

City of Yellowknife Climate Action Plan

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT – PHASE 2

AUGUST 14, 2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project overview

The City of Yellowknife (“the City”) is developing a Climate Action Plan (CAP). The project began with the first phase of public, stakeholder, and rightsholder engagement that was completed in April 2025. This informed the creation of a set of draft actions released in June 2025. These draft actions were the primary subject of the second phase of engagement. Once finalized, the CAP will support the City’s vision for a sustainable future, environmental responsibility, and economic diversity. The CAP will be a comprehensive plan that defines strategies to mitigate emissions and adapt for future climate impacts within the City’s corporate and community-wide spheres of influence. The final CAP is anticipated to be completed by fall 2025.

1.2 Engagement purpose and goals

The first phase of public engagement involved residents, community organizations, local Indigenous governments, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), and utilities. This phase sought to:

- Understand the community’s concerns and their level of climate change preparedness;
- Identify the community’s vision for climate action; and
- Review ongoing efforts at other levels of government.

Phase one culminated in the What We Heard Report – Phase 1.

Following this first phase, the City examined the feedback received and conducted internal staff workshops that informed the drafting of actions for the CAP.

The goal of the second phase of engagement was to share the results of the first phase of engagement, share key findings from two background reports completed by Stantec: the Energy and GHG Emissions Inventory and the Climate Vulnerability Assessment, and seek feedback on the draft CAP actions.

The City met with rightsholders and stakeholders to discuss these draft actions and then released a set of draft actions for public review, organized under six themes:

1. Sustainable Transportation;
2. Waste Management;
3. Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure;
4. Responsible Land-Use and Planning;

5. Governance and Accountability; and
6. Community Preparedness and Emergency Response.

These actions can be found in Appendix A. Public engagement on them aimed to gauge support for each action, ensure the City was on the right track, identify any missing actions, and solicit recommendations for finetuning.

2.0 Engagement Summary

2.1 Engagement tactics

The second phase of engagement for the CAP took place from April to July 2025. The following table provides a summary of the specific outreach activities and the number of participants.

Date	Method	Location	No. of Attendees
April 16	Rightsholder meeting – Yellowknives Dene First Nation	Virtual	1
April 17	Stakeholder meeting – GNWT Department of Environment and Climate Change and Department of Infrastructure Energy Division	Virtual	3
April 23	Rightsholder meeting – Yellowknives Dene First Nation	Virtual	2
April 24	Stakeholder meeting – Arctic Energy Alliance	Virtual	1
May 7	Stakeholder meeting – Yellowknife Community Garden Collective	Virtual	1
May 10 & 11	Spring Tradeshow booth	The Multiplex	-
May 16	Rightsholder meeting – North Slave Métis Alliance	City Hall	1
June 18 – July 4	Public survey	PlaceSpeak	56
June 18	Stakeholder meeting – Bottle Shop Recycling Depot	Virtual	1
June 19	True North Rotary Club presentation	Yellowknife Public Library	13
June 25	Public roundtable	City Hall	20
July 4	Letter received – Alternatives North and Ecology North	-	-
July 21	Rightsholder meeting – Yellowknives Dene First Nation	Virtual	2

2.2 Rightsholder meetings

Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN)

Three meetings were held with representatives of the YKDFN. During these meetings, topics covered included:

- YKDFN’s vision for climate action in Yellowknife;
- How the City and YKDFN can support each other advance mitigation and adaptation;
- Upcoming initiatives led by YKDFN;
- How YKDFN would like to be involved in the CAP implementation phase; and
- YKDFN feedback on the City’s draft actions.

North Slave Métis Alliance (NSMA)

One meeting was held with a representative of the NSMA. This meeting focused on NSMA priorities related to climate change, how NSMA would like to be involved in the implementation of CAP, and areas for partnership with the City on draft actions of the CAP.

2.3 Stakeholder meetings

Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT)

City staff held a 1-hour meeting with individuals of the GNWT Department of Environment and Climate Change and the Department of Infrastructure Energy Division. The goal of this meeting was to receive feedback from the GNWT on the City’s proposed actions. The GNWT identified partners for the City to work with, provided updates on GNWT initiatives that could affect Yellowknife’s climate action approaches, recommended technologies to explore, and suggested actions to consider.

Arctic Energy Alliance (AEA)

City staff met with an AEA representative for a 1-hour meeting. This meeting was to discuss:

- How AEA would like to be involved throughout the CAP implementation phase and specific actions they could partner on;
- How the City can support the work of AEA;
- The suitability of specific technology, including electric vehicles, in Yellowknife;
- Ongoing research and up-to-date data on the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of renewable energy; and
- AEA recommendations for additional CAP actions.

Yellowknife Community Garden Collective (YCGC)

The City met with a representative of the YCGC to discuss potential partnership and involvement in the CAP implementation. Specifically, the City sought information on the future of the YCGC and their priorities, their interest in other kinds of gardens, and how the City could support their initiatives going forward.

The Bottle Shop Recycling Depot

City staff met with the owner of the Bottle Shop Recycling Depot to discuss how Yellowknife can improve diversion of bottles and e-waste from the Solid Waste Facility. Current barriers to recycling and opportunities for a larger, more visible presence at City events and facilities were discussed.

2.4 Spring tradeshow booth

The City hosted a booth at the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce's Spring Tradeshow on May 10 & 11, 2025 to share the results of the first phase of engagement with the public. Materials displayed key findings from the What We Heard Report – Phase 1 as well as upcoming steps in the CAP development process. Members of the public had the opportunity to chat with city staff about the engagement results and find out how to get involved in future steps.

2.5 Public survey

A survey was open to the public PlaceSpeak from June 18 to July 4, 2025 and was completed by 56 participants. The goal of the survey was to:

- Present the draft actions;
- Understand the level of public support for each action; and
- Get feedback on each theme and the CAP as a whole.

The survey findings are incorporated in the following results section.

2.6 True North Rotary Club presentation

City staff presented at the True North Rotary Club's Third Thursday Speaker Series on June 19, 2025 attended by 13 individuals. The presentation covered:

- Current emissions and climate hazards in Yellowknife;
- Projected emissions trajectory and future climate changes for Yellowknife;
- Progress on the development of the CAP;
- The draft CAP structure and actions;

- Information on how residents can reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change; and
- Upcoming engagement opportunities.

The presentation was followed by a question period.

2.7 Public roundtable

The City held an in-person, 1.5-hour public roundtable event the evening of June 25, 2025 attended by 20 participants. City staff gave a brief presentation outlining how the draft actions were developed, the rationale for them, the six themes of the draft CAP, and next steps in the CAP development process.

City staff then led the participants in an engagement activity during which they went around the room to tables with the six themes and their actions. There, participants would mark their level of support for each action with sticky dots and left comments on sticky notes. One city staff member was present at each table to help facilitate and take additional notes from the conversations if necessary.

Following the roundtable event, the sticky dots marking level of support were tabulated and the sticky note comments transcribed. Any notes taken by city staff during the event were also documented. The roundtable findings are incorporated in the following results section.

2.8 Letter received

Alternatives North and Ecology North submitted a joint letter to the City with their feedback on the draft CAP actions. This feedback is incorporated in the following results section.

3.0 Results

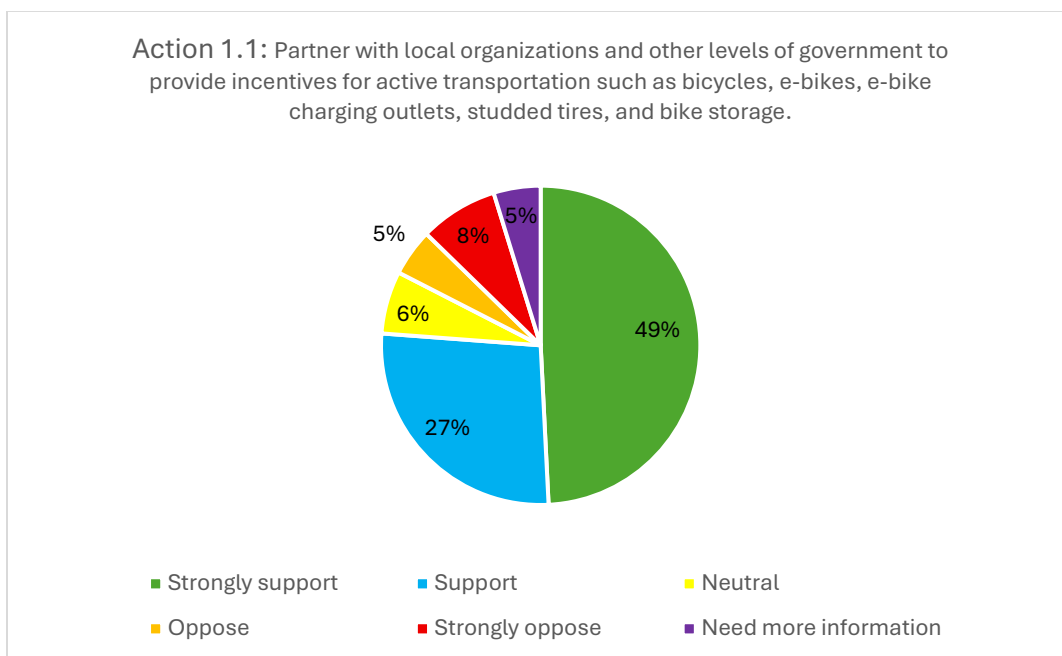
3.1 Sustainable Transportation

The City’s engagement process found ample support among the public for prioritizing active transportation. This was primarily due to positive effects on physical and mental health, accessibility, and reduced cost-of-living benefits. More detailed transportation actions will be included in the Transportation Plan currently under development.

