.	To share updates or gather quick feedback.	Inform, Consult
Survey	Tools to gather quantitative or qualitative input	When you need input from a large audience on preferences, needs or priorities.	Consult, Involve
Public Meetings	Open forums for information sharing and Q&As	When needing to present information and respond to public questions	Inform, Consult, Involve
Workshops	Facilitated Sessions to explore issues in depth	When you want deeper dialogue and to refine options collaboratively.	Involve, Collaborate

Focus Groups	Small Group discussion to explore attitudes and opinions	For detailed feedback from a specific demographic or stakeholder group.	Consult, Involve
Open Houses	Drop in sessions with displays and staff available to answer questions	When people need to explore information at their own pace and ask questions	Inform, Consult
Advisory Committees	Groups of stakeholders offering guidance throughout a project	When consistent input from stakeholders is needed over time	Involve, Collaborate
Pop Up booths	Temporary, mobile stations in public places to share info and gather input.	When you want to reach people in high-traffic areas or remove barriers to access.	Inform, Consult, Involve
Activations	Creative, often interactive events or displays to raise awareness and spark dialogue.	When trying to build interest, prompt an emotional connection, or memorably gather feedback.	Inform, Consult, Involve.
Deliberative Forums	Structured discussion to weigh options and make recommendations	When addressing complex issues that require informed public judgement.	Collaborative, Empower
Co-design workshops	Sessions where stakeholders help design solutions or services	When needing shared ownership and tailored solutions	Collaborate, Empower
Community Mapping	Engaging residents in identifying asses and needs in their neighborhoods	When local knowledge is key to understanding challenges and opportunities	Involve, Collaborate

The City is always open to exploring new public engagement opportunities that come up in strategic planning.

D.2 OUTREACH TO FIRST NATION GOVERNMENTS

Engaging First Nations and Indigenous governments ensures that City planning and engagement processes are inclusive, respectful, and informed by the perspectives of governments with longstanding ties to the land and community. The City seeks to build on existing relationships and create early, meaningful, and ongoing opportunities for input into decisions that may affect their communities.

Letters to First Nation governments should reflect respect, clarity, and transparency. The tone should acknowledge existing relationships, recognize the unique role of each government, and clearly explain the purpose of the project. Communications should provide relevant details, invite perspectives, and remain flexible to accommodate limited staff resources and availability. Effective engagement requires the City to be transparent about timelines, adaptable to the governments' preferences, and committed to building trust through consistent, respectful outreach.

A standard letter should include the following elements:

- Header Information
  - Date
  - Nation (community/government name)
  - ATTN: Contact name and role
  - Address
  - Email (if applicable)
- Subject Line - Clearly reference the project name and purpose
- Opening
  - Acknowledge relationship and extend respectful invitation.
  - State the City project and overall goal.
- Project Context
  - Provide high-level description (purpose, phases, outcomes).
  - Indicate how the project affects the community (relevance).
  - Include project webpage or additional resources.
- Engagement Invitation
  - Invite perspectives, interests, and priorities.
  - Offer options for meeting or alternative ways to share input.
  - Emphasize willingness to work around Nation's capacity and timelines.
- Contact Information
  - Provide direct staff contact and role (e.g., Director, Project Manager).
- Closing
  - Reaffirm respect and commitment to engagement.
  - Formal closing and signature (e.g., Mayor).

Letter Drafting and Approval Process:

- The Community Engagement Advisor or Project Consultant drafts the letter.
- The Economic Opportunities Manager reviews the draft for messaging, clarity, and alignment with City standards.
- The City Manager reviews the letter for approval.
- The City Mayor reviews the document for final approval.
- The Community Engagement Advisor creates letters tailored for each government and sends them back to the Executive Assistant team for the Mayor to send.
- Executive Assistants coordinate the final mailing or electronic delivery on behalf of the Mayor.

D.3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

This checklist (DM #796968) is designed to support the planning and delivery of small to medium-sized public engagement events hosted by the City of Yellowknife. These include:

- Roundtable discussions
- Targeted consultations
- Themed community conversations
- Facilitated group dialogues

Use this checklist when planning in-person events with 10 to 50 participants, where the goal is to gather input, test ideas, or build mutual understanding.

PRE-EVENT PREPARATIONS:

- Event Logistics
  - Confirm Date and Time (consider event proper, ingress, and egress)
  - Book Venue (City Space or external space)
    - Consider Accessibility
    - Consider parking for guests
    - Consider washroom access
    - Is food permitted in the venue?
  - Confirm the format of the event

- Setup and Props
  - Audio Visual Needs
    - Is there a TV or projector on site?
    - Whose laptop will be used?
    - What connector is needed?
    - Are mics needed?
    - Where will the speaker stand?
  - Event Setup
    - Is there enough space for the expected headcount? Would it be conducive to the activity planned?
    - Are backdrops needed?
    - Signages needed:
      - Registration Signage
      - Washroom Signage

- Entrance Signage
- Food and Beverage Area
- Are there restrooms in the location?

