

Draft Climate Action Plan 2026-2036: Selection of themes and actions for public review

June 18, 2025

Our Climate Action Plan is comprised of 6 themes. Each theme is supported by goals to strive for, strategies to mitigate or adapt to climate change, and specific actions the city can take. The actions presented here are not a complete nor final list of actions for the Climate Action Plan.

1. Sustainable Transportation

On-road transportation accounts for 20% of 2023 community GHG emissions. Embracing active and public transportation and decarbonizing the city fleet can help us reduce our emissions while offering several co-benefits including improved health and well-being.

- Action 1.1: 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, and bike storage.
- Action 1.2: Partner with local organizations to promote bike-share programs, such as SHIFT, and explore other micro mobility-sharing initiatives.
- Action 1.3: 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.
- Action 1.4: Develop a corporate procurement policy and a funding and staff retraining plan to replace on- and off-road city fleet vehicles with low or zero-emission vehicles at the end of their lifespan.
- Action 1.5: Create a development incentive program to encourage EV-ready charging in multi-unit residential buildings and connect applicants with practical information on installing chargers.

2. Waste Management

Solid Waste is the largest contributing source of emissions, making up 73% of 2023 corporate GHG emissions. 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.

- Action 2.1: Identify and contract a service provider to operate a re-sale store for used furniture, building materials, and other items not accepted at existing re-use stores.
- Action 2.2: Partner with community organizations to host re-use events such as repair clinics, community garage sales, and other exchange events.

- Action 2.3: 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.
- Action 2.4: Implement an improved methodology for measuring fugitive emissions from the Solid Waste Facility and incorporate this data into decision-making regarding potential emissions-capturing technology of future landfill cells.

3. Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

With climate-related hazards becoming increasingly common, we must rethink and redesign our buildings and infrastructure to withstand the future climate. Buildings are also a major source of GHG emissions and accounted for 30% of 2023 community GHG emissions. 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.

- Action 3.1: Provide regulatory and zoning relief, such as density bonuses, fee rebates, or expedited permit approvals, for new Net-Zero Energy Ready buildings through permit application processes.
- Action 3.2: Identify funding opportunities and partnerships to expand solar PV at City facilities and assess eligibility to participate in the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC) Net Metering program.
- Action 3.3: Develop a plan and explore funding to transition City buildings to renewable energy and increase energy efficiency.
- Action 3.4: Create a guidebook for developers and home builders on how to build affordable and efficient buildings, and how to access information or funding, similar in concept to the City of Edmonton's Affordable Housing Sustainability Guidebook.
- Action 3.5: Partner with community organizations to host workshops for residents to learn how to improve their energy efficiency, FireSmart their homes and businesses, or take other measures to increase their climate resilience.

4. Responsible Land-Use and Planning

Incorporating nature-based solutions through land-use and planning can have multiple benefits for adapting to a changing climate and sequestering emissions. Climate change also compounds food insecurity 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.

- Action 4.1: Create an urban forest management or natural asset management plan for adequate planting and maintaining new trees, including FireSmart site and species selection, on City-owned land and explore funding options such as the Green Municipal Fund (GMF) Tree Planting funding.
- Action 4.2: Review and update the City's Development & Design Standards and the Zoning By-law (No. 5045) to reflect FireSmart best practices.
- Action 4.3: Fund actions of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture (GROW) Strategy.

5. Governance and Accountability

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 also 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.

- Action 5.1: 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.
- Action 5.2: Create an implementation working group, including other levels of government, community organizations, and stakeholders to provide direction, assistance, and accountability.
- Action 5.3: Continue to improve the city website and ensure it contains accurate, updated, and accessible information regarding climate and other environmental initiatives as well as the Climate Action Plan progress.
- Action 5.4: Maintain ongoing communication, partnership, and information-sharing on climate and other environmental issues with local First Nations and Métis governments.

6. Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

Yellowknife residents are not affected equally by climate change, nor do they have equal access to resources to adapt. Yellowknife has also become a support hub for neighbouring communities such as sheltering evacuees from other communities. 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.

- Action 6.1: Complete a collaborative assessment with local organizations that identifies climate risks faced by vulnerable community members and recommendations for how the City can support them.

- Action 6.2: Collaborate with local organizations to identify and map designated shelter locations for use in extreme weather or poor air quality events and publicly share this information through existing City channels.
- Action 6.3: Evaluate the current system for shelter operation and emergency response in times when Yellowknife becomes a regional hub for evacuees of other communities.
- Action 6.4: Collaborate with the GNWT and other levels of government to improve food security and distribution and other supply chain issues during emergencies.