Bike storage

Current barriers to active transportation uptake include perceived high rates of bike theft in Yellowknife. As such, residents suggest that bike storage should be standard at all apartment buildings and 49% of survey respondents strongly support incentives for active transportation including bike storage (action 1.1).

Figure 1 Level of support for action 1.1 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Active transportation infrastructure

Many participants commented on the absence of actions to provide more active transportation infrastructure in Yellowknife. Participants would like to see the City enhance bike infrastructure through the development of protected lanes and improved winter maintenance. Participants note that long-term investments in infrastructure are necessary to make active transportation safe and accessible.

“I would love to bike more, but don’t feel safe on the streets as they are.”

- Anonymous

Public transportation

Also highlighted was the absence of actions regarding public transportation. People called for the City to increase the frequency of buses, expand the hours of operation, make the bus feel safe and clean, and reduce or provide further discounts on bus fares. By doing so, residents believe the City can increase ridership and reduce the number of cars on the street.

Yellowknife Car-share Co-op

On a similar note, participants asked for the Yellowknife Car-share Co-op to be promoted through the CAP to reduce the need for individual car ownership. Recommendations included partnering with the co-op on public EV education campaigns, allowing City staff to use the car-share for work purposes, and designating car-share spots on City streets.

Electric vehicles

Members of the public also advocated for increased renewable energy generation and that there are concerns regarding increasing EV infrastructure in the absence of a cleaner grid. Some residents believe EV-use should be promoted secondary to investing in active and public transportation. However, the proposed incentive program for EV-ready charging in multi-unit residential buildings was criticized as being too weak for encouraging, instead of requiring, their installation in new builds. Generally, there is support for increasing the availability of EV charging in multi-unit residential buildings as their absence is a deterrent for some individuals from purchasing an EV.

Communication and awareness

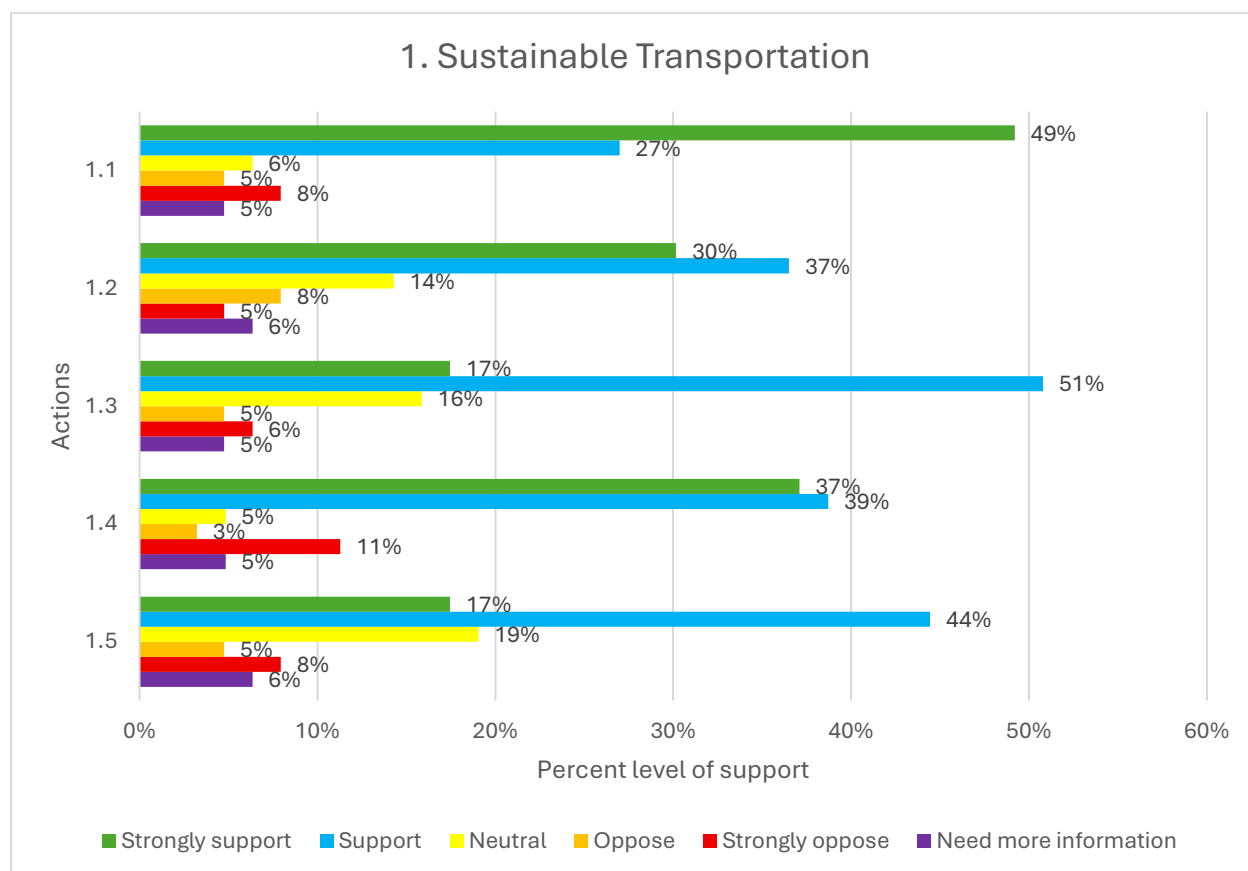
Communication, public education, and incentivizing behavioural change are seen as necessary companions to infrastructure improvements and procurement practices. For example, more education is needed on EV functionality in cold climates. People also note that more signage is needed on multi-use paths and that some complicated bike routes pose a challenge for bikers and drivers alike. Another suggestion was the use of apps that reward people for choosing active and public transportation.

Advancing equity

Residents suggest that to enhance equity and inclusivity, there should be targeted support for underserved populations. Seniors and youth in particular were stated as being less likely to drive and depend more on active and public transportation options. Similarly, participants voiced concern that low-income residents face greater barriers to car

ownership and those living in multi-unit residential buildings may have difficulty accessing electric vehicle charging.

Figure 2 Level of support for Sustainable Transportation actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



3.2 Waste Management

Overall, residents desire more comprehensive waste management, focusing on reducing waste generation, improving recycling and composting efforts, enhancing public communication and engagement, and integrating community-driven solutions.

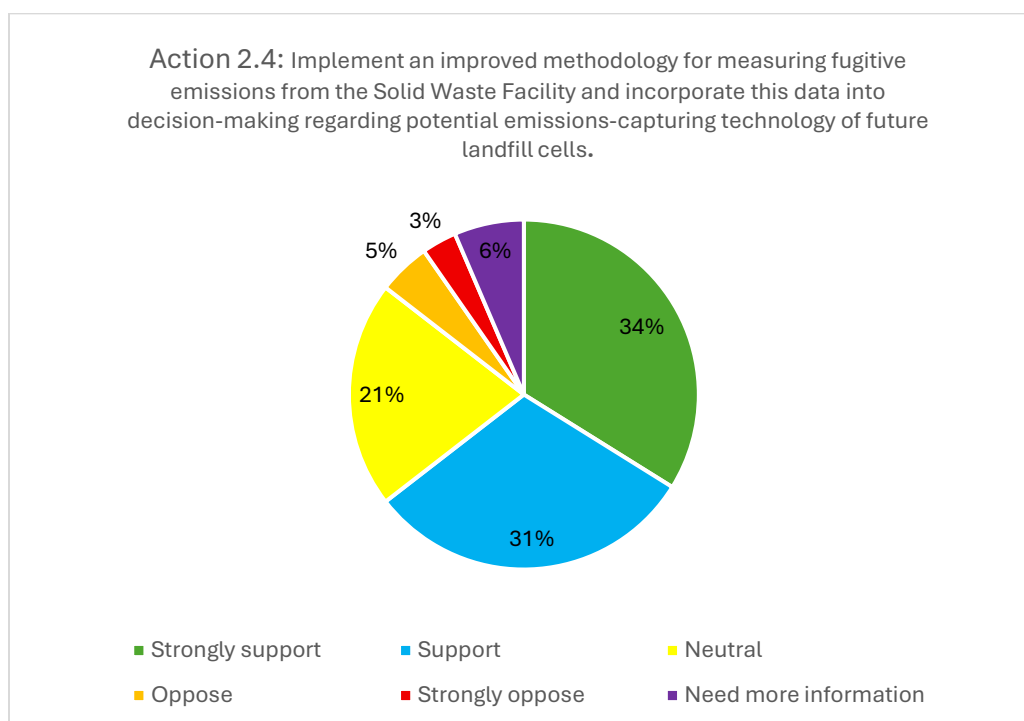
Waste reduction and re-use

Respondents call for the City to promote waste reduction and re-use, however there were mixed reactions on actions to re-establish a re-use store and partner on re-use events. Some respondents believe current practices such as salvaging at the landfill, existing thrift shops, Facebook marketplace, and the Salvagers Unite Facebook group, are sufficient. Some respondents also believe that local organizations are already effectively providing re-use events and suggest other options should be examined for how to divert construction waste and furniture from the Solid Waste Facility.

Measuring fugitive emissions

Improving methodology for measuring fugitive emissions at the landfill (action 2.4) is seen as a lesser priority than actions directly reducing waste generation or increasing diversion. 34% of survey respondents strongly support, and 31% support, implementing an improved methodology for measuring these fugitive emissions. Instead, residents call for incentives and/or requirements targeting businesses and industry to reduce the amount of waste they are producing and subsequent emissions at the Solid Waste Facility.

