

What We Heard

NIVEN LAKE RAVINE TRAIL PROJECT

Engagement Round 1

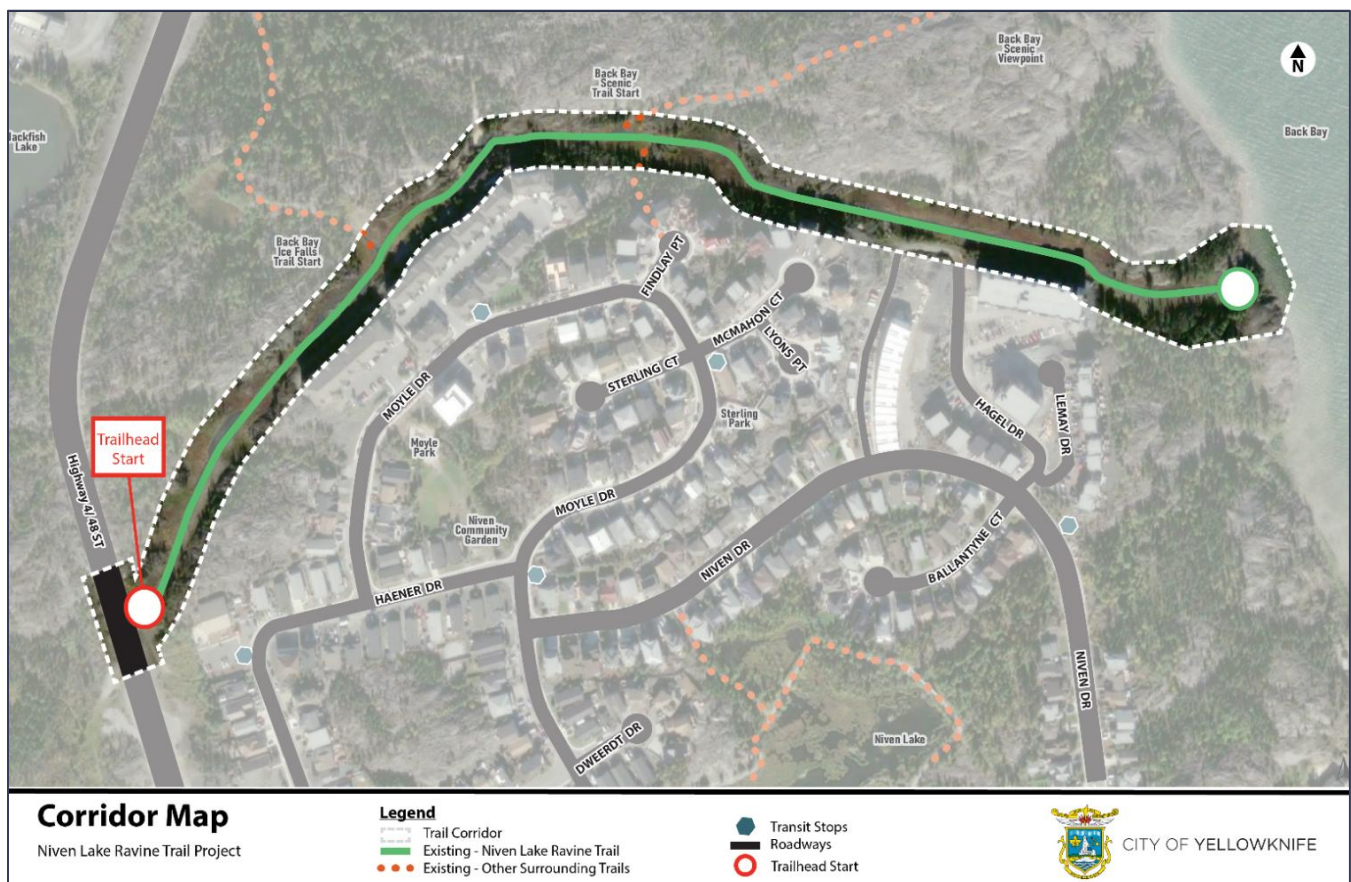


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Project Background

The Niven Lake Ravine Trail is an important community connection that links the Niven neighbourhood with Back Bay, nearby natural areas, and Yellowknife's broader trail network. The trail provides opportunities for year-round recreation, access to nature, and connections to destinations throughout the city.

First identified in the City's *Integrated Parks, Trails and Open Space Development Study* (2005), the trail corridor was incorporated into the Niven Lake development plans and continues to play an important role as the neighbourhood grows.

