

**RECONCILIATION**

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**ACTION PLAN**

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2022



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

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# Introduction

## Reconciliation Framework

The City of Yellowknife Reconciliation Framework is the foundation for how the City works to build respectful relationships with, and create a more inclusive representation of, Indigenous Peoples within the City of Yellowknife.

Please refer to the Reconciliation Framework for:

- Background on the City’s Reconciliation journey;
- Overarching goals and principles of the City’s Reconciliation initiatives; and
- How the City will engage Indigenous peoples, Indigenous governments, Indigenous organizations and the community at large on the City’s Reconciliation initiatives.

## Structure of the Action Plan

This Action Plan supports the Reconciliation Framework. The Action Plan lays out concrete actions the City plans to take to move forward on our collective Reconciliation journey.

This Action Plan includes:

1. **Current Actions**, which the City has committed to taking, description of the work, the partners the City intends to involve, and the expected timeline;
2. **Past and Ongoing Actions**, which the City has already taken; and
3. **Possible Future Actions**, which are within the City’s mandate that the City received through the “Reconciliation: Starting the Conversation” discussions and from reviewing initiatives taking place in other municipalities which might become actions the City chooses to undertake in the future.



## Review and Additions

This Action Plan is a living document that will be refreshed and adapted to reflect the City's work and priority areas across our community.

This Action Plan will be reviewed and updated regularly, and will be presented to Council at a minimum of once per year.

Items will be added to the **Current Actions** based on ideas and feedback from the Yellowknives Dene First Nation, the North Slave Métis Alliance, other Indigenous governments, institutions individuals and organizations, and the community at large.



## ACTION PLAN

### Current Actions – 2021 and 2022

Since the dialogue that came out of the City’s ‘Starting the Conversation’ document in 2019, the City received many suggestions from a broad array of people. Although not all of the suggested actions are within the City’s mandate, many are and actions have been taken on a number of fronts. Since then, other suggestions have been made to the City and are reflected here as well. COVID has impacted the City’s ability to advance many strategies and action but we continue to seek to move forward on reconciliation in spirit and practice.

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PARTNERS	STATUS
Yellowknife Public Library – Elders Circle in (2021)	Elders are invited to host sessions at the Library.	Elders	Ongoing, Funding included in Budget 2022
NAKA Festival	Collaboration with YKDFN to celebrate and promote aurora borealis and related activities	YKDFN	Paused in 2021 & 2022 due to COVID. Discussions will be held with YKDFN to resume for 2023
Canada Day event and reconciliation (2021, 2022)	Collaboration with YKDFN to change the tone and approach for Canada Day to recognize the legacy of residential schools and colonization in our country.	YKDFN	Collaboration underway for planning 2022 event.
Yellowknife Public Library – Speak Dene Café (2020, 2021)	Dene language speaking in an informal context is offered with guidance from a Dene elder	Elders	To resume in 2022
Stop Signs	Update stop Signs to include Wiiliideh language	YKDFN	Ongoing, installation as and when stop signs are ordered
Lobby to advance TRC Action #82	82. “We call upon provincial and territorial governments, in collaboration with Survivors and their organizations, and other parties to the Settlement Agreement, to	YKDFN, GNWT, Dene Nation, CIRNAC	Ongoing. City is a member of the Steering Committee led by the GNWT to advance this



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	PARTNERS	STATUS
	commission and install a publicly accessible, highly visible, Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.”		
Joint Economic Development Strategy	City and YKDFN partnered in the Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI)- co-hosted by CANDO and FCM - as one of the lead co-horts for indigenous-municipal joint economic development	YKDFN	YKDFN and City ‘graduated’ in 2021. Joint Economic Development Plan was approved in 2021 and a joint implementation plan is being reviewed by YKDFN and City leaders in 2022.
Indigenizing Space	<p>Arbour - The City proposes to build an arbour to indigenize public space</p> <p>Library – acquisition of artwork depicting historical residents of Latham Island</p>	YKDFN, Community residents	<p>Planning and project development included in Budget 2021, getting underway in 2022.</p> <p>Acquired in 2022.</p>
Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation (AIWF)	<p>Extension of the MOU with the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation for the purpose of providing interim traditional Indigenous health services (Council Motion #0128-18) as an indication of UNDRIP principles applying to land considerations.</p> <p>The City supported AIWF in its work to establish a healing camp by providing the land for the camp through an unprecedented, non-colonial process and funding.</p>	AIWF	Renewal of MOU in 2022, as per the wishes of the AIWF.