Figure 3 Level of support for action 2.4 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Recycling

There is strong support for improved recycling in Yellowknife. Suggestions include implementing a curbside recycling collection program and supporting local businesses that use recyclables as product inputs such as Old Town Glassworks and the Makerspace. Another suggestion is to pursue creating a business case or market for recycling. Residents feel that equally important to recycling is being transparent about where our recycling is going, the benefits of recycling, and regularly reporting this to the public.

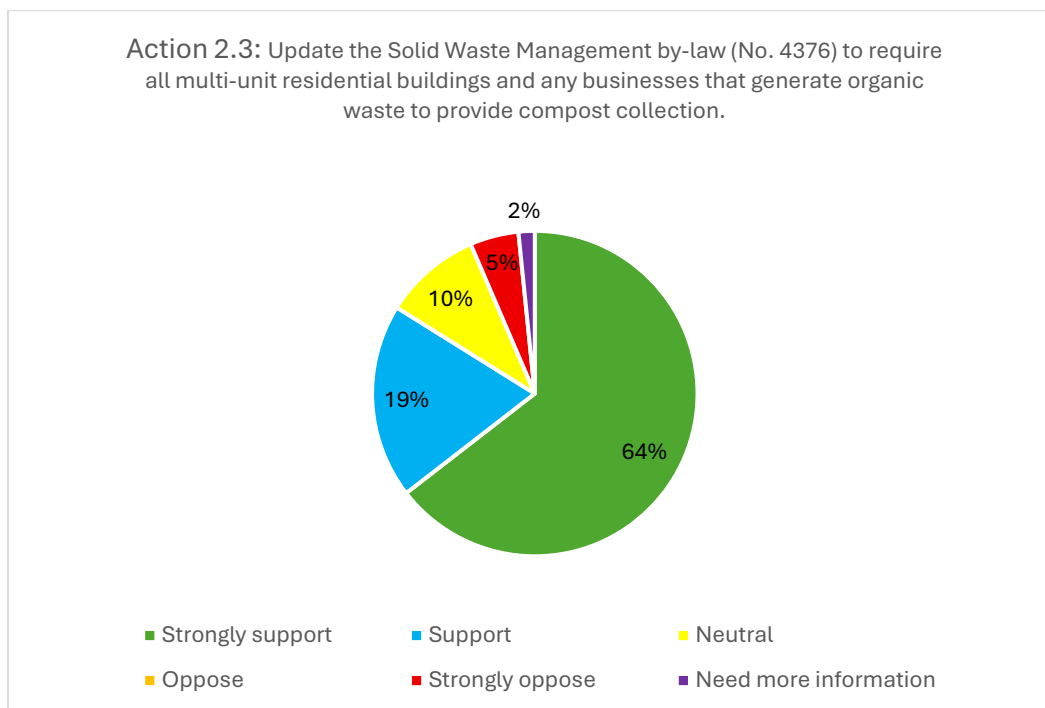
“Encourage more recycling by making it easier for all residents to participate.”

– Anonymous

Compost program

There is strong support for expanding compost collection to multi-unit residences and businesses. 64% of survey respondents strongly support, and 19% support, bylaw changes to require the participation of these occupancies (action 2.3). Respondents note that this should be coupled with support for small businesses and education for users on what goes in the green bin.

Figure 4 Level of support for action 2.3 from the PlaceSpeak survey



How compost is used

The end-use of compost was also reoccurring theme among public feedback. Respondents note the spread of rumours about how compost is being used while others call for it to be made available for residential and commercial gardens. According to respondents, the City should better communicate how compost is currently being used, and why, to address prevalent misconceptions.

“Composting is good! However, lots of rumours [about] how compost is currently being used.”

– Anonymous

Communication and awareness

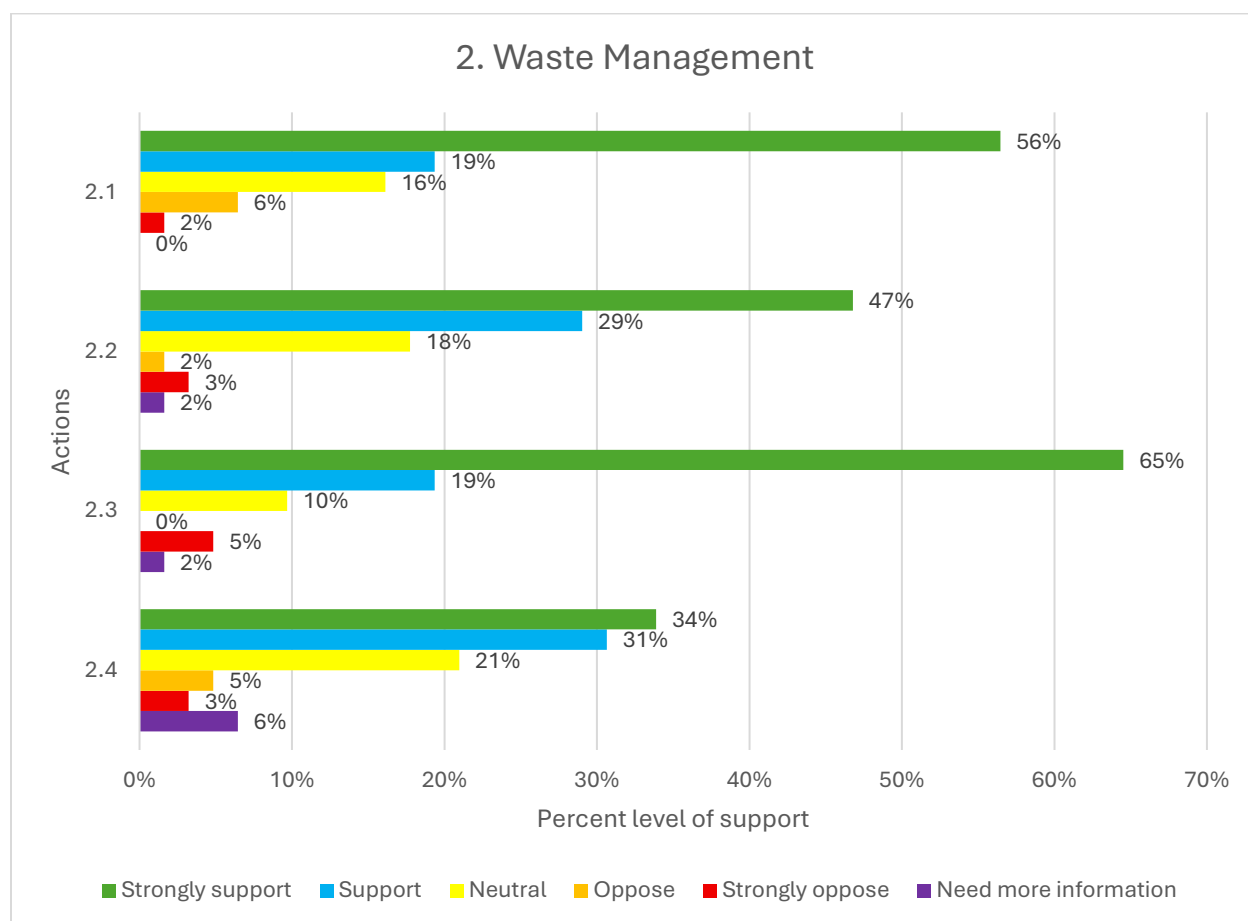
To support existing diversion programs, residents feel the City should transparently communicate about waste management processes, impacts, and successes. According to

survey respondents, part of this should include communicating current diversion rates and setting targets for future reductions. Respondents also suggest the City run awareness campaigns on composting, recycling, and reducing waste generation.

*“I'd like to see the City take a more active role in encouraging people to reduce waste...
Messages need to get out to people who are not already interested.”*

– Anonymous

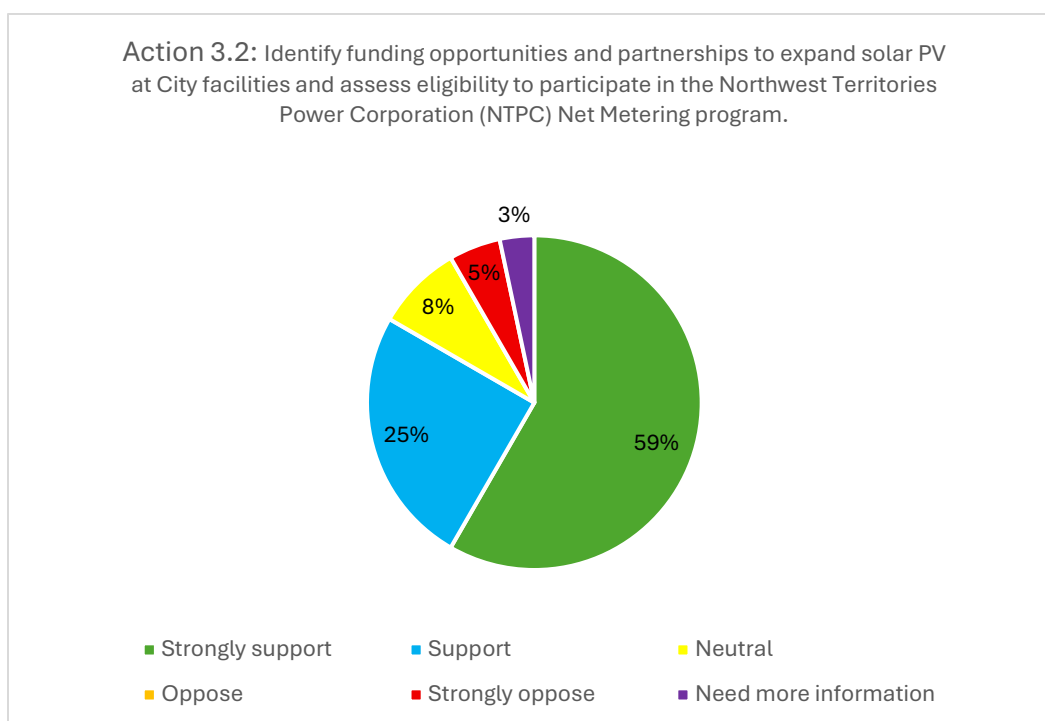
Figure 5 Level of support for Waste Management actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



3.3 Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

There is strong support for expanding solar PV at City facilities (action 3.2) and transitioning to renewable energy generally. The new Aquatic Centre is highlighted as an ideal starting point for installation. Respondents suggest that there should be a distinct action on energy efficiency at City facilities and feel that this should be prioritized over renewable energy generation.

