



## CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

### MEMORANDUM TO COMMITTEE (For Information Only)

**COMMITTEE:** Governance and Priorities

**DATE:** September 19, 2022

**DEPARTMENT:** Corporate Services

**ISSUE:** Budget 2023 Public Input

#### BACKGROUND:

Public consultation is a key pillar of the City's budget process. During the year, the public has been invited to provide their input on Budget 2023. These opportunities were advertised in the Capital Update, on local radio, through the City's online and social media channels, and reiterated in budget presentations to Committee.

Citizens had the opportunity to present their input on Budget 2023 at the September 12, 2022 Council meeting, and three citizens presented:

- Council heard a presentation from Tom McLennan regarding the need for a policy regarding mill rate ratios. Tom McLennan also seeks stable long term funding for the Yellowknife Street Outreach. Tom McLennan noted that the Downtown Improvement Reserve should only be used for the downtown and not Old Town.
- Council heard a presentation from Mickey Brown regarding Lakeview Cemetery. Mickey Brown seeks increased resources and funding to maintain the cemetery and its upkeep. Mickey Brown requested the City invest funds in developing a map illustrating the names and locations of burials at Lakeview Cemetery.
- Council heard a presentation from Linda Bussey regarding the Arctic Inspiration Prize. Linda Bussey thanked Council for their past support and requested future commitment of \$10,000 in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

In addition to these presentations, the following input was received:

- Appendix A: Request for Rink Boards
- Appendix B: General comments on property taxes
- Appendix C: Requests regarding garbage collection and road improvement
- Appendix D: Proposal for curb-side parking lane on School Draw
- Appendix E: Request for funding to support the Community Energy Plan Actions
- Appendix F: Request for additional funding for recreation and swimming
- Appendix G: Budget 2023 priorities
- Appendix H: Budget 2023 priorities

**COUNCIL POLICY / RESOLUTION OR GOAL:**

Motion # 0204 -19 That Council approve the revised Budget Policy as proposed by the Budget Policies Task Force.

**APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BY-LAWS, STUDIES, PLANS:**

*Cities, Towns and Villages Act*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendices A through H.

Prepared: September 12, 2022; SW  
Revised: September 14, 2022; SW  
September 15, 2022; SW

## Appendix A: Request for Rink Boards

Received by email, February 9, 2022

Good day,

I'm a resident on Hall Cres and live right by the park. There's an awesome little skating rink that is being maintained on the concrete slab in the middle of the park, there are nets and there is lighting at night, and the rink gets a fairly high volume of skaters. I wanted to inquire if it would be possible to have the city (or some other funding source available) sponsor the purchase of some sort of boards to line the side of the rink and make that rink just one step more official? Even if they were short boards that were just above ankle height, it would at least allow pucks to not be constantly lost into the snow.

Now that Hall Cres is nearing completion for construction, and there are more and more families moving into the area I think this investment would be enjoyed for quite a long time! I'm willing to help research and organize procurement, if you or someone at City Council or the NWT Association of Communities would be willing to spearhead the funding (I have no idea how the public funds procurement process would go for something like, or if this is even a reasonable request).

Preliminary search/cost estimate - probably on the order of \$2000-\$3000 pre-tax.

[1] <https://canada.ironleek.com/poly-board-rink-kits/16-wide-boards>

[2] [https://ezicerinks.com/?rink=small&style=1%2C1%2C1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAgP6PBhDmARIsAPWMq6mI3sOWQyP\\_75TsSizVuif9Eeu7sSeh3-vgL-nAwkijM-H1wFc3VFsaAt1ZEALw\\_wcB&features=rounded%2Crounded#shoprinks](https://ezicerinks.com/?rink=small&style=1%2C1%2C1&gclid=Cj0KCQiAgP6PBhDmARIsAPWMq6mI3sOWQyP_75TsSizVuif9Eeu7sSeh3-vgL-nAwkijM-H1wFc3VFsaAt1ZEALw_wcB&features=rounded%2Crounded#shoprinks)

If I'm totally off-side (pun intended) with this request, I understand. Mostly just asking if this is even something that could be considered.

Thank you kindly,  
Graham Neely

## Appendix B: General comments on property taxes

Received by email, March 16, 2022

To whom it may concern,

My family owns a house on Hall Cres and at this time I am against raising residential property taxes without a detailed financial analysis of what expenditures the increase would be used for. This is for the following reasons:

1. Our road is not fully paved.
2. There is no enforcement of noise bylaws particularly in the winter months when snowmobiles speed along Kam Lake all hours of the night- not is there a designated and signed snowmobile trail or posted speed like.
3. There is no permanent traffic signage at the intersection of Hall Cres and Hall Court.
4. The city does not enforce beautification of playgrounds or parks which are swamped with garbage and/or graffiti during summer months.