- Media Interview
  - Do you need to schedule this separately?
  - Where can the media hold interviews?
  - What are the questions beforehand?
    - Brief the media on the scope and limitations of the interview.
  - Who is the spokesperson?
    - Brief the spokesperson on key messages and key talking points.

- <u>Food and Beverage</u>
  - Service Style:
    - Coffee, Tea, and Snacks
    - Is there drinking water available?
    - Are you serving lunch or dinner?
  - Consider dietary restrictions
  - Always order 10% more
  - Are there appropriate trash bins?
  - Consider the internal team for headcount
  - If ordering, confirm delivery time and include a clean-up schedule.

- <u>Documentation</u>
  - Do we need to hire an event photographer?
    - Where are we getting the budget?
    - What are the deliverables?
    - What are the deadlines for the edited material?
    - Confirm rights to photos and videos (raw and edited versions)
  - Do we need to bring in a team member to take photos? Videos?
  - Do we need to record the event (audio or video)?
    - Prepare waivers for private and marketing-related events
    - Prepare signage for implied consent for public events.

- <u>Registration and Invitations</u>
  - Create an Invite List – DM #796503
  - Draft Email Invite
    - Create an invite graphic as needed
    - Send and invite at least 2 weeks before the event.
      - Include event graphic (if available)

- Be clear on event details
- State the purpose of the meeting
- Write a compelling call to action – What's in it for them?

▪ Create additional emails:
- follow-up invite for those who have not confirmed (3-5 days before the event)
- Reminder Emails to those who have confirmed attendance ahead of time.

▪ Update the Invitation list as RSVPs come in.
- Ensure coordination with the manager and facilitator, if applicable.

- <u>Presentations</u>
  - Who is presenting?
  - Who is preparing the presentation slide deck?

- <u>Printed Materials</u>
  - Event Agenda (copies for all internal staff attendees)
  - Event Background / Summary page (copies for all internal staff attendees)
  - Guest List (copies for all internal staff attendees)
  - Presentation Slide deck as needed
  - Ground Rules for Respectful Discussion (for display)
  - Sign-in Sheets
  - Worksheets, if any
  - Internal Staff Responsibilities throughout the event
  - Print and bring all prepared (and approved) speeches.

- <u>Supplies (check for resources before purchasing)</u>
  - Name tag holders
  - Flip charts
  - Post its
  - Markers and pens
  - Paper
  - City Swag if needed
  - *NOTE: Confirm the budget for sourcing the necessary supplies.*
- For bigger events, or as needed, book 30 minutes of internal alignment (especially if you're asking for help from other team members)
  - Ensure that you add the event to the team calendar.
  - Clarify call times for the project lead, supporting team members, and management.
- For Special events, a reminder to invite YKDFN Drummers.

EVENT DAY FLOW

- Team Arrives Early (1-1.5 hours before the event, depending on setup needs.)
    - Ensure designs are set up
    - Ensure tech is set up, and the presentation works
- Ensure registration desk and signage are in place
- Food and Refreshments should be ready at least 30 minutes before the guest's arrival
- Have an internal alignment
    - Reiterate roles and responsibilities throughout the event.
        - Who will man registration?
        - Who welcomes guests?
        - Who manages media interviews, if any?
- Clean Up

POST EVENT

- Share the final attendance List
- Send thank-you emails to attendees
- Compile notes
- Upload event photos to the shared drive
- Schedule a staff debrief as needed

D.4. ESTIMATED TIME FOR APPROVALS

ESTIMATED TIME FOR APPROVAL		
Digital Assets		
	PROCESS	**DEADLINE**
Website Content	- Fill out DM Template #792262 - To be reviewed by Project Lead, Community Engagement Advisor, Department head	At least 1 week in advance
Survey Template	- Fill out Consultation Template DM # 782378 - Fill out Survey Template DM # 695467 - The consulting team drafts initial write up, with feedback/input from the Community Engagement Advisor.	At least 2 weeks in advance is public consultation is involved.
Social Media Content	- If there is a consulting team, clarify roles for copy draft, graphic design, proposed scheduling. - Content plan will be reviewed by the Community Engagement Advisor, with final sign off by the department.	At least 3 days prior to scheduled posting.
General Project Materials		
Communication (Channel) Plan	- The City's communication plan details channels to be utilized for information dissemination. - Ensure only high level information is in this plan, separate documents are sent for advisory, radio ads, and others .	At least one week in advance.
Key Visual (Design)	- This is usually done at the start as it will roll out in different communication channels.	ASAP
Media Release/Advisory	- Consulting team or department leads the first draft. - Communications Advisor leans in and edits as needed. - Final draft gets sent to communications@yellowknife.ca and Comms will route it for final approval from the Department Head and Comms Manager.	Send to the Comms Team at least 3 business days prior to media release date.