<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Traditional on-the-land camps and community hunt (2021)	Community Advisory Board on Homelessness (CAB) recommended and Council approved allocating federal Reaching Home one time COVID funding for YKDFN led programming for on-the-land healing camps and a community hunt to provide traditional/country food for Indigenous residents of the region	YKDFN; CAB	YKDFN implemented a successful on-the-land program in Spring 2021 with one time COVID funding provided through CAB.
Traditional names for lakes/landmarks (2021)	Seek to rename lakes and prominent landmarks within Yellowknife's boundary using traditional Williideh names	YKDFN	YKDFN and City have begun this work.
Recruitment strategies	The City is seeking to attract more Indigenous persons to work at the City through its recruitment practices by prioritizing qualified Indigenous candidates		City HR Directives adopted in 2021; Implementation underway
Annual Priority for Municipal Enforcement (2021)	Council set "emphasis on incorporating reconciliation with Indigenous peoples into public safety and enforcement activities" as a key priority		Council Motion 0077-21
Recognition of YKDFN Peoples (2021)	Motion from the Heritage Committee, supported by Council, including a backgrounder, plaque and translation of information into Williideh dialect	YKDFN	Collaboration with YKDFN to get underway in 2022
Indigenous Cultural Safety Training for City staff	The City has held annual residential school training that has been mandatory for all City staff since 2015. Paused in 2020 due to COVID, options to expand the focus of training to include colonization, cultural respect/ safety are being planned, including online and in person opportunities	GNWT; Private contractors	Resources are included in Budget 2022 – RFP to seek Indigenous cultural training for staff and Council in progress



<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Visitor Information Centre (VIC)	Incorporate YKDFN content on history and culture	YKDFN	New VIC to open in 2022
Aquatic Centre	Indigenous Engagement and incorporation of design elements	Clark Builders	Commencing in 2022
Reconciliation Round Table 2022	Host an event where the residents can discuss what reconciliation looks like in our community		Council motion 0063-21





## Past and Ongoing Actions

Over the years since the community of Yellowknife was established, the City has been evolving in our understanding of the culture, traditions and rights of Indigenous peoples whose traditional lands our community now inhabits. Historically, there have been many wrongs and more recently, a growing awareness of the importance of honouring, respecting and recognizing the rights of Indigenous peoples.

In the spirit of reconciliation, some actions that the City has undertaken include:

ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action 43, 47, 57, 75, 76 and 77 – Council Motion #0324-15 adopted October 26, 2015	Article 43: Adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	Completed	Council Motion #0324-15
	Article 47: The Mayor corresponds with the GNWT to ensure that any and all laws that rely upon the Doctrine of Discovery and terra nullius are repudiated.	Completed	Letter sent to the Honourable Robert C. McLeod February 25, 2016 (DM#453424)
	Article 57: That funding be identified for the provision of skill-based training for all City staff to undergo that will provide a learning experience on the history of Aboriginal peoples relating to residential schools; UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Treaties and Aboriginal Rights, Indigenous Law; and, Aboriginal–Crown relations.	Completed	Budget 2016 - Council Motion #0316-16. All City Staff completed training on the History and Legacy of Residential Schools and Colonization between 2017-2019
	Articles 75, 76, and 77: The Mayor correspond with the GNWT and School Boards encouraging them to ensure that they provide any and all information pertaining to identification,	Completed	Letter sent to the Honourable Robert C. McLeod February 25, 2016 (DM#453424)  Letter sent to Simon Taylor, Chair Yellowknife Catholic Schools February 25, 2016 (DM# 453430)