I would support an increase in residential property taxes for the following services and initiatives:

1. A curb side recycling.
2. Investments in recreational facilities for residents to use during the summer such as an outdoor splash pad- acknowledging that there is a lack of public beaches and some families have limited means of transportation.
3. An increase in the number of positions for recreational programs (such as swimming lessons), before/after school care, and day camps.

Jennifer Vermeersch

## Appendix C: Requests regarding garbage collection and road improvement

Received by email: August 25, 2022

Request 1: Install a more effective garbage bins. I often see overfull bins that I believe city staff currently empty once per week. Specifically the Rat Lake parking lot on Con Road and the bins at the Petro Canada card lock across from coop on the shore of Frame Lake. These bins overflow on a weekly basis and people aren't smart enough to stop trying to shove things into them when they are already overflowing. The result is raven's that scatter the garbage and city staff end up having to clean it all up. Some of the problems are caused by people disposing household garbage on bins that have no restriction on the tops of them. Some suggestions if they are workable are larger bins, more frequent pickup, or contracting the collection out to Kavanaugh and installing locked bins that have restricted openings so that household garbage bags can not be stuffed into them. If people are willing to take the time to put their garbage in a bin, they shouldn't be overflowing as it just causes our littering problem to grow.

Request 2: Replace a stretch of pavement on Old Airport Road in front of the pumphouse at the Old Airport Road/Kam Lake Road/Franklin Avenue/Taylor Road intersection. The Northeast bound lanes have been in need of repair for years with patch jobs falling apart any time it rains or we have a freeze/thaw cycle in spring or fall. A new section of pavement there is needed rather than patching.

Allan Gofenko

## Appendix D: Proposal for curb-side parking lane on School Draw

Received by email: August 25, 2022

I am writing to propose a new curb-side parking lane on the west side of School Draw from Rotary Park to either the community garden opposite Lundquist Road or perhaps all the way to the corner of Franklin if that was the city's wish. At the time of writing, it is my understanding that there is to be a sidewalk installed on the west side of School Draw in front of the new apartment. It is my recommendation that the city not use financial resources for a sidewalk in this area, instead directing the resources to a parking lane, either parallel or angle parking, if space allows. Space for parallel parking has already been demonstrated by construction crew vehicles parked between the curb and the fence. I believe there is additional space on the backside of the fence, as illustrated on Planning Department maps, that may allow for angle parking.

At the present time there is no sidewalk on the west side of School Draw from the top of the street to the bottom. Building this small section serves little purpose when there is an active sidewalk on the east side of the street (the Rotary Park side), especially considering a sidewalk would have to terminate just south of the apartment where the rock outcrop exists.

School Draw, at its north end, was not constructed wide enough to safely accommodate parking for a popular community park and an apartment building, thus parking in the neighbourhood currently needs attention. Rotary Park currently creates congestion and subsequent safety issues every time there is an event in the park. The situation will only worsen once the apartment is completed in 2023. By planning and acting on curb-side parking in this budget cycle, the city would be proactively getting ahead of a difficult neighbourhood situation and a public safety issue.

This message will be followed by a second email and attachments provided to the Planning Department earlier this month, including a detailed description of the proposal.

August 21, 2022

Andrew Treger  
Planner  
City of Yellowknife

School Draw/Lundquist Road Parking and Sidewalk Layout

Thanks for taking time with me on Friday, Andrew. I appreciated going over the Lundquist/School Draw neighbourhood road and site plans with you in order to be able to see the spaces we have available.

My ultimate goal with this initiative is to see the City undertake a capital project that will proactively address parking in the School Draw/Lundquist area in time for the opening of the new apartment currently under construction. Framing on the building is drawing to a close so a capital project on School Draw next summer, perhaps at the same time as the renewal of the sewage lift station is being undertaken, would see the parking issues addressed just prior to opening the new apartment.

*Before proceeding I want to make it clear to all readers that this is not a complaint in any fashion. The builders of the new apartment have been good neighbours and the building is being accepted positively in the neighbourhood, as far as I'm aware.*

Addressing the parking issue in advance of the next capital plan exercise would address two fundamental issues in a timely manner: 1) public safety, 2) street congestion.