Roundtable/Discussion Related Public Engagement		
Spokesperson Speech	- To be written by Communications Team/ Community Engagement Advisor	At least 2 days prior to event
Spokesperson Media Briefing	- To be written by Communications Team/ Community Engagement Advisor	At least 2 days prior to event
Information Board Content	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	TBD
Information Board Design	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	TBD
Presentation Slide deck	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	At least 2 days prior to event
Other Event Materials	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	TBD
Activation related Project Materials		
Leave Behind Materials	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	TBD
Other Event Materials	- Decide who takes lead. - Community Engagement Advisor to review - Final approval from Department	TBD

D.5. HONORARIUM FRAMEWORK

The City recognizes that when residents take the time to share their input, whether through surveys, events, or in-depth discussions, they are contributing their energy, ideas, and lived experience to improve decision-making. To respect this contribution and encourage broad participation, the City provides honorariums or incentives.

- Principles
  - Equity & Fairness – Incentives should be applied consistently across similar types of engagement.
  - Transparency – Clearly communicate when and why incentives are being offered.
  - Appropriateness – Match the level of honorarium to the time and effort required.
  - Community Benefit – Prioritize options that support community participation.

- Incentive Types
  - Passes to City facilities (e.g., Aquatic Centre, Fieldhouse) – individual or family, single passes, flexi-passes, 3/6/12 month options.
  - Gift cards to local businesses, cafés, or merchants.
  - Event-based prize draws (where appropriate).

- Budgeting for Incentives
  - Incentives should be budgeted as part of the Communications budget for city-wide initiatives, or within the project budget for department-led engagements.
  - Staff should confirm available funds at the project planning stage, before commitments are made.

- Honorarium Structure
  - Not all engagement asks the same of participants. A tiered honorarium structure ensures that incentives are proportional, consistent, and fair:
    - Time Commitment – Short, simple surveys require far less time than a two-hour focus group. Honorariums should reflect that difference.
    - Depth of Input – The more detailed and personal the contribution (e.g., sharing lived experiences), the higher the recognition.
    - Effort and Preparation – Some activities require participants to reflect, travel, or prepare in advance; this justifies a higher tier.
    - Equity and Inclusion – Tiers help remove barriers by ensuring that people who commit more time and effort are not disadvantaged.
  - This approach makes clear that the City is not “paying for opinions,” but instead recognizing the varying levels of contribution residents make when they choose to participate.

Engagement Type	Type of Effort	Suggested Incentives	Appropriate Value Range	Sample Prizes
Short Surveys (mostly close ended questions)	10-15 minutes Low effort	Prize draw entry 5 minor prizes	Minor prize ($50 or less)	2 weeks flexi-pass to the Aquatic Center ($39.50/per pass)
Medium Surveys (mix of open ended and close ended questions)	15-30 minutes Moderate effort	Prize draw entry 4 minor prizes, 1 major prize	Minor prize ($40 each) Major Prize ($200)	2 weeks flexi pass to Aquatic Center ($39.50/per pass), 3 month flexi pass to Aquatic Center ($206.75)
Long Surveys (Detailed input needed)	> 30 minutes High effort	Prize draw entry 10 minor prizes, 1 major prize	Minor Prize ($40 each), Major Prize ($400)	2 weeks flexi pass to Aquatic Center ($39.50/per pax), 6 month flexi pass to Aquatic Center ($391.75) or 3 month family pass $449.50
Pop up Event Activation	Moderate Effort (Consider travel time)	Prize draw 4 minor prizes, 1 major prize	Minor Prize ($20 each), Major prize ($75)	1 week flexi-pass to the Aquatic Center ($21.75), 1 month Flexi-pass to the Aquatic Center
Focused Group Discussion	High Effort	Token of Gratuity	$20-25 each	2 single admission passes to the Aquatic Center ($9.25 x 2)
Event-based Activities (e.g. Community Showcase)	Low to moderate Effort	Prize draw 1 major prize	Major prize $150	1 month family flexi-pass to the Aquatic Center ($157.50)
One on one interview	High Effort	Token of Gratuity	$20-25 each	2 single admission passes to the Aquatic Center ($9.25 x 2)

APPENDIX E: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 4: ANALYZE

WHAT WE HEARD OUTLINE

This phase focuses on understanding feedback from engagement. After public participation activities, the City reviews and organizes all input. The goal is to understand community values, concerns, priorities, and ideas, and how this feedback informs decision-making.

Analysis can be straightforward while remaining thoughtful and fair. Regardless of whether feedback is collected through surveys, workshops, or online platforms, the City must accurately interpret it, identify key themes, and ensure that participants' voices are represented in the results. This approach fosters transparency and enhances the link between engagement and decision-making.

What We Heard Reports

Project Overview - Brief description of the project and why the public was invited to participate	
Engagement Approach - Selected Level of Engagement with a brief description of what it is - Engagement Methods Used - Promotion and Outreach Summary - Participation Summary	
Summary of What We Heard - Key Themes - Concerns or Issues Raised - Unique Perspectives and Insights - For multi-phased or layered projects, break down all public participation opportunities utilized.	
What Happens Next - How feedback will be used - Any limitations or boundaries on influence - Next steps and timelines for further engagement - How to stay informed	
Acknowledgements - Thank you message for participants - Recognize partners and organizations involved in the engagement.	