Figure 6 Level of support for action 3.2 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Retrofitting existing buildings

Respondents call for support to retrofit existing homes. While supporting residents access information on improving energy efficiency and climate resilience (action 3.5) is useful, residents believe financial incentives are needed to address rising costs of retrofits. Respondents also report difficulty securing contractors to complete the work presents an additional barrier. According to respondents, more support is needed to help residents move off oil and install rooftop solar.

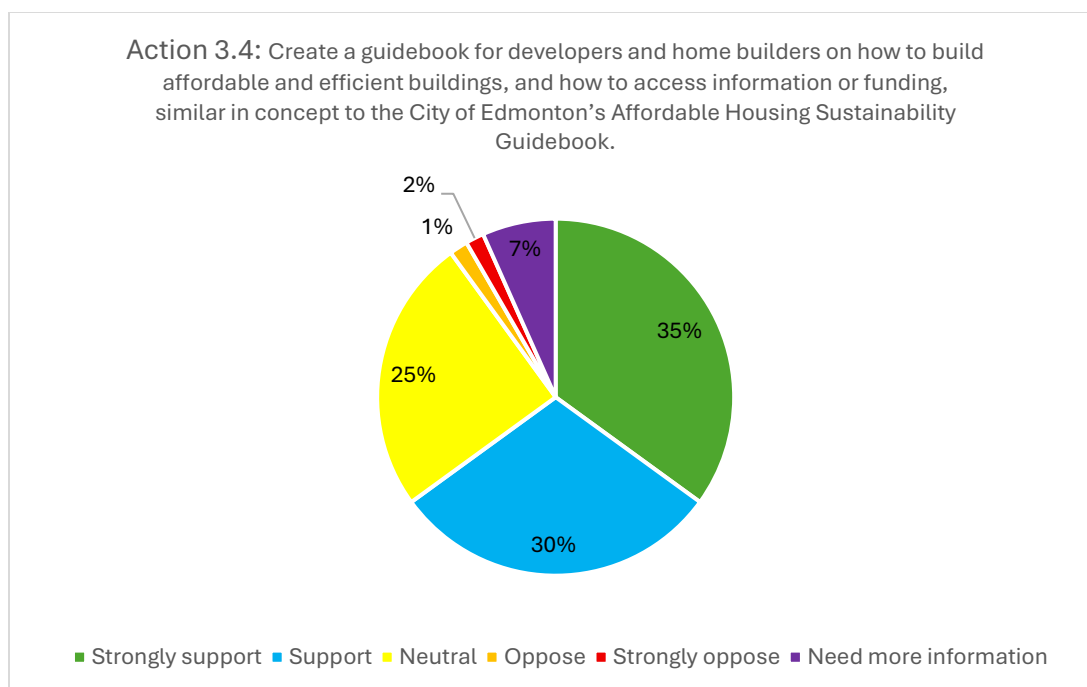
“Fire Smarting YK homes should be a top priority. We got off lucky in 2023 but when, not if, another fire threatens the city we will be in great danger of losing many houses and other buildings.”

– Anonymous

New developments

Some respondents voiced concern that existing “carrot” tools to encourage developers to build energy efficient and resilient new buildings is not enough. Others note that educational efforts geared towards developers may be ineffective without mandatory requirements. For example, creating a guidebook for developers (action 3.4) is not a high priority among respondents who also note there are similar materials available from Arctic Energy Alliance. Respondents feel that what is more important are stringent energy efficiency and fire-resistant standards and financing options, such as a revolving fund.

Figure 7 Level of support for action 3.4 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Advancing equity

Addressing equity and the housing crisis are top concerns among respondents as a means for climate adaptation. For this reason, respondents believe that equity safeguards should be implemented to prevent unintended consequences on affordable housing stock and energy costs and incentives should target retrofitting multi-unit residential buildings.

Nature-based solutions

Respondents suggest that more focus should be given to critical infrastructure and how they can be adapted with nature-based solutions. Recommendations from participants include restoring natural wetlands, maintaining existing greenspaces, and assigning financial values to natural assets.

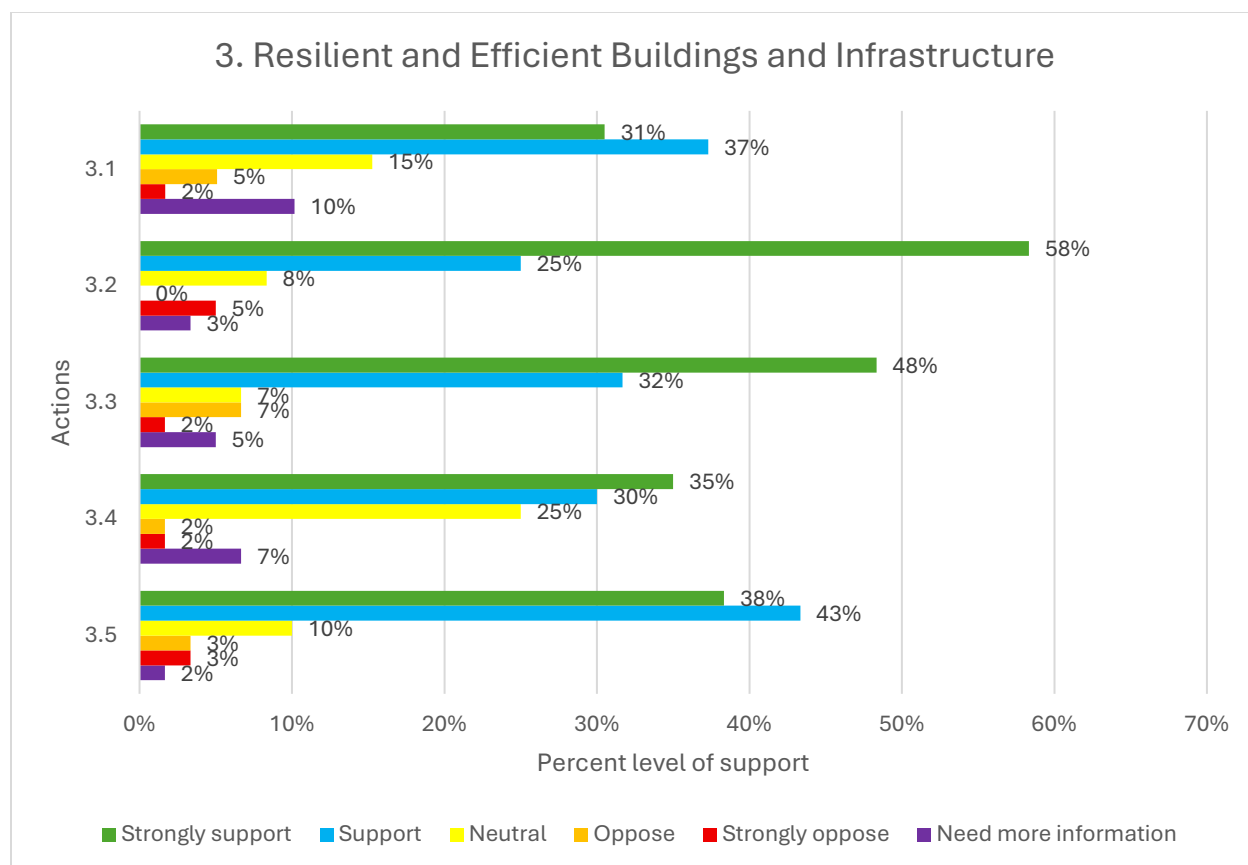
“Preserve existing green spaces and natural areas for the multiple benefits they provide in mitigating climate impacts.”

– Anonymous

Measurability of actions

There is a consensus on the need for robust monitoring, clear targets, and frameworks to track the impact of these building and infrastructure actions, emphasizing collaboration with Indigenous communities and existing organizations. Respondents would like to see measurable targets with a date for their completion to be included in the CAP.

