



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

PHOTO BOB WILSON



YELLOWKNIFE'S Capital Area

SUMMARY OF TOUR & INFORMATION SESSION
FEEDBACK FROM SEPTEMBER 2014



Introduction

City Council and the Capital Area Steering Committee have directed Administration to update the Capital Area Development Scheme. On September 23rd and 30th, the City held two evening information sessions for the public to learn more about the Capital Area and submit any comments on what kind of improvements might be made. City staff also led noontime walking tours of the Capital Area on September 23rd and 24th, and a noon bus tour was offered on September 30th. Over twenty residents attended either an open house or a walking tour, and an additional four sent comments by e-mail.

This summary captures the key ideas and messages we have received thus far on the Capital Area. The ideas highlighted here are a summary of the most commonly raised comments, concerns and opportunities raised. Based on the consultations with the public, the City has developed a list of initiatives for the Capital Area. The City is gathering further feedback on the proposed initiatives and development areas via an online survey from August 11th to August 29th. Next, the City will host an open house once the preliminary report and concept designs are completed for public input.

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Public Art



1. Public art is a wonderful way to introduce residents and visitors to the city: Consider developing more material celebrating the local environment and history of the capital area (e.g. it was previously used as farmland!)
2. When investing in new public art, preference should be given to functional pieces such as decorative benches or bicycle racks. It would be great to bring the energy of Old Town (e.g. the painted garbage cans) to the Frame Lake Trail.
3. Yellowknife has a harsh climate; art made of resilient materials will require less maintenance. Maintenance is important, so there needs to be a budget for installation, repair, and/or removal works on public display.
4. In general, the City should consider forming a Public Art Committee for the selection, management, security and maintenance of public art pieces. This Committee could set guidelines for the proposal requests for Capital Area public art.
5. Don't forget that public art includes entertainment and performing arts (e.g. Theatre on the Lake), and the Capital Area has excellent opportunities.



Signage



1. It would be useful if new signs included distances to all the major institutions in the Capital Area (e.g. Hospital) and provided the estimated walking time to each. There is no need for these signs to reference landmarks outside Capital Area (e.g. Range Lake or Niven Lake) as this may be confusing for visitors.
2. New signs identifying the Capital Area would be best placed at main gateways (e.g. highway intersections).
3. The trailhead is not clearly defined in some areas (e.g. the trailhead behind the Legislative Assembly is difficult to locate) and once on the trail, connections are not clearly marked.
4. New trail signs could be colour-coded to distinguish between paved and unpaved sections of the trails with estimated walking time for different sections.
5. There are multiple types of signs from different eras around the Capital Area; some of these need to be replaced as they are outdated or difficult to read. Not all signs necessarily need to be the same style but the information and landmarks included should be consistent to avoid confusion.



Furniture



1. More benches are needed along the Frame Lake Trail; especially in accessible locations (e.g. if one is perched on a rock, there should also be a bench at grade).
2. Wooden benches are warmer than metal benches in the winter but need to be replaced on a regular basis.
3. Please place furniture (benches and bicycle racks) in clearly visible areas to discourage inappropriate activities and theft.
4. It would be ideal if any new walking or bicycle trails are accompanied with new furniture (benches, recycling cans and garbage cans).
5. Fire pits would be nice for day use on shore, with firewood provided. If fire pits are provided, they would be best placed in highly visible areas.



1. Prioritize maintenance over new landscaping.
2. Please keep the landscaping natural along the ceremonial circle and flag corridor, and keep brush down to preserve views.
3. Clear brush and deadfall, especially along sides of trail and around benches, as bushes encroaching onto the trails are a hazard to cyclists.
4. Native plants and species are recommended; most Yellowknifers prefer a minimal approach to landscaping that reveals its natural beauty. Please also minimize the use of boulders, unless the boulders are being used as traffic barriers.
5. Weeding the flowers more frequently is needed to ensure the plant beds look attractive.