COMMUNICATING HOW FEEDBACK WAS USED

Clearly explain how input influenced the project, based on engagement level:

- Inform**:** We shared information to build understanding. No public input was sought for this stage or decision.
- Consult**:** We listened to public feedback to better understand preferences and concerns. Input helped shape recommendations or confirmed aspects of the approach.
- Involve**:** We had two-way dialogue with stakeholders and used what we heard to adjust, refine, or prioritize project elements. Feedback was reflected in key decisions.
- Collaborate**:** We co-developed solutions with the community. Input played a direct role in creating options and selecting outcomes.
- Empower**:** Community made the final decision; outcome reflects their choice.
- Always link feedback back to the decisions or next steps; participants should see how their input mattered.

APPENDIX F: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 5: SHARE

F.1 CHECKLIST WHERE TO SHARE REPORTS

To close the loop effectively, it is important that engagement results are shared widely, consistently, and through the right channels. Using a variety of communication platforms ensures participants feel heard, the broader community understands how input was considered, and Council decisions are transparent.

This checklist is designed to help project teams and the Communications Division coordinate the release of reports and updates across the City's digital, physical, and public-facing channels. Each project should review the list, select the most relevant outlets, and confirm that messaging and scheduling are aligned with City standards.

City Digital Channels	Are we sharing results and updates in these channels? Y/N	Have we tailored the report to fit specific channels?	Have we coordinated with the Communications Team to schedule the report upload?
Website			
Facebook			
Instagram			
Other City Channels			
Bulletin Boards at different City Facilities			
Council Meetings			
Digital Billboard			
Other Relevant Touch Points			
Media			

F.2 REPORT PUBLISHING TIMELINES

To support transparency and set clear expectations for both staff and participants, the City has established standard timelines for releasing "What We Heard" reports. These timelines help ensure reporting is timely, consistent, and proportionate to the scale of engagement.

REPORT PUBLISHING TIMLEINES		
TYPE OF PROJECT	**EXAMPLE**	**SCHEDULE RELEASE**
Internal Public Engagement Event	TBD	2 weeks from the event date
One-time/One-off Public Engagement Event	Business Owners Safety Initiative Collaborative Brainstorming Session (June 2025)	2 weeks from the event date
Multi-phased project	Community Plan – Let's Talk YK 2050	Update report done in Phases. Specific timelines identified by Project Lead.

APPENDIX G: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CYCLE PHASE 6: EVALUATE

G.1. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVALUATION SURVEY (REFER TO DM #795610)

This survey gathers feedback from staff and partners involved in public engagement activities to help improve and strengthen the City's engagement practices. It can be adapted depending on project scale and team needs.

- Overall Experience
  - Rate satisfaction with the overall engagement process (1–5).
  - What worked well?
  - Main challenges or areas for improvement?

- Planning Phase
  - Effectiveness of collaboration between Project Lead and Community Engagement Advisor (1–5).
  - Was the Public Engagement Plan clear and detailed?
  - Were scope, objectives, and level of engagement clearly defined? (1–5)

- Execution Phase
  - Were engagement activities implemented as planned?
  - Were methods and channels appropriate for goals and audience?
  - Rate delivery quality of activities and readiness of engagement tools.
  - Were communication and promotional efforts effective?

- Accessibility and Inclusion
  - Were accessibility considerations addressed?
  - Were equity-deserving and underrepresented groups included effectively?

- Feedback Loop and Follow-Up
  - Was feedback collection and documentation transparent and efficient?
  - How clearly were results communicated back to participants?

- Suggestions for improving sharing of results.
  - Final Thoughts
  - Additional comments or recommendations to improve public engagement practices.

G.2. INTERNAL DEBRIEFING AGENDA GUIDE

This meeting allows the project team, partners, and Community Engagement Advisor to reflect on the engagement process. Regular debriefs foster learning, transparency, and continuous improvement in public engagement.

- Purpose:
  - Complement the post-engagement survey with discussion and practical insights.
  - Highlight operational lessons and strategic takeaways to improve future planning, tools, and staff support.

- Suggested Agenda:
  - Review engagement objectives, process, and outcomes.
  - Identify successes, challenges, and unexpected insights from planning, execution, and delivery.
  - Evaluate data collection, reporting, and communications.
  - Recommend updates and improvements to engagement tools, templates, and practices.

APPENDIX H: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Definition
Accessibility	The degree to which engagement activities, materials, and communications are usable and inclusive for people of all abilities, including those with disabilities.
Community Engagement Advisor	City staff responsible for providing guidance, tools, and oversight to ensure public engagement is inclusive, consistent, and aligned with City standards.
Engagement Channel	The medium used to reach and interact with the public, including in-person meetings, surveys, social media, and websites..
Equity-Deserving Groups	Communities or individuals who experience systemic barriers to participation due to social, economic, or demographic factors.
Inclusion	Ensuring participation opportunities are accessible and welcoming to diverse voices and perspectives.
IAP2 Spectrum	An internationally recognized framework defining levels of public participation: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.
Public Engagement	The process of actively involving the community in City decisions, planning, and service delivery.
Public Engagement Plan	A documented plan outlining the objectives, scope, methods, timelines, and responsibilities for a specific engagement initiative.
RACI Model	A tool to clarify roles and responsibilities: Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed.
Stakeholder	An individual, group, or organization affected by, or with an interest in, a project or decision.
Transparency	The practice of openly communicating information, decisions, and rationale to the public.