Figure 8 Level of support for Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



3.4 Responsible Land-Use and Planning

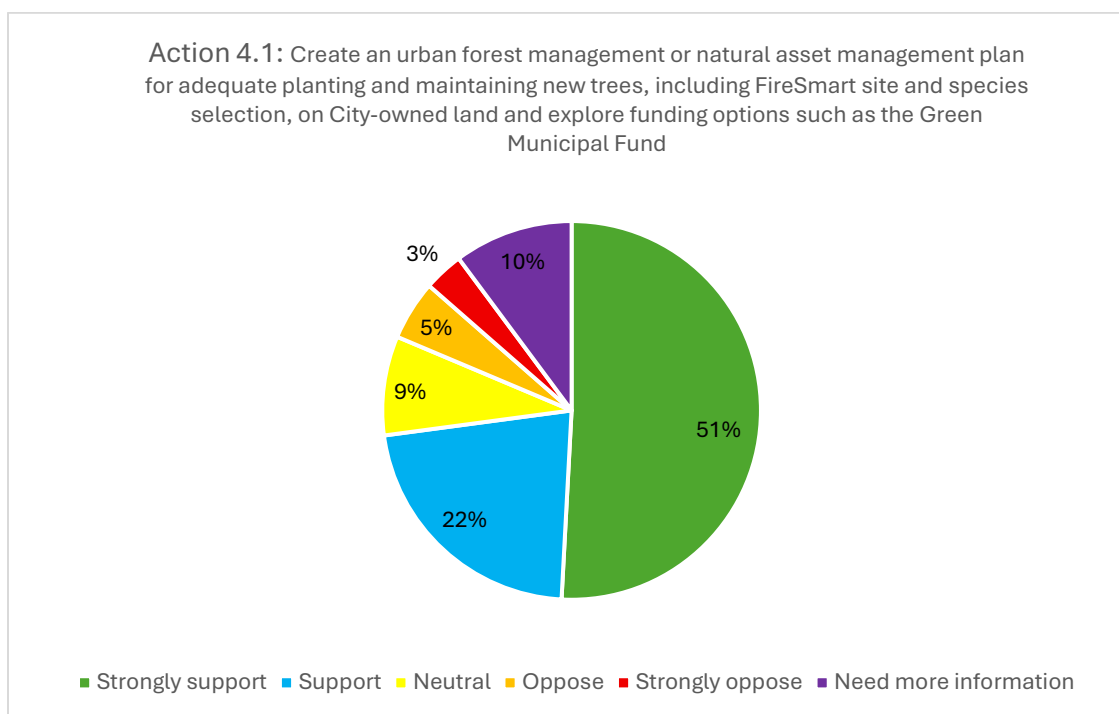
Overall, respondents voice support for preserving and enhancing greenspace through land-use planning and increasing local food production. Significant concern is raised regarding the City’s rezoning of greenspaces in the past and caution against this.

Preserving and enhancing greenspaces

Respondents were strongly supportive of creating an urban forest management plan or natural asset management plan with 51% strongly supporting, and 22% supporting, action 4.1. However, many emphasize the importance of preserving existing green spaces and natural areas. Respondents stress the importance of maintaining and protecting these natural assets and raised concerns about green spaces being opened to development. Many urge the City to continue promoting intensification and the availability of secondary suites. Places of particular importance for preservation are Tin Can Hill, Willow Flats, and Con Road rock way. Benefits of maintaining green spaces cited by respondents include for

mental health, cooling effects, reducing the impacts of climate change, and sequestering carbon.

Figure 9 Level of support for action 4.1 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Green streetscapes

Respondents suggest that the City's Development & Design Standards should be updated to improve greenery along streets. Increasing the use of vegetation as a buffer between traffic and pathways is suggested by respondents to boost safety and aesthetics of using active transportation while also sequestering carbon and increasing water retention. Respondents advocate for diverse species selection, professional care, and protection of new and existing City trees against damage and note the importance of balancing tree maintenance with FireSmart efforts.

"A healthy urban tree canopy is absolutely necessary for cooling and for everyone's mental health, an absolute no brainer."

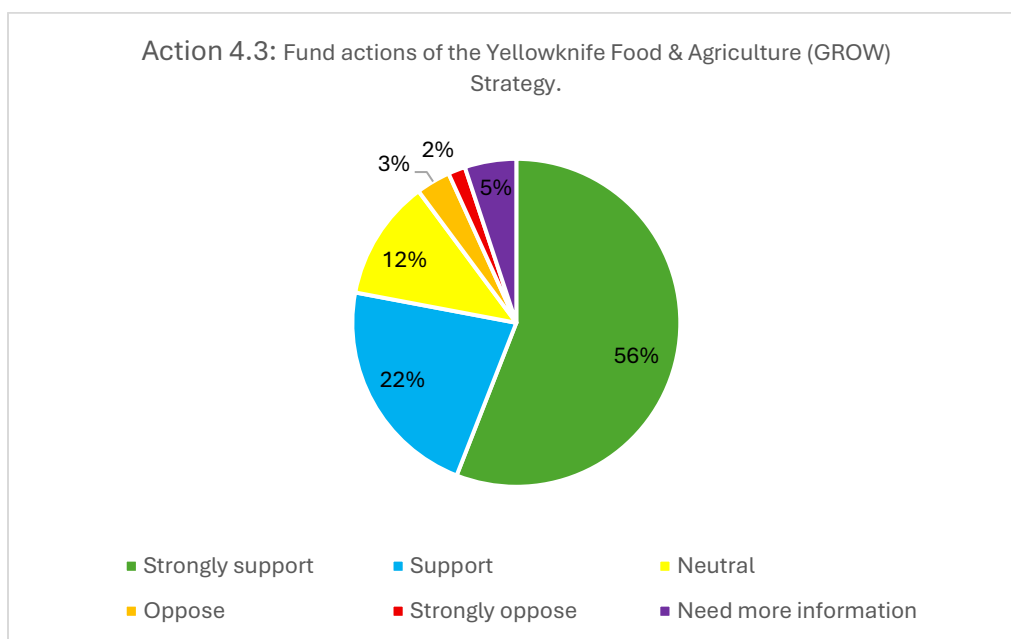
– Anonymous

Local food production

There is strong support for funding the implementation of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture (GROW) Strategy with 56% respondents strongly supporting, and 22% supporting, action 4.3. Respondents call for the City to reduce barriers to urban agriculture and supporting equitable access to food through community gardens and the

establishment of greenhouses. Respondents note that support is also needed for existing food-producing businesses.

Figure 10 Level of support for action 4.3 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Water management

Respondents note that actions addressing water are missing from the draft CAP and made suggestions for maintaining water quality and quantity. Respondents point to low water levels and increased drought, as well as localized flooding due to high intensity, short-term rainfall as reasons to adopt land-use adaptation measures such as increasing permeable surfaces. Respondents feel this will help reduce runoff from entering lakes or overwhelming our stormwater management system.

“This section should include the action of... ‘keep the water as close to where it falls as possible.’”

– Anonymous

Communication

As with the other themes, the public urges the City to improve communication surrounding land-use and planning. One recommendation was to use more graphics, visuals, and videos to make information accessible to the public. Respondents suggest that a targeted effort should be made to include youth and involve school boards.

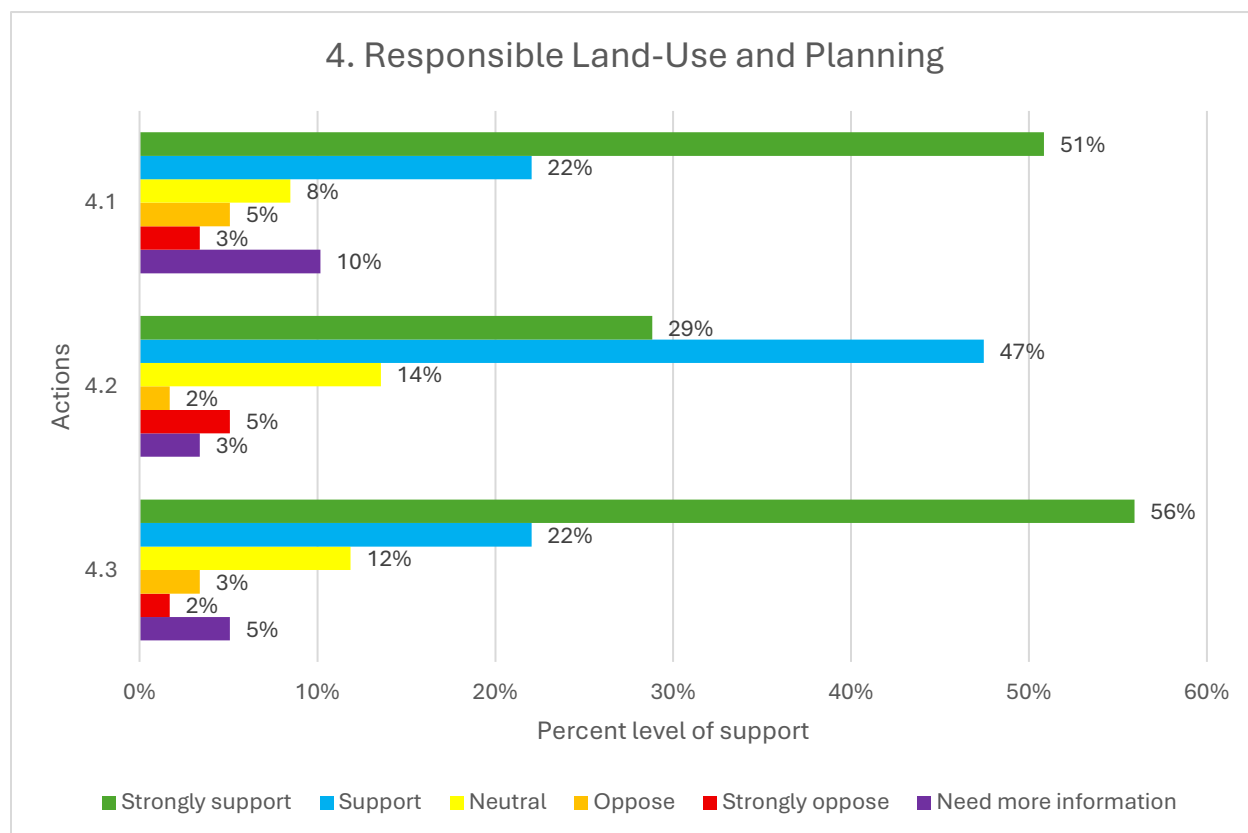
Implementing land-use and planning actions

In terms of the implementation of CAP, respondents recommend transparent monitoring over progress on these actions, public education on current initiatives, and coordinated efforts across city departments.