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
	documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries/sites where residential school children are buried, and for them to provide all known records to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.		Letter sent to John Stephenson, Chair YK Education District No. 1 February 25, 2016 (DM #453428)
Meeting protocols updated	Meetings commence with an acknowledgement that the City is on the shared traditional lands of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN), and recognition of the North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA)	Completed	Acknowledgement:  <i>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.</i>
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	The City and the YKDFN entered into a MOU in 2002. The MOU was revised and executed in 2019.	Completed	MOU signed by both YKDFN and City on December 5, 2019 (Council Motion #0060-20). <a href="https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/city-government/resources/Indigenous-Relations/MEMORANDUM-OF-UNDERSTANDING-BETWEEN-CITY-AND-YELLOWKNIVES-DENE-FIRST-NATION-REDUCED-PDFA.pdf">https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/city-government/resources/Indigenous-Relations/MEMORANDUM-OF-UNDERSTANDING-BETWEEN-CITY-AND-YELLOWKNIVES-DENE-FIRST-NATION-REDUCED-PDFA.pdf</a>
Joint Council Meetings	Regular Joint Council meetings between the elected leaders of YKDFN and the City started in the 1990's and continue to the present day	Ongoing	Chiefs and Mayor meet regularly; schedule annual meetings with GNWT.



<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>
YKDFN Flag	The YKDFN flag flies next to the Canadian, NWT and City of Yellowknife flag in front of City Hall year round.	Completed	Flags and Proclamations Policy adopted on January 11, 2021 (Council Motion #0005-21) – YKDFN flag is displayed permanently.
Urban Hide Tanning Camp	The City has support the Urban Hide Tanning Camp in downtown Yellowknife financially and through use of outdoor City space since its inception 3 years ago.	2017, 2018, 2019	Council Motion #0163-17 Council Motion #0302-18
Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation (AIWF)	The City supported AIWF in its work to establish a healing camp by providing the land for the camp through an unprecedented, non-colonial process and funding.	Completed	October 15, 2019 Council approved \$50,000 to extend hours of healing camp and transportation to camp (Council Motion#0219-19)  April 30, 2018 Council directed SAO to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation for the purpose of providing interim traditional Indigenous health services (Council Motion #0128-18) as an indication of UNDRIP principles applying to land considerations.
Intercultural Heritage and Placemaking Plan	The development of the Intercultural Heritage & Placemaking Plan was a collaboration between (YKDFN and the City in order to reflect the indigenous history and cultural values in the community	Ongoing	On September 10, 2018 Council accepted for information, the Intercultural Heritage and Placemaking Plan and approved the expenditure of \$45,000 from the Heritage Committee Reserve Fund for the implementation of the Intercultural Heritage and Placemaking Plan. (Council Motion #0301-18)  On April 14, 2020 Council directed Administration to implement the Intercultural Heritage and Placemaking Plan (Council Motion #0060-20)



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
YKDFN-City collaboration	<p>Selected as a partnership under the First Nations-Municipal Community Economic Development Initiative (CEDI) to advance areas of shared interest</p> <p>Working, together with the North Slave Metis Alliance, to secure funding for the submarine water pipeline which brings water from upstream of Giant Mine to the City's water treatment plant which serves all</p> <p>Successfully obtaining funding under Climate Change Preparedness in the North (CCPN) to work to protect Dettah/Ndilo and Yellowknife from wildfires</p> <p>YKDFN's Chief Executive Officer and the City Administrator have regular meetings to work on issues of common interest</p> <p>Actively working to reaffirm, align and support respective lands interests as the Akaitcho negotiations towards Agreement-in-Principle proceed</p> <p>YKDFN representatives are key participants on a number of City Committees, including the Community Advisory Board (CAB) on</p>	Ongoing	<p>On July 22, 2019 Council passed a resolution confirming participation in CEDI (Council Motion #0178-19)</p> <p>Letters of Support provided from YKDFN and NSMA were integral to the City accessing funding under the Government of Canada's Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund for the water pipeline replacement.</p> <p>Joint collaboration on firesmaring between City and YKDFN.</p> <p>Monthly meetings take place.</p> <p>City supports YKDFN interim land withdrawal interests.</p>