CITY OF
YELLOWKNIFE

Public Engagement

Policy, Framework, Guidelines & Toolkit

Presented by: Economic Opportunities & Investments Department | February 4, 2025

Why we are here?

Creating Clarity, Consistency, and Trust in How We Engage

Public engagement appears in almost every major City decision, but until now, we haven't had a shared playbook.

The Workplan Commitment

Tier 1 Priority:
Develop Public Engagement Guidelines and Tools

- Clarify engagement requirements and norms
- Support effective outreach
- Identify appropriate tools
- Educate staff and the public understand what engagement can and cannot influence.

“Engagement”

Engagement can mean different things to different people and can include many activities.

Public engagement, by definition, involves two-way participation that helps shape decisions.

What we're presenting today:

POLICY

Sets high-level commitments and principles for public engagement

FRAMEWORK

Provides a structured approach for implementing the Policy

GUIDELINES

Enforces tools, templates, and best practices for staff to deliver engagement activities

This is grounded in best practices (IAP2) and tailored to our capacity and context.

FRAMEWORK HIGHLIGHTS

What we mean by Public Engagement?

Participation that shapes City Decisions

It is the formal process of inviting people to share their ideas, perspectives, and experiences to inform City decisions, plans, and policies. It takes many forms:

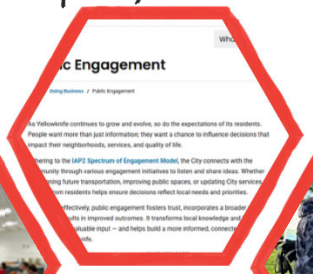
Surveys

Open Houses

Workshops

Roundtables

Online platforms



Events

1 on 1 outreach

What they all have in common is providing space for meaningful input

GOALS OF
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Provide equal opportunities
- Build trust
- Communicate clearly
- Leverage community knowledge
- Acknowledge input
- Maintain ongoing presence
- Be responsive

When we'll engage

- Shaping decisions that affect residents, such as planning, policies, or service improvements.
- Projects with multiple options or potential outcomes, where public values and trade-offs are important.
- Issues affecting specific neighbourhoods, communities, or groups, where local knowledge matters.
- Legislative or regulatory requirements that require public involvement.
- High-impact or high-interest projects, where early involvement can build trust, reduce resistance, and improve outcomes.
- Emerging issues or community concerns where prompt listening can prevent larger problems.

When we won't

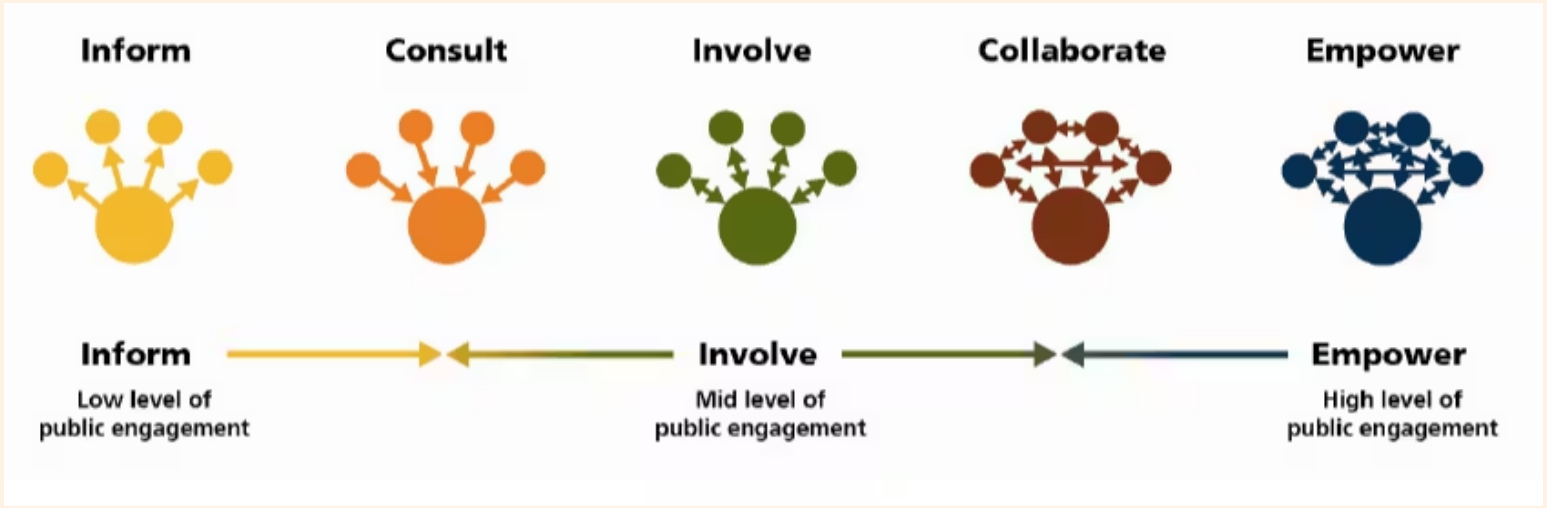
- When laws or regulations already determine the outcome.
- For routine tasks that do not impact residents.
- During emergencies that require quick action.
- If public input will not change the decision.
- When the community was recently surveyed on the same topic.
- If involving the public would delay urgent work.
- Even when engagement is not used, the City is committed to clear and timely communication to keep residents informed.