**1) Public Safety – Children in the Park**

For a number of years there has been a pop-up bike park at the corner of School Draw and Lundquist. By cutting the grass and generally looking after the area it has been transformed from a littered eyesore commonly parked on by large trucks and always marked by copious dog droppings to a terrific little family site. People now clean up the paper blowing through from the recycling area and dog people have been pretty good about cleaning up after their dogs. A little public effort has made an enormous difference to the area, all at no cost to the city.

Since around 2000, kids have been using the berm on Lundquist as a bike jumping ramp, an initiative that expanded as they built and maintained bike jumps and ramps on the site. It has become common for parents to take their children to the park and help them develop bike skills.

Parking in front of the park on Lundquist will obviously create a safety issue if children are to be entering and exiting on bikes between parked vehicles. Currently there is very little demand for parking on Lundquist so seldom a safety conflict between vehicles and kids. Having a no parking zone by the bike park and allowing parking immediately across from and further down the street from the park could alleviate safety concerns. It is anticipated that solutions to this issue would only result in City signage expense.

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**2) Street Congestion and Public Safety:**

Observation on the street in front of any apartment building in Yellowknife will confirm that streets are full with parked vehicles: family unit second vehicles, campers, trailers, boats, and snowmobiles. Although our community ideal is to reduce vehicle use, reality is that people have more than one vehicle in addition to recreation vehicles. The on-site parking requirement of any development is generally insufficient to meet occupant demand for space. A proactive parallel parking initiative along the west side of School Draw would go some distance to recognize the looming neighbourhood challenge.

Exacerbating this issue is that only 4 parking spaces are available for Rotary Park. When there is an event in the park, School Draw is severely clogged creating obvious safety issues. When both sides of the street are used, the roadway is reduced to only one lane.

It is my understanding that there is to be a sidewalk on the west side of School Draw, an amenity that would likely eliminate the space for parking. I submit that this sidewalk is not necessary as a sidewalk on the east side of School Draw currently serves the area. Note is made that there are many streets in Yellowknife with sidewalks on only one side of the street, including School Draw from one end to the other, including a section in front of an existing major apartment, Ciara Manor.

Importantly, any plan for sidewalks needs to accommodate people with disabilities, this area being no exception. As a southbound sidewalk on the west side of School Draw would be terminated by the ditch and the rock outcrop just south of the apartment, it would make sense to accommodate people with disabilities wishing to travel in the direction of Rotary Park with a crossing at School Draw and Lundquist providing access to the sidewalk on the east side of the road. Additionally, a sidewalk should run from the north end of the development on the west side of School Draw to Franklin Avenue.

Highlighting the existing structural issues and safety need for a proactive approach to parking is the width of School Draw. From a presentation I made to the Appeal Board as a means of highlighting a neighbourhood planning issue:

*School Draw, by my measurement, is 27 feet wide. A 2020 Ford F-150 with the mirrors extended is 8 feet wide, with the mirrors folded, 7 feet. Were Ford F-150s parked on either side of the road, there would be 11 feet left for travelling vehicles. Clearly this is insufficient for emergency vehicles.*

A second issue with street congestion is the servicing of houses on the north side of Lundquist Road. Being a trucked water and sewer street, access to service outlets cannot be blocked. Parked vehicles owned by apartment dwellers or their visitors, if not removed during service hours, will result in Lundquist resident municipal service issues. There are a number of potential solutions to this that should be considered.



August 21, 2022

**Summary:**

So what am I asking?

1. That the city install parallel parking, or angle parking if there is sufficient space, on the west side of School Draw to serve both the new apartment development and Rotary Park.
2. That a sidewalk, if there is to be one, be constructed from the north entrance of the apartment to Franklin Avenue and a crossing from the same entrance be placed at the intersection of School Draw and Lundquist Road providing access to the existing School Draw sidewalk.
3. That parking issues be addressed with residents, on Lundquist Road regarding pop-up park safety for children and residential trucked municipal services.
4. That I be advised of any actions being taken on these matters and the process that must be followed to ensure this issue is put before City Council and considered for the 2023-24 Capital Plan.

Andrew, as you said, matters of this sort involve Public Works and Safety divisions, in addition to Planning. I encourage you to share this correspondence with those departments and any others that might have input into proactively improving the School Draw/Lundquist neighbourhood as it transitions under the new Planning by-law.

Again, Andrew thanks for providing me with an opportunity to address this matter.