“Integrating transparent monitoring and cross-departmental coordination across these actions would amplify their long-term impact.”

– Anonymous

Figure 11 Level of support for Responsible Land-Use and Planning actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



3.5 Governance and Accountability

To ensure the CAP is successfully implemented, respondents suggested a number of improvements to be made to actions regarding accountability measures and communication strategies.

Ensuring accountability

Concerns were raised about potential bureaucracy, inefficiency of the City government, and a lack of tangible outcomes in the draft CAP. To ensure long term accountability and success of the CAP, respondents suggest a timeline should be included in the CAP so that items are prioritized and put forward for the budget. Respondents note frustration over previous plan items not being brought forward to draft budgets for funding. In addition, they advocate for clear metrics within the CAP to assess progress and outcomes as well as specific public reporting requirements.

“Including a timeline helps in planning so that actions can get funded. They’ll only get funded if City [administration] puts them and prioritizes them in the budget they bring out.”

– Anonymous

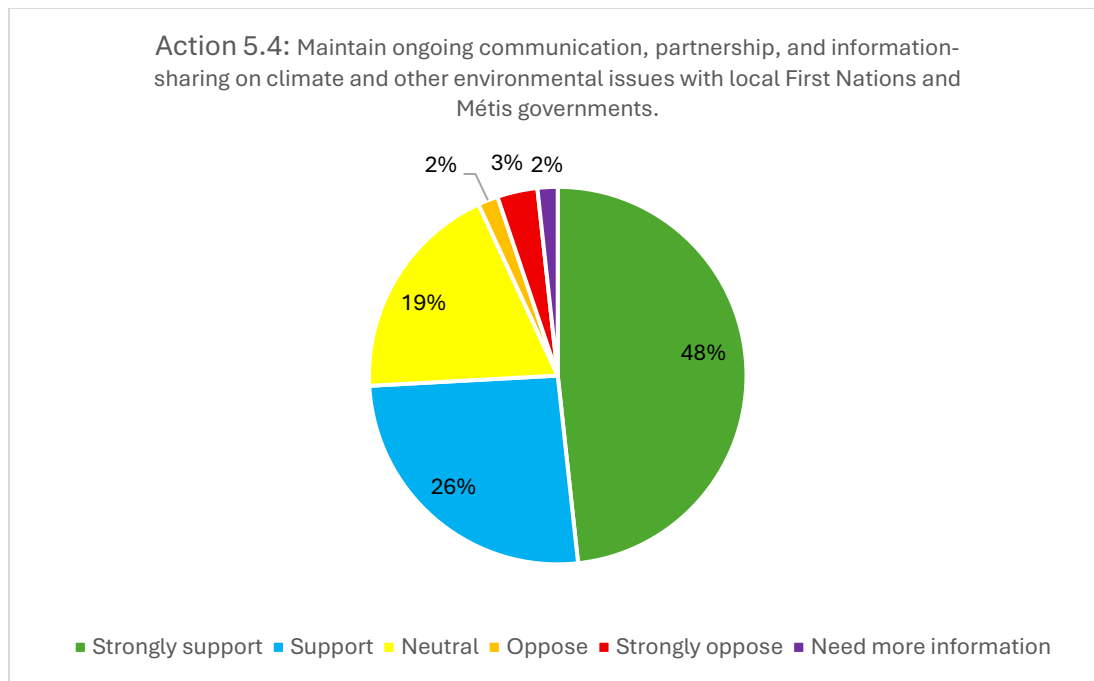
Targeted communication

According to respondents, targeted communication is key for collaboration. There is a push for engaging vulnerable populations and a need to reach this group through specific, targeted messaging via appropriate channels. Respondents feel that typical City communication methods, like the website or social media, are ineffective at reaching this group. Similarly, respondents suggest more efforts should target youth participation by meeting them where they are at, such as through schools, youth groups, and summer job programs.

Partnership with Indigenous governments

There is strong support for maintaining ongoing partnership with local Indigenous governments, with 48% of survey respondents strongly supporting, and 30% supporting, action 5.4. This is seen as essential for building a more resilient community and improving trust. Respondents suggest clear protocols for knowledge-sharing, co-decision making, and mutual accountability should be established.

Figure 12 Level of support for action 5.4 from the PlaceSpeak survey



“Now more than ever we need to work together and build community resilience and trust between citizens and government.”

– Anonymous

Implementation working group

With respect to forming an implementation working group (action 5.2), respondents were adamant that it should be a committee of council to encourage ownership by council. In addition to council representation, respondents believe specific groups should be targeted for participation on this committee, namely representatives of each of the following: local Indigenous governments, youth, environmental organizations, transportation organizations, and businesses.

Interdepartmental collaboration

Many also highlight the need for interdepartmental collaboration within the City for successful implementation of the CAP. One suggestion from respondents is to create an implementation working group within the City government to mainstream climate change work into all operations.

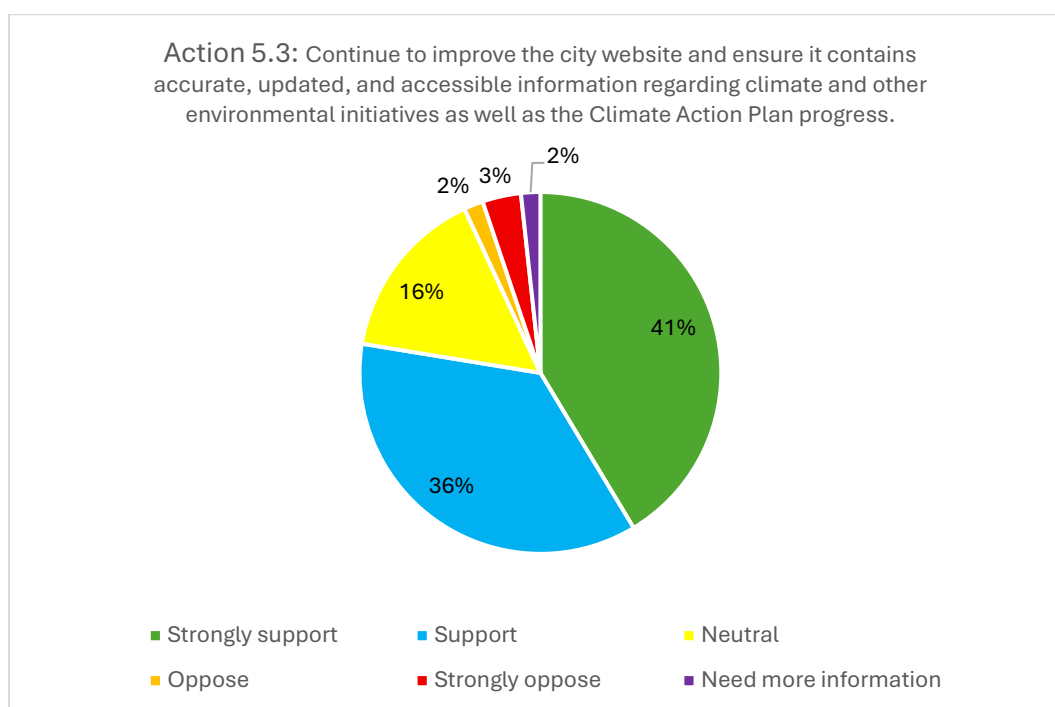
“It is critical that the City create an implementation working group WITHIN the City government. The mainstreaming of climate change into City operations requires a change in the way City staff work. Interdepartmental dialogue and collaboration is essential.”

– Anonymous

Communication channels

An overwhelming response from the public indicates frustration with the City website and support for making improvements to it. 41% of survey respondents strongly support, and 36% support, making improvements to the City website to ensure it contains accurate, updated, and accessible information (action 5.3). Issues are also noted with the City’s online engagement forum, PlaceSpeak. On top of website changes and digital communication, respondents suggest other avenues of communication must be explored as many residents are not able to participate online. Ideas for improved communication proposed by respondents include creating a visual dashboard showing progress on climate initiatives, partnering with Cabon Radio or CKLB, collaborating with artists, townhalls, and climate cafes. Respondents suggest an action should be included that specifically focuses on the communication plan for the CAP implementation.