The City of Yellowknife utilizes the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) to inform its approach to community engagement in decision-making.

IAP2 is a global leader in public engagement, providing standards that promote transparent, inclusive, and effective practices in government and public service.

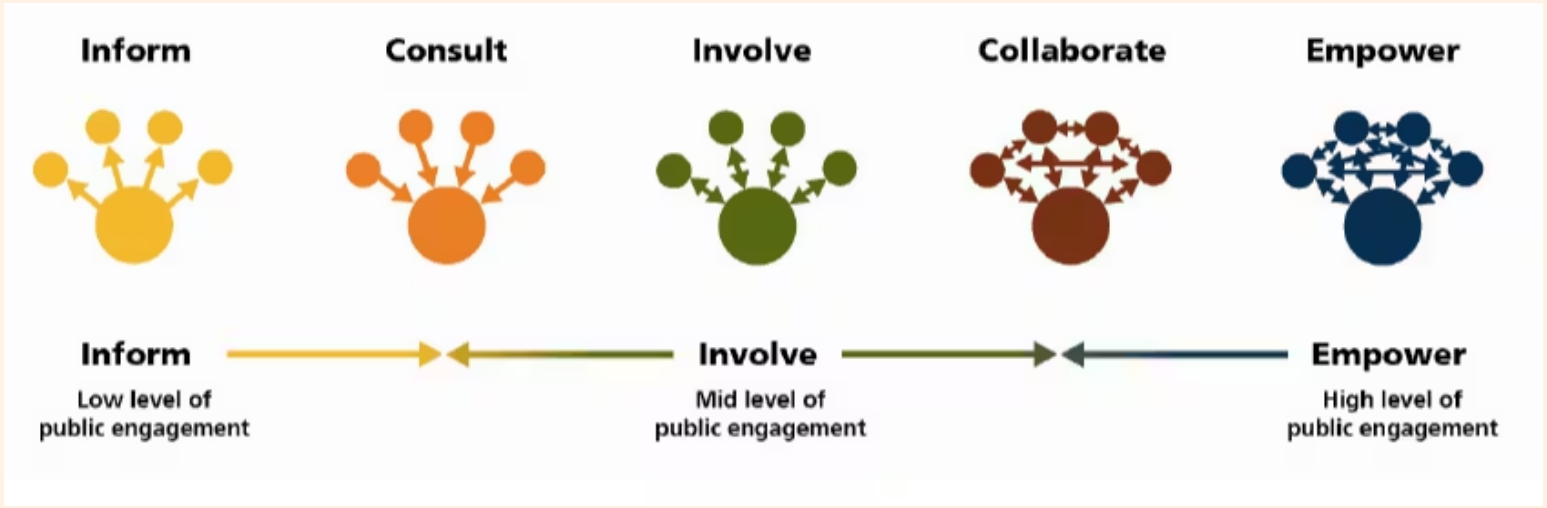
Promise to public

iap2 international association for public participation CANADA



We will keep you informed	We will listen to your input, consider it, and share how it influenced the decision	We will work with you to ensure your views are understood and considered	We will look to you for advise and innovation, and include your input as much as possible.	We will support you in making the final decision

Sample City Projects:



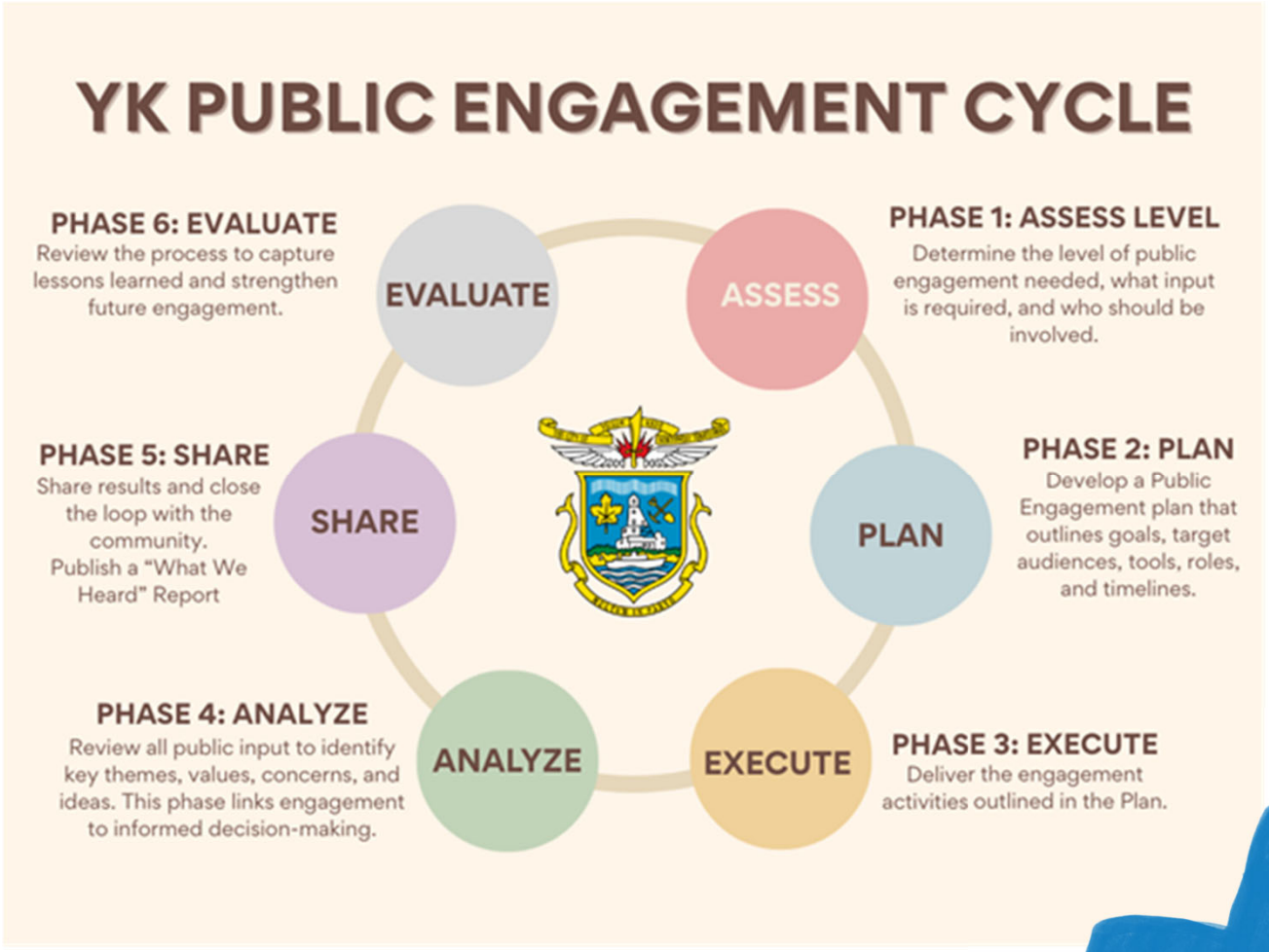
Construction projects (road work, transit detours, traffic light maintenance program, etc.)	Let's Talk YK 2050 – Phase 1	Climate Action Plan 2026-2036 Roundtables (Phase 1) Q1 2025.	Business Owners' Safety Initiative (Jun 2025)	Referendum, such as the Aquatic Centre Borrowing.

FROM FRAMEWORK TO PRACTICE

Consistent.

Scalable.

Repeatable.



ASSESS

The City first determines the level of public engagement required, identifies helpful input, and determines who should be involved in the process.

- Match engagement to project impact
- Consider scope and reach
- Factor in resources
- Account for sensitivity and complexity

Use these factors to decide the level of engagement

Plan

A plan is created to guide the engagement, including clear goals, methods, and timelines. Planning ensures that participation is accessible, inclusive, and meaningful.

Engagement delivery

- Internally delivered (Small/one-off projects)
- Internally-led, consultant supported
- Consultant-led engagement

Delegation of roles/responsibilities

RACI Method
(Responsible, Accountable, Consult, Inform)

Public Engagement Plan

captures key details such as objectives, timelines, methods, risks, and reporting.

Execute

Engagement activities are carried out. Residents may be invited to participate through surveys, workshops, meetings, online platforms, or community events.

Analyze

All feedback is reviewed to identify key themes, priorities, and concerns. This helps the City understand community input and use it to inform decisions.

Analyzing Data

- Collect and organize input
- Identify key themes
- Assess feedback against project goals
- Ensure inclusive representation
- Summarize results

What We Heard reports

Capture community input and key themes in participants' own words. It does not include recommendations or decisions.

Share

The City shares what was heard and explains how community input influenced decisions. Reports are easy to read, may include visuals, and are shared online, in public spaces, and through other channels.

Sharing Outcomes

- Publish and share results widely
- Connect engagement to decisions
- Notify participants directly

Evaluate

The City reflects on the engagement process to identify what worked well and what could be improved. Lessons learned are documented and shared internally to make future engagements more effective, inclusive, and aligned with community needs.

