



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

VISION

Downtown Yellowknife is a lively, welcoming, bright and inclusive Northern city centre that serves its residents and welcomes the world. Downtown builds on our unique culture and history, providing an attractive combination of retail, housing, entertainment, government services, workplaces and public spaces.

- **Downtown is vibrant** – through diverse shops, storefronts and restaurants, and our hospitality and entertainment options, that serve all residents including an expanding downtown residential population. Downtown is the hub, welcoming locals and visitors alike, and showcases our culture, history, art and opportunities. It reflects our identity as a friendly, hospitable Northern urban experience
- **Downtown is sustainable** – through the fundamentals (like our buildings, streets, landscaping, open spaces and infrastructure), and the options we have to use and enjoy downtown (shops and restaurants, employment, arts and culture). Together, these come together to create a supportive, consistent, safe and welcoming environment that maximizes the social, economic and cultural well being of all people
- **Downtown is accessible** – through active transportation options and public transit, we link all of Yellowknife easily into downtown. Roads, pedestrian and cycling routes, public transit and parking are part of an overall system that responds to peoples' needs
- **Downtown is the heart of our capital** – through reflecting the entire NWT, we honour and share what makes Yellowknife, and the NWT, so unique. We celebrate all our neighbourhoods and see downtown as the common bond that ties us together. Yellowknife's local colour is celebrated as we confirm our place on the territorial, national and international stage.

PRINCIPLES

- Downtown is a destination that unites all neighbourhoods of YK as the hub of our city and where people want to live, work, dine, shop and gather
- Downtown reflects Yellowknife's diversity of cultures, incomes, interests and abilities and welcomes everyone equally
- Downtown is clean, safe, healthy and inviting
- Downtown includes a strong and diverse resident population base
- Downtown includes a thriving, sustainable, diversified economy with a range of commercial, retail and hospitality options to welcome both residents and visitors
- Downtown connects our urban amenities with surrounding parks, trails, waterfronts and wilderness space
- Downtown reflects our environment by embracing our position as a Winter City and our status as the Canadian city with the most summertime sunshine.



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PARAMETERS

For the purposes of Downtown revitalization, downtown is defined as the area within 47th Street to 54th Street, 49th Avenue to 52nd Avenue.

GOALS

The following 5 goals outline the foundational pieces that contribute to Council's vision for Downtown revitalization:

1. **Jump start development** – coordinate and leverage substantial public sector investment of major planned projects to catalyze private development. Actions can include:
 - Take an inventory of upcoming private, public and NGO facility needs as part of the Multi-Use Building Study and then propose options for the development of 50/50
 - Support business incubation through development incentives – e.g., Win Your Space, other incentives that are open to all businesses
 - Explore opportunities for Business Improvement District
 - Capitalize on partnerships to encourage development
 - Support a new Visitor's Centre/DMO office
 - Explore multi-lot land assembly opportunities in the downtown transitional zone - for high-density residential and major public facility projects
 - Increase investor (developer) confidence, develop a communications plan for our new Downtown Revitalization Plan – complete with timelines for major investments
 - Develop a comprehensive parking strategy to meet the needs of downtown workers, businesses and residents

2. **Enhance the ground floor environment** – ensure ground floors engage pedestrians and create an attractive, inviting urban experience with a comfortable safe and vibrant pedestrian environment year round. Actions can include:
 - Access expertise to advise on how the City can maximize on retail/commercial development to enhance downtown retail businesses, with vibrant, clean, sunny, aesthetically pleasing street fronts
 - Build upon existing zoning overlay based on expert advice (store widths, signage, building massing, building heights, sunlight, wind, etc.)
 - Consult on how we can improve the pedestrian experience in our downtown
 - Support a streetscaping "renewal" of the downtown, including sidewalk patios and other welcoming options
 - Initiate a Public Art Strategy throughout downtown
 - Explore place-making, tactical urbanism and micro-festival techniques



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- 3. Provide more housing downtown** – make downtown a great place to live by supporting the development of diverse housing options and resident serving amenities that will boost economic activity, build community and create round the clock vibrancy. Actions can include:
 - Overhaul the Downtown Residential Infill Incentive – skew the incentives towards larger multi-lot developments
 - Establish “Residential Primary” areas outside of the “Retail Primary” area and adjust zoning accordingly
 - Explore a partnership with an NGO to launch a financially sustainable car-share program
 - Work with NWT Housing Corporation to launch a non-market housing program (City provides the development/zoning incentives, GNWT manages the units to ensure they remain non-market)
 - Limit the development of high density residential land outside of the downtown for the next ten years
 - Request the transfer of GNWT land in the downtown to the City for development

- 4. Improve connectivity** – Link housing, office space, retail and the natural environment to enhance Downtown’s sense of place and its link to all parts of the community. Strengthen intermodal connections making it easier for downtown pedestrians to use different modes of transportation. Actions can include:
 - Promote walking/active transportation as an important mode of local circulation within Downtown
 - Explore opportunities to create pedestrian/cyclist pathways through the middle of downtown blocks
 - Increase usage of public transit - propose to reduce/eliminate fares as a pilot
 - Plan for improvements to vehicle and cyclist connections between downtown and the surrounding residential neighbourhoods

- 5. Create a Downtown for all** – make downtown an inclusive, diverse, active experience. Actions can include:
 - Integrate public art into downtown design planning – stand alone installations (e.g., ARCC partnership on log helix), beautification (paintings on buildings, power boxes), small infrastructure (e.g., bike racks shaped as fish/dog teams/etc.)
 - Increase Downtown’s safety and attractiveness by addressing social issues:
 - Support a sobering centre and day shelter
 - Develop a strategy for accessible public washrooms
 - Implement a Street Outreach Program that proactively seeks out and supports vulnerable persons to get them to a safe place (e.g., the sobering centre)
 - Explore strategies for better enforcement of liquor laws with our partners
 - Implement the homelessness employment pilot program



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- Support a Litter-Free Downtown by engaging residents and making this everyone's responsibility
 - Increase the number of cigarette butt receptacles
 - Incentives to property owners to clean their frontage
 - Celebrate businesses that are role models
 - Incentives to individuals who clean up
- Consider updating the Noise By-law to include "good neighbour" clause