Maintenance



1. Maintenance in the Capital Area, particularly along the trail, needs more attention. Give priority to ensuring garbage cans are emptied, replacing poop bags in the containers, replacing/repairing damaged furnishings and signs, and removing debris such as abandoned shopping carts.
2. Clearing willows along the trail has left sides of trail with large drops on side that should be even with trail by spreading more gravel.
3. The City could partner with other groups to clean garbage out of Frame Lake; other groups have done this in the past but it has been discontinued.
4. Former 'Petitot Park' area needs attention and general clean-up.
5. Please work with partners to ensure winter snow plows do not damage bushes along the trail by forming snow banks on top of bushes, and that snow is cleared in a manner that is safe for pedestrians (particularly behind the RCMP building).



Trails & Trail Safety

1. The improved lighting is good, and more could be added. Consider providing emergency phone numbers and installing cameras along the trail.
2. MED presence and improved landscaping has deterred loitering and crime (e.g. at the Visitors Centre), but trail safety continues to be a concern.
3. Increasing the trail width to 3 metres would improve safety (e.g. the turn by McNiven beach). There are a few hazardous areas on the Frame Lake Trail, e.g. there are major ruts at the bottom of Gitzel street entrance that are a hazard and the boardwalks are in need of some repair.
4. A safe crossing for cyclists is needed at the Highway No. 4 realignment.
5. Measures are needed to promote safety on the trails and prevent collisions with snowmobilers.



Waterfront Access

1. The end of Matonabee Street may be a good option for a non-motorized boat launch (however, parking could be problematic).
2. Non-motorized recreation, such as canoes, kayaks, paddleboats, and paddle-boarding is supported on Frame Lake and Jackfish Lake.
3. Frame Lake would be a great location for canoe/kayak/paddleboat rentals and secure lockers for storage, possibly by City Hall. Please consider installing emergency equipment, such as life jackets and rescue poles if the use of the Frame Lake and Jackfish Lake are promoted.
4. Ensure increased canoe/kayak access to Frame Lake is completed in consultation with area buildings to address any safety concerns.
5. Access to Jackfish Lake could be improved.