Culture of Learning and Accountability

- Engagement Evaluation Survey
- Internal Debriefing Agenda

What this means for Council?

Public engagement is a shared responsibility, and Council has a critical role in ensuring it is meaningful, transparent, and effective.

Clearer Expectations

- Council can be confident that engagement is purposeful.
- Council can expect consistent reporting and transparency.

Better decision-making

- Engagement will be more consistent and inclusive.
- Council receives higher-quality input and clearer “what we heard” summaries.

Stronger Trust

- Residents will better understand when they can influence decisions, and when decisions are already determined.
- Clear follow-through reduces frustration and builds confidence.

Consistency for Staff.

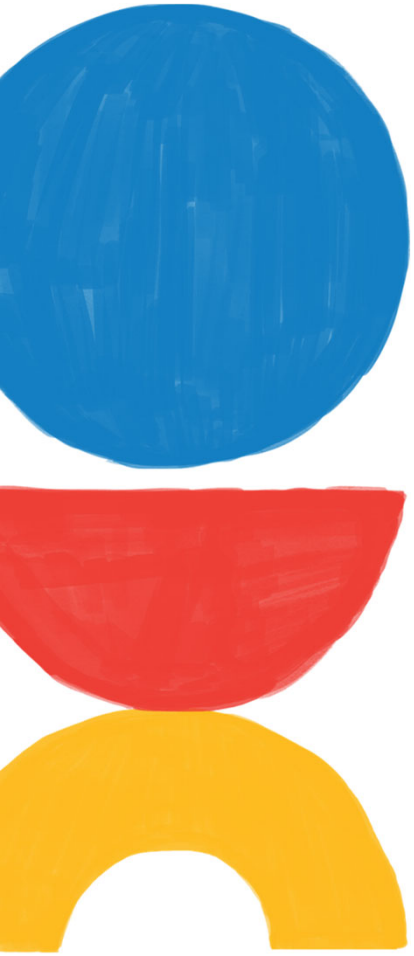
Clarity for Residents.

Confidence for Council.

To make this work, we need 2 things:

1. **Council Endorsement**

2. **Continued support for implementation**

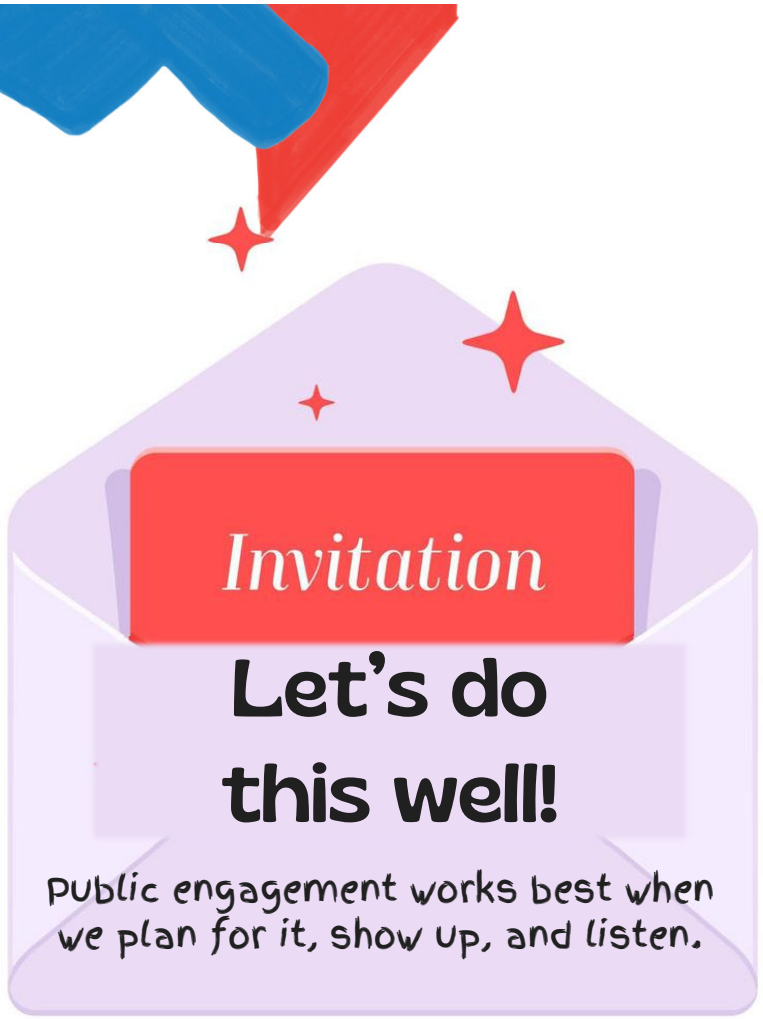


Next Steps

Present this to City Staff

Training Sessions with Key staff

City Central (Guidelines and Toolkit)



For Staff

to use these tools early in planning and often

For Council

to support meaningful engagement

For Residents

to share your voice and stay involved

CITY OF
YELLOWKNIFE

Thank you!

Presented by: Economic Opportunities & Investments Department | February 4, 2025