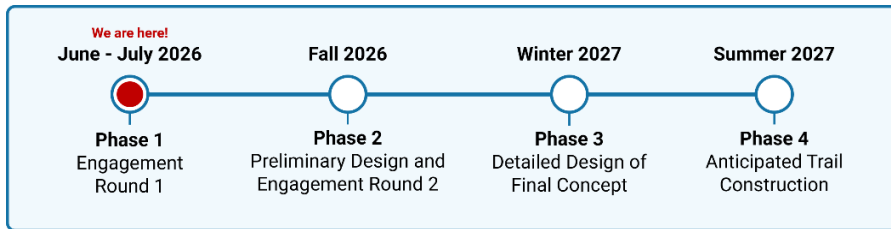


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Planning for the Trail's Future

With subdivision development nearing completion and wildfire preparedness clearing completed in 2023, the City is exploring how the corridor can continue to support recreation and emergency preparedness while responding to community priorities related to safety, accessibility, environmental conditions, and the overall trail experience.

To support this work, the City retained Stantec in early 2026 to develop a community-informed vision for the trail. Feedback gathered during Engagement Round 1 will help inform a preliminary trail concept and guide future planning, design, and investment decisions for the corridor.



Who We Heard From

Engagement Round 1 took place from June to July 2026 and gathered input from trail users, nearby residents, community organizations, and other Yellowknife residents.

Community members shared feedback through:

- An online survey (267 responses)
- A trail user group walk and talk | June 29 | 6:45-7:45pm
- Three community pop-up events (over 20)

ATCO Aquatic Centre | June 29 | 4-6pm | 9 attendees

Coffee at the Trailhead | June 30 | 7:30-8:30am | 6 attendees

Chatting at the Trailhead | June 30 | 6-8 pm | 6 attendees

Participants shared how they use the trail, what they value most about it, and where they see opportunities for future improvements.



What We Heard

Participants value the Niven Lake Ravine Trail as an important part of Yellowknife's trail network. They highlighted its role as a year-round recreation corridor, a connection to nature, and a link between neighbourhoods, Back Bay, and the broader trail system.

Key Themes

The trail is a valued community asset

Participants described the trail as an important part of daily life. It is valued for its proximity to surrounding residences, connection to nature, recreation opportunities, scenic views, and for providing access to Back Bay and nearby destinations.

Participants want stronger connections

As part of a larger city-wide trail network, many participants expressed a desire in having the trail provide stronger connectivity to other trails, nearby neighbourhoods, and key destinations.

Protecting the trail's natural character is a priority

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of preserving the trail's natural character, atmosphere, and connection to nature. While many supported improvements, they also expressed a desire to avoid overdevelopment or substantial change.

Users support practical improvements

Participants prioritized opportunities to enhance the trail experience through practical, low-impact improvements, including:

- Wayfinding and directional signage
- Drainage improvements
- Benches and seating areas
- Pet waste stations and garbage bins
- Improved access points and enhanced access to Back Bay
- Trail surface improvements to address loose gravel, uneven sections, and accessibility challenges

QUOTES FROM THE SURVEY

"It's one of the best things about living in Yellowknife."

"It's a treasure that just needs a few tweaks and minor improvements."

"Keep it as close to nature as possible."

"I think it's super important that this trail have good connections to the rest of the trail network in the city."

"Connect the trail to all the others!"

"This area can be a great shared space for all."

"Pet waste stations could help improve the user experience."

"It would be great to either raise those areas or have boardwalks to cross over those wet areas."

The trail supports year-round recreation

The trail supports a wide range of activities throughout the year, including walking, hiking, dog walking, nature viewing, skiing, and accessing Back Bay, the ice caves, and the ski club trails.

Shared use remains important

Most participants reported feeling safe on the trail. Safety feedback focused primarily on interactions among different trail users, including snowmobilers, walkers, cyclists, skiers, and dog owners. The more prominent concerns were:

- Snowmobile speeds
- Off-leash dogs
- Dog waste
- Trail etiquette (e.g., yielding, slowing down when passing, and respecting other users)
- Visibility around bends
- Shared use awareness (e.g., understanding the needs of different trail users)

Trail Use Highlights from the Survey



84% of respondents
use the trail during
winter



80% of respondents
walk to the trail



76% of respondents
use the trail for
walking, running, or
hiking



54% of respondents
use the trail for dog
walking

What Happens Next?

The project team will review and consider feedback from Engagement Round 1 alongside technical analysis, existing conditions information, and direction from the *YK 2025 Community Plan* and *Let's Move YK Transportation Master Plan*. The project team will also work with City departments to identify shared priorities, opportunities, and operational considerations that will guide possible trail improvements.

Using this information, the project team will develop a preliminary trail concept for the Niven Lake Ravine Trail. Once the concept is ready, it will be shared with the community for review and feedback. Community input received during this phase will help refine the preferred concept before detailed design begins.

Subject to project approvals, trail improvements are anticipated to be constructed in 2027.

Learn More About the Project

Learn more about the project and view the complete Engagement Round 1 Report, including full survey results, on the City's website: <https://www.yellowknife.ca/niven/lake/ravine/trail/project>