McNiven Beach

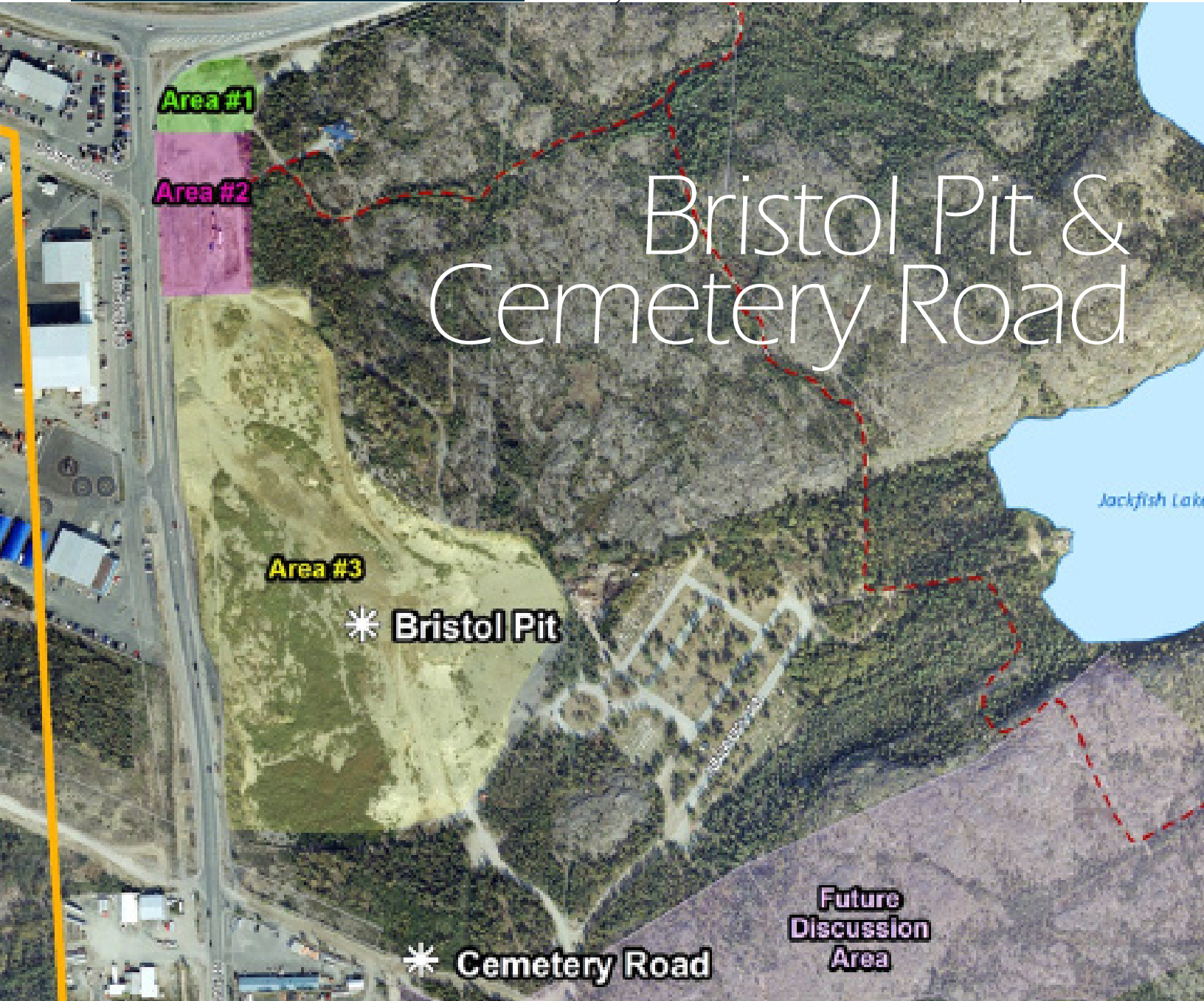


1. Promote McNiven Beach to the public if the water is suitable for recreational uses. Promotional material could include signage which indicates potential uses of the beach, such as swimming.
2. McNiven Beach would be a great opportunity site for food trucks in the summer and canoe/kayak rentals.
3. McNiven Beach could be improved by repairing the wooden siding by the trail, relocating the existing playground equipment to a more suitable location, as well as placing more sand, benches, and garbage cans.
4. Improve beach access by removing the willows but preserving the trees.
5. Take out the Wade Hamer Mini Golf structures if there are no plans to repair them.