Respectfully

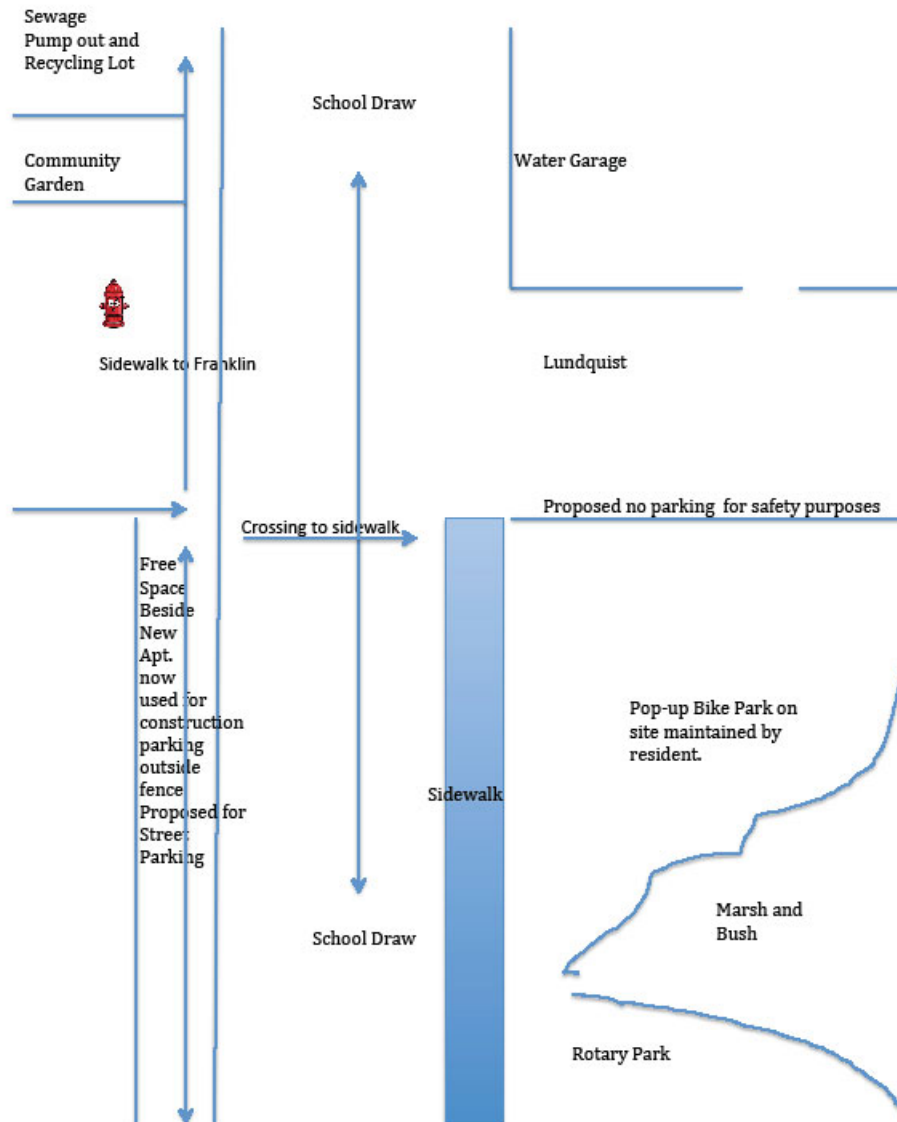


David Gilday

**Note:** For reference, included are two photos illustrating the space available outside the fence along the west side of School Draw and a drawing, clearly not to scale, illustrating the current neighbourhood layout.



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## Appendix E: Request for funding to support the Community Energy Plan Actions

Received by email, August 31, 2022

I would like to see the budget include funding to support the Community Energy Plan Actions (2015-2025 latest report available), specifically the action identified under 8.1 Reducing Vehicle Kilometres traveled by 20% and 8.2 Changing Yellowknife's Vehicle mix. This is a tall order - but with significant potential and positive impacts. To date there has been little to no action. Let's get going.

Ann Peters

## Appendix F: Request for additional funding for recreation and swimming

Received by email, September 6, 2022

Greenspaces and recreational areas are an important aspect of attracting and keeping residents, attracting tourists, and supporting healthy active living. I recommend increasing funding towards improving trail systems and signage. More importantly, the City should create goals to create new trails which connect to the larger network of walking and cycling trails around the city. Tin Can Hill should be secured as an official recreational area for residents. Funding can be used to improve pathways and provide trail infrastructure (signage, boardwalks, sitting areas, etc), historical/educational plaques, etc.

Increased funding should also be used to increase human resource capacity at the pool to provide increased services to residents. There is an extreme shortage of swimming lessons and I am concerned that this problem is not being addressed and that we will have a larger pool with no additional instructors.

Jennifer Broadbridge

## Appendix G: Budget 2023 Priorities

Received by email September 12, 2022

Dear Mayor, Council and Administration,

I would like to thank the city for seeking public input on the 2023 draft budget. This is an important process and it is great to see input being sought.