Figure 13 Level of support for action 5.3 from the PlaceSpeak survey

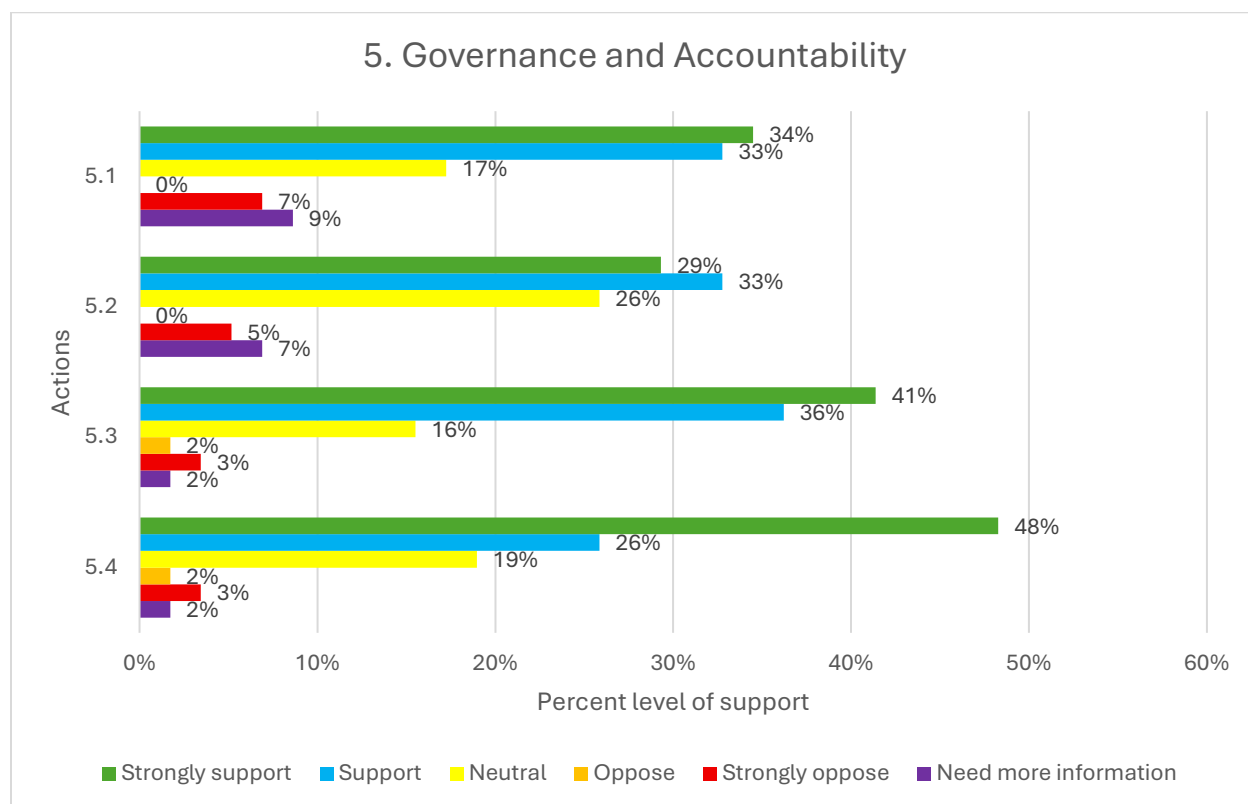


CAP implementation progress reporting

Participants emphasize the need for transparency, particularly on the status of the CAP implementation and data showing the success of programs implemented. Regular

progress reports and clear communication are seen as critical, and as such, respondents suggest including an action in the CAP for a full progress report to be completed every other year and individual updates along the way to encourage continuous public, stakeholder, and rightsholder engagement.

Figure 14 Level of support for Governance and Accountability actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



3.6 Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

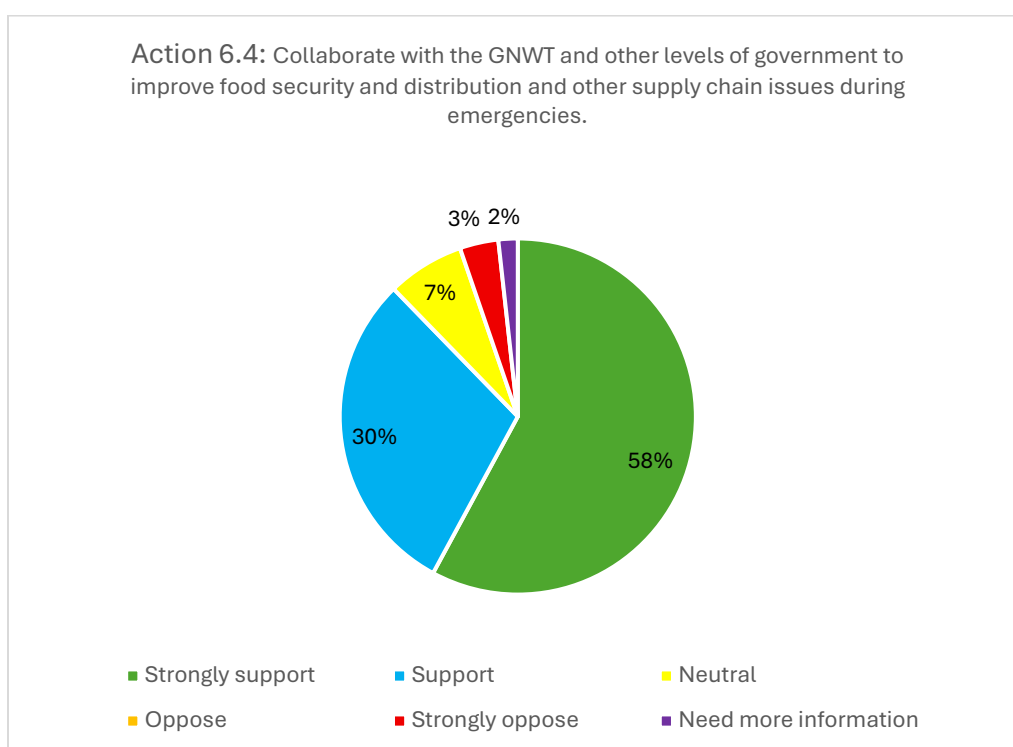
Overall, respondents agree on the importance of the City safeguarding local populations and appreciate steps taken but urge for more robust, forward-thinking actions to meet growing challenges. Respondents seek more ambitious action on community preparedness and emergency response over the 10-year action plan timeframe.

Supply chain issues during emergencies

There is strong support for collaborating with other levels of government to improve food security and supply chain issues during emergencies, with 58% of survey respondents strongly supporting, and 30% supporting, action 6.4. In particular, a need for community-led food systems are emphasized to build community resilience. In addition to food and supplies, respondents note this action could be expanded to include energy security. On

this action, respondents suggest clarification is needed on the roles and responsibility of each level of government. Finally, clear commitments and indicators are proposed by respondents for this action to be measurable such as dollars invested in local food production, size of food and supply reserves established, or level of investment in backup generators.

Figure 15 Level of support for action 6.4 from the PlaceSpeak survey



Supporting vulnerable residents

According to respondents, more work is needed to clarify how vulnerability is defined and which groups this may include. However, there is strong support among respondents for the prioritization of disadvantaged or marginalized groups generally through the CAP implementation. Additional actions to support these individuals proposed by respondents include low-income housing development initiatives or provision of subsidized air purifiers. Respondents also note that communication strategies must ensure those without internet receive up to date information and access to resources through other channels.

“This is what municipal government is for, taking care of people locally.”

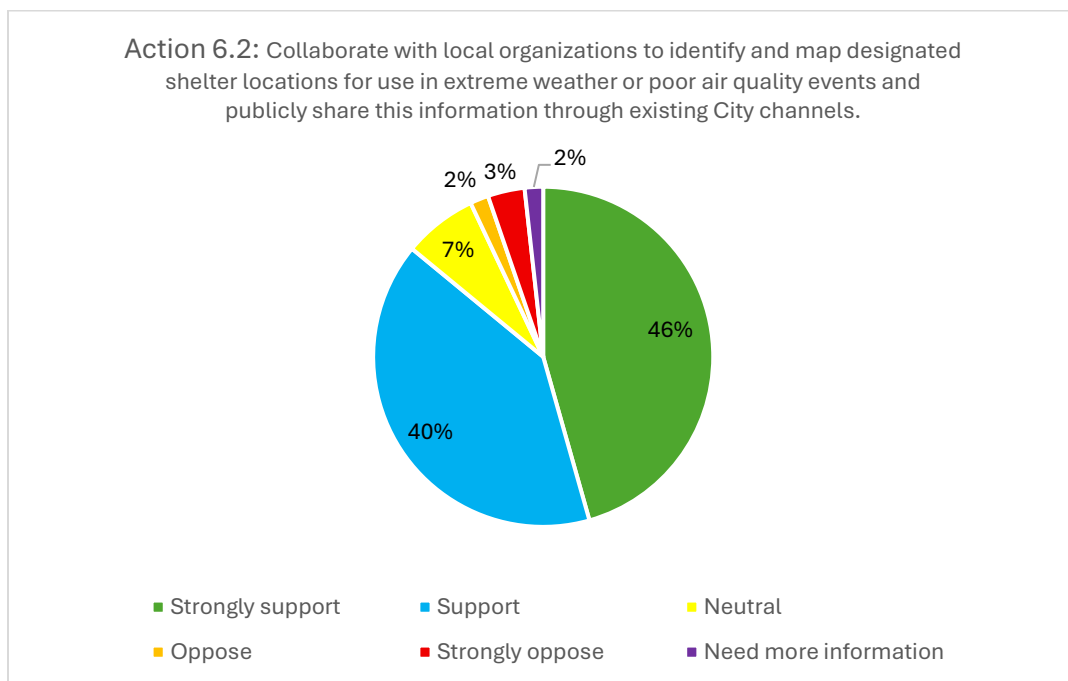
– Anonymous

Poor air quality and extreme weather shelters

With respect to shelters for use during poor air quality or extreme weather events, 46% of survey respondents strongly support, and 40% support designating and communicating

these shelter locations (action 6.2). Respondents would like to know how many of these shelters will be made available, where they will be located, their capacity, and accessibility standards. Respondents note that clear criteria for the shelters, including air quality thresholds, must be communicated prior to air quality or weather events. Concerns were raised about ensuring that these shelters include appropriate social supports, as lacking these can render such spaces ineffective. In addition, respondents suggest the City should consider how individuals will travel to and from these spaces. For this action to be more measurable, it is suggested that commitments be made with respect to capacity available at these shelters and a timeline in which they will become available.