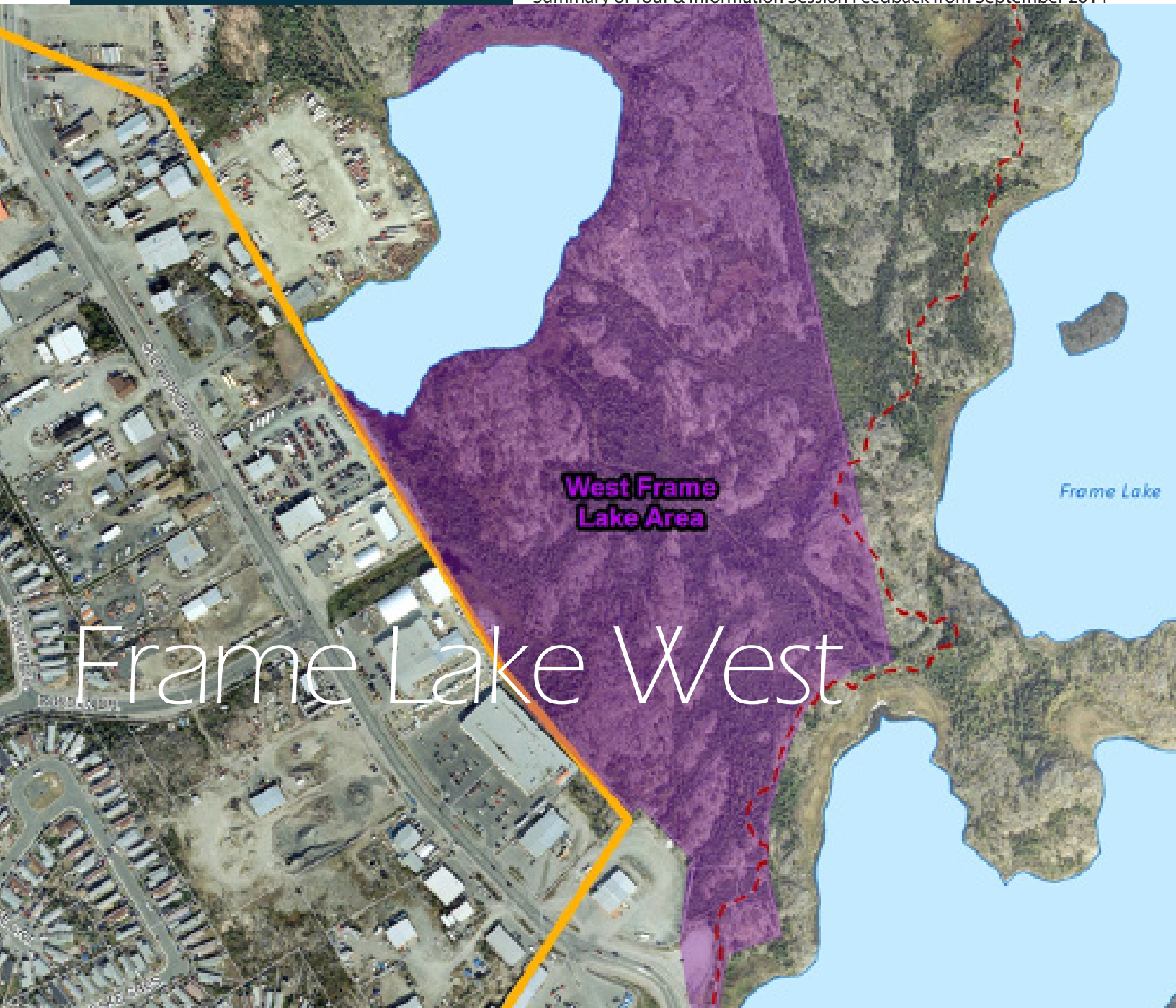


Trail Connections

1. Trails are especially needed along Highway No. 4 to Niven Gate – many people walk along this road to commute to work.
2. Give priority to improving connections between existing trail networks, i.e. Frame Lake Trail to Niven Lake Trail. In addition, signs should be placed at trail intersections to provide clear orientation and directions.
3. A multi-purpose trail along the Highway loop is needed.
4. There is potential for more trails around Jackfish Lake.
5. Trail improvements and connections could enhance the public's interaction with the Legislative Assembly building. As it stands, the Legislative Assembly seems isolated from the rest of the community.



1. The Bristol area serves as the gateway to the City and is the first point of contact for tourists. For that reason, the design of the area needs to be welcoming and attractive.
2. Commercial use could offer convenient service to campers and road trippers, such as a gas station, store, café, restaurant, and public washroom.
3. The Bristol Freighter could use more attention.
4. Leave the area as is for near future.
5. Future development needs to be done in coordination with the expansion of the cemetery. Expansion of the cemetery could occur into the outcrop (south-west of the cemetery) and east.



1. Some residential is supported but the trails must be buffered from future development. Only contemplate residential uses if a large buffer from water and trails can be maintained.
2. Protect the shorelines from development.
3. If development is to occur behind Old Airport Road, there needs to be design standards in place.
4. The integration of green space and parks are encouraged for development occurring in this area.
5. Place priority on affordability for development in the West Frame Lake area.



1. Streetscaping needs to be maintained better and improved along Hwy 4 from the Visitor's Centre to YK Motors (i.e. with a multi-use trail).
2. The connection between the Visitor's Center to downtown needs to be improved.
3. There is no parking at Visitor's Center – it is all private.
4. Give high priority to creating a safe trail from Niven to downtown. The current situation is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.
5. Improve connections from Frame Lake Trail to Niven Lake Trail.