There are several things I would like to see in the 2023 budget and I will focus on four of them today. Firstly, I believe it is important to not only set policies to guide decision making but also to ensure policies are followed once they are in place. In this vein I would strongly advocate for the Funds Stabilization component of the City's Budget Policy to be followed in 2023. It is understandable that Covid 19 and the uncertainty surrounding it led to unpredictable shifts in the City's budget. I believe we are now at a point where these shifts are either behind us or are generally predictable and therefore the policy can be followed. This will ensure that further tax increases are reduced and the City does not add unnecessary burden to resident's cost of living.

Second, in terms of setting policy I would advocate for Council and Administration to consider and begin crafting a Mill Rate Ratio Policy. I believe this policy should be one that is clear and transparent. The goals of this policy should be to provide fairness and certainty to residents and businesses. As we saw with the mill rate ratio change this spring, one off shifts can create shock and sudden adverse consequences for residents. A documented policy is key to avoiding these unpleasant surprises.

Third, a specific program I would like to see get attention in the 2023 budget is Yellowknife Street Outreach. This program does amazing work and I would strongly advocate for it to receive stable, long term funding. Street Outreach is one of the best tools that currently exists to address the social issues downtown. I would support expansion and strengthening of this program. Understandably this is an expense that may not be within the City's means and in this regard I would encourage Administration to seek partnerships and funding arrangements with the GNWT and Federal government to make this possible. A program with mental health workers on call and able to respond to calls from residents and businesses would be an extremely valuable asset. In the meantime a longer term funding arrangement for Street Outreach would provide stability and hopefully allow the attraction and retention of staff.

Lastly, with regard to the Downtown Improvement Reserve I would push Council to use this money downtown and not in areas like Old Town. There are several excellent ideas for use of this money that could have a positive impact downtown. Of these the ones that I believe would be most beneficial are incentives for downtown development through forgivable loan programs, tax reductions or subsidies, density bonuses and up front grants for existing small businesses. Striking an affordable housing committee and incentivizing potential student housing downtown are other key measures I would encourage Council to adopt. The memo for August 8ths GPC meeting mentioned potentially using this money to improve waterfront access. While this is important work I believe it should not be funded by the Downtown Improvement Reserve.

To sum up, I am advocating for Council and Administration to follow the Funds Stabilization policy and to begin work to set a Mill Rate Ratio policy. I believe Street Outreach to be one of our best tools to address social issues downtown. I would ask Council to give the organization stable long term funding

and for Administration to consider ways and means to expand the program. Finally, I would like to see the Downtown Improvement Reserve spent downtown and nowhere else. Thank you very much for your time and the opportunity to share my thoughts.

Thomas McLennan

## Appendix H: Budget 2023 Priorities

Received by email September 12, 2022

When considering the budget for 2023 I would like money put towards beautifying the city. One of the most disappointing things I have seen since moving here in late 2020 is the amount of garbage thrown about the city. This is something I have never seen anywhere else I have been. The purchase of animal proof receptacles to replace the ones from the '90s or '80s or whatever part of the last century they were from needs to be part of this budget. These cans need to be emptied regularly to remove the attraction for animals to enter the city. I witnessed a fox at the Rat lake garbage can enter and remove all the garbage till he got what he wanted.

After the bear that entered the condo on Forest Drive was destroyed the city asked residents to be bear aware. Yet the city doesn't practice what it preaches.

I've attached a photo of a full garbage can taken on September 9th that doesn't appear to have been emptied in weeks. This can is located by the Sundog coffee shop.

City parks need to be cleaned up, beautified and have proper animal garbage cans placed. Seeing parks full of weeds with garbage strewn about and grass not watered or cut shows little pride in the community.

I would like to see more and better cycling lanes through the city. The cycling lane on the Deh Cho Blvd is not connected to any other lane and a person would take their life in their hands cycling down Kam Lake road to access the Deh Cho road.

The problems in the downtown core needs to be addressed before someone is hurt. I have been threatened with violence against my family for not providing a cigarette. I and every other citizen have a right to be safe in the community that we pay taxes to.

The unfair tax shift needs to be reversed and added to the first and second readings of the next budget. This tax shift was done without adequate public discussion and supported by councillors with businesses who voted themselves a tax break. No data was provided to show why it was needed. I followed up with a councillor in BC and another in Alberta if it was normal to approve a major tax shift at a 3rd reading. Both said it would be highly unusual to make a major tax shift at that stage of the budget process without proper public debate.

Regards,

Brad Makortoff