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
	Homelessness, the Heritage Committee, the Homelessness Commission and the Capital Area Committee		
Community Boundary Revision	The community boundary impacting the City and YKDFN is one part of the AIP process. The YKDFN has identified that for the purposes of community growth and land development they are requesting that the community boundary between the City of Yellowknife and Dettah/Ndilo be adjusted. The City of Yellowknife has been working in partnership with YKDFN to support long term growth for YKDFN while concurrently projecting Yellowknife land needs.	Ongoing	On July 22, 2019 Council resolved to apply to the GNWT for a community boundary revision jointly with YKDFN (Council Motion #0177-19)
Indigenous Relations Advisor	City received funding through Urban Programming for Indigenous Persons (UPIP) to hire a term Indigenous Relations Advisor to facilitate the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan across all City departments	Completed	Indigenous Relations Advisor was hired for 18 month term in 2018.
North Slave Metis Alliance (NSMA)	Regular meetings take place between the City and the leadership of the NSMA.	Ongoing	Meetings take place and work will soon commence on an MOU between the City and NSMA.
Sports and Recreation	City has worked in partnership with the Aboriginal Sports Circle of the	Ongoing	Ongoing efforts to seek instructors and facilitators for Indigenous programming and events



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
	<p>Western Arctic to host Traditional Games Nights at the Multiplex</p> <p>Indigenous programming such as Naturally Dene Workshops, has been included in recreational programming</p>		
Street & Park Naming	Outreach to YKDFN, NSMA and the Dene Nation to seek their suggestions for street and park names that honour Indigenous citizens within the City	Ongoing	<p>Letter to William Enge, President, NSMA dated June 6, 2019 (DM#563307)</p> <p>Letter to YKDFN dated June 6, 2019 (DM#563309)</p> <p>Letter to Chief Norman Yakeleya, Dene Nation, dated June 3, 2019 (DM#563308)</p>
Traditional Names for Lakes within Yellowknife's boundary	Outreach to YKDFN to collaborate on using traditional names for lakes		Letter to YKDFN Chiefs dated November 26, 2020 (DM#631336) – City and YKDFN Administrations are working together on this
Indigenizing Outdoor Space	Proposing that an arbour be built within Yellowknife – planning funds included in Budget 2021		Letters to YKDFN Chiefs January and April 2021 (DM#638576 and DM#645926) proposing collaboration
Street Signs	Include Wiiliideh language on Stop signs	Ongoing	40 bilingual stop signs erected in 2020; ongoing as and when stop signs are ordered/replaced. (Council Motion #0060-20)
City email signatures	Standardized email signatures	Ongoing	City staff email signatures are standardized to include: <i>I acknowledge that I reside and work in Chief Drygeese territory.</i>
“Strong People; Strong Communities” (2021)	Support - \$ and in kind - to mural project where NWT artists work with youth to create 5 murals. For permanent installation around YK	Mahalia Newmark, Kalina Newmark and team	Project completed in 2021, 7 new murals in Yellowknife, 2 on City owned buildings
Traditional on-the-land camps and	Community Advisory Board on Homelessness (CAB) recommended and Council	CAB; YKDFN	YKDFN implemented a successful on the land program in Spring 2021



ACTION	DESCRIPTION	STATUS	DETAIL
community hunt (2021)	approved allocating federal Reaching Home one time COVID funding for YKDFN led programming for on-the-land healing camps and a community hunt to provide traditional/country food for Indigenous residents of the region		



## Potential Future Actions

The City is planning for a number of future actions, including many that result from our close working relationship with YKDFN. In addition, we seek ongoing ideas and recommendations on actions that can advance reconciliation. Some of the activities that the City is considering in the future include the following. What else can we do?

ACTION	DESCRIPTION
Annual gathering on reconciliation	Coordinate an annual public event in 2022, pending COVID, to encourage dialogue on reconciliation within Yellowknife, with the support of external facilitator(s)
MOU annual Work Plan	Work with the YKDFN to plan annual priorities to focus on under the framework of our MOU
Highlight Indigenous Languages where possible	Incorporate indigenous language into more signage, festivals and events
MOU with NSMA	Develop an MOU that outlines our mutual respect and working relationship
Community Blanket Exercise	Opportunity for residents to seek to understand the impact of colonization and residential schools on Indigenous Peoples
Implementation of the Joint Economic Development Strategy - JEDS (YKDFN & City)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint lobbying effort to establish Indigenous culture training and certification</li> <li>• Create an innovative visitor experience to highlight Chief Drygeese territory and YKDFN culture</li> <li>• Collaborate with YKDFN on recommendations to GNWT to rebrand the Yellowknife Airport arrival and departure displays to reflect Chief Drygeese territory.</li> <li>• Friendship Festival - YKDFN and City planning this together to potentially begin in 2022</li> </ul>