Figure 16 Level of support for action 6.2 from the PlaceSpeak survey

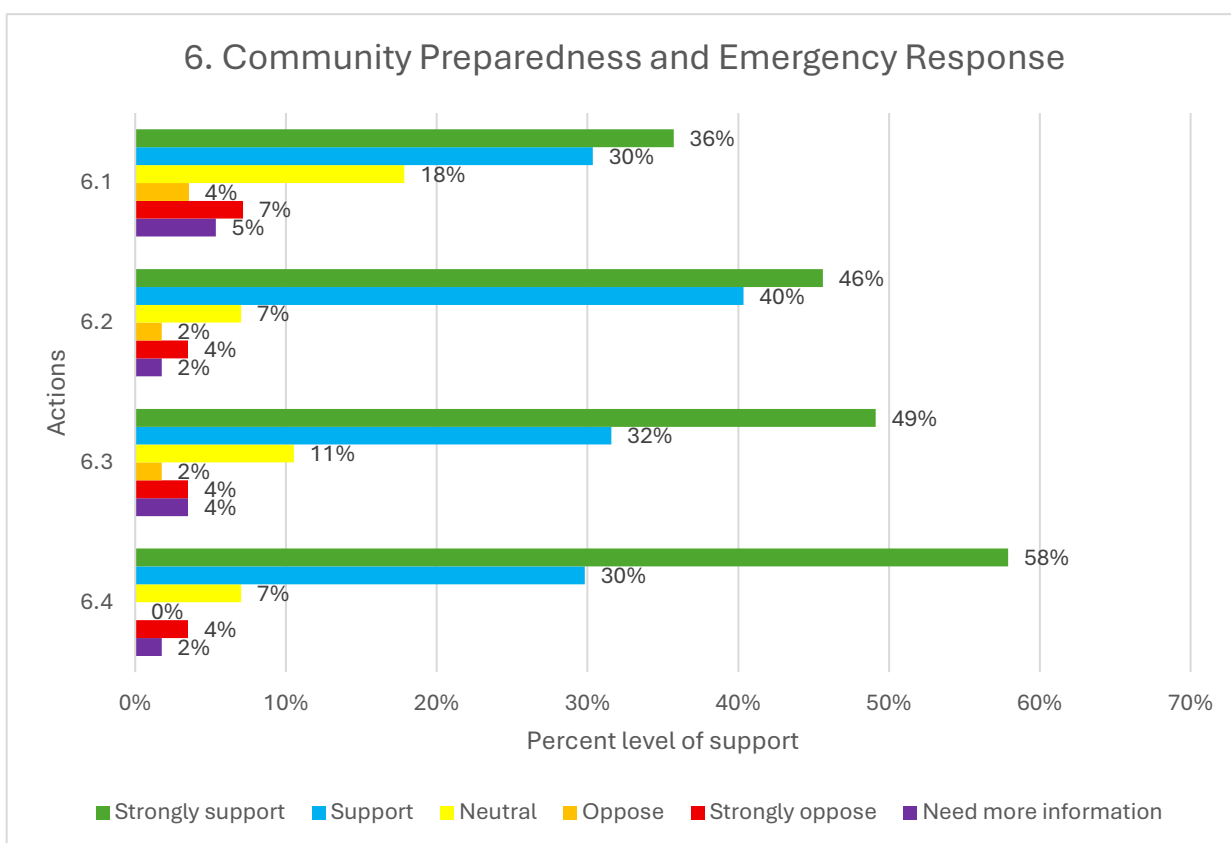


Fuelbreaks

Communication regarding fuelbreaks is lacking as respondents note misconceptions about if they can be repurposed for activities such as agriculture or recreation.

Respondents also seek more information on fuelbreak maintenance plans, how removed biomass is disposed of and if it could be used in biomass heating systems.

Figure 17 Level of support for Community Preparedness and Emergency Response actions from the PlaceSpeak survey



4.0 Key Takeaways

4.1 Theme highlights

The results of our second phase of public engagement offer valuable insights into how the actions of each CAP theme can be improved. Below are highlights of the feedback received from respondents for each theme:

Sustainable Transportation

- Increase the availability of bike storage and make it standard at all apartment buildings in the City.
- Make long-term investments in active transportation infrastructure including protected bike lanes and improved winter maintenance.
- Improve the bus service by increasing their frequency, expanding hours of operation, improving safety and cleanliness on board, and reducing bus fares.
- Promote the Yellowknife Car-share Co-op and partner with them on education campaigns.

- Require EV-ready charging in new multi-unit residential buildings.
- Improve communication of sustainable transportation by raising awareness of EV functionality in cold climates and improving signage on active transportation routes.

Waste Management

- Consider establishing a re-use store while also examining other options for diverting construction waste and furniture from the landfill.
- Target incentives or requirements for businesses and industry to reduce waste.
- Support recycling locally including the use of recycled materials.
- Expand compost collection to multi-unit residential buildings and businesses in tandem with support and education.
- Improve communication and awareness on composting, recycling, and waste reduction.

Resilient and Efficient Buildings and Infrastructure

- Provide support for property owners to retrofit existing buildings with energy efficiency and climate resilience improvements.
- Require more stringent energy efficiency and climate resilience standards in new developments and explore financing options.
- Adapt critical infrastructure with nature-based solutions, like restoring wetlands and preserving greenspace, and recognize the financial value of these natural assets.

Responsible Land-Use and Planning

- Create an urban forest management plan and/or natural asset management plan to increase tree planting and preserve existing greenspaces and natural assets.
- Update the Development & Design Standards to improve greenery along streets.
- Fund the implementation of the Yellowknife Food & Agriculture Strategy and support existing food-producing organizations and businesses.
- Address water level changes and protect our stormwater management system by increasing the use of permeable surfaces.

Governance and Accountability

- Improve accountability on CAP implementation by including a timeline and prioritization of actions within the plan itself.
- Target communication of CAP implementation for different groups via different messaging and channels of communication.
- Maintain healthy relationships with local Indigenous governments by enacting clear knowledge-sharing and mutual accountability protocols.

- Encourage council ownership of CAP implementation by creating a committee of council with representatives of various stakeholders and rightsholders.
- Share full progress reports on CAP implementation every other year and regularly communicate with the public in the interim.

Community Preparedness and Emergency Response

- Support community-led food systems and clarify the roles and responsibilities of each level of government in ensuring food and energy supply during emergencies.
- Clarify how the City defines vulnerability and design climate resilience support to reach these individuals.
- Designate shelters for poor air quality or extreme weather events, establish clear criteria for their use, and ensure adequate social support is available on site.

4.2 Overarching comments

There is support for the plan's collaborative approach, focus on equity, and the emphasis on partnerships, education, and infrastructure is seen as a strong foundation. However, there are calls for clearer metrics, targets, and funding pathways, and that communication on the CAP's implementation be frequent and thorough, to ensure success and accountability. Respondents also urge the City to consider possible unintended consequences of these actions and plan for how they may be avoided.

Education and awareness

Public education and awareness are key to shifting behaviours across all themes in the CAP. For example, infrastructure and programming must be accompanied by information for it to be effectively implemented, such as by:

- Improving signage on bike routes;
- Educating residents on EV functionality in the North; and
- Reminding residents of proper compost bin usage.

The City can also show people examples of what to do by modelling good behaviour by ensuring that City facilities and procurement processes demonstrate proper waste diversion, clean energy solutions, and FireSmart practices. Modelling these practices can help change resident behaviour throughout the community.

Communication

Transparent communication is critical to ensure community buy-in and effectiveness of all City initiatives including the CAP. To accomplish this, the City website needs a significant overhaul. It must provide accessible, accurate, and regularly updated information. Moreover, communication of the CAP implementation should include visuals such as

graphics, videos, or a dashboard on the status of the CAP actions. However, digital communication alone is insufficient to reach all residents. More accessible and targeted communication strategies are needed to make sure everyone can be informed and participate in CAP implementation including the elderly, unhoused, youth, and Indigenous peoples.

Communicating the benefits of climate action and community successes is important for gaining traction from more residents. This could include:

- Reporting on the diversion rate of composting and recycling;
- Highlighting the benefits of active transportation for health and well-being; and
- Publishing the cost savings to the City from various climate actions.

Residents are skeptical of City activities or are hearing rumours that are not being sufficiently addressed and combatted with accurate information by the City. For example, there is confusion about how compost is used, where blue bin collection goes, and if fuelbreaks can be repurposed. Proactive communication should be embraced to prevent the spread of misinformation and build community trust.

Measurability

Overall, the feedback underscores the need for clear commitments and measurable outcomes. In addition, many respondents express a desire for concrete actions, emphasizing the need to implement strategies rather than spend excessive time on studies and assessments.

For actions in all themes of the CAP, the City should specify:

1. The goal – what outcome is the City trying to achieve?
2. The responsible party – who is responsible for completing action?
3. The indicator – what metric will be used to measure success?
4. The timeline – when will the action begin and when will it be complete?

In other words, each action should follow the SMART framework and be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Including these aspects within the CAP itself will help ensure accountability, build public trust, and see that the CAP is successfully implemented.

Funding the CAP

For any of these actions to be accomplished, the City must secure funding. Respondents are aware that the actions presented here will cost money and, to avoid the greater costs of inaction, they must be put forward in the budgeting process. This will also require internal

collaboration among City departments as climate action must be embedded into all City projects and processes.

Avoiding unintended consequences

Concerns are raised about the potential for unintended consequences of these actions. Implications on living costs, namely energy, housing, and food affordability must be considered. All efforts should be made to anticipate potential consequences and plan to avoid negative impacts.

5.0 Next Steps

Now that phase two of public engagement is complete, the next step in the CAP process is to revise the draft actions to incorporate this feedback and the results of this What We Heard report throughout August and September.

This revised draft will then be reviewed by senior management and undergo further revisions based on senior management feedback.

A complete CAP will be presented to council in October and, pending any necessary revisions, should be approved this fall. The final CAP will be posted on the City's website.

Once the CAP has been approved, the implementation phase can begin including establishing the implementation working group and identifying funding opportunities for CAP actions.

Appendix A: draft actions for public review

Draft Climate Action Plan 20260-2036: 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.