

What We Heard Report

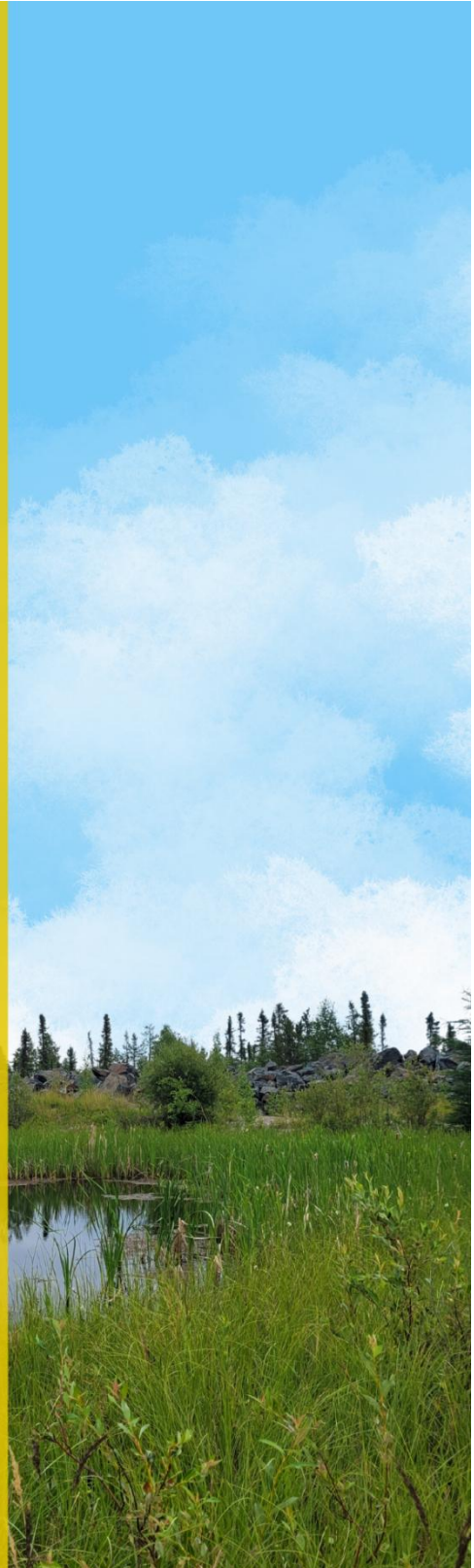
Kam Lake Area Development Plan 2026 Open House

The City of Yellowknife is preparing an Area Development Plan to guide the future growth of the Kam Lake area. Building on public engagement completed in 2024, a market study and updated planning work, the City held an open house on July 23, 2026, to share the draft concept, answer questions and hear comments from residents, businesses and landowners.

July 31, 2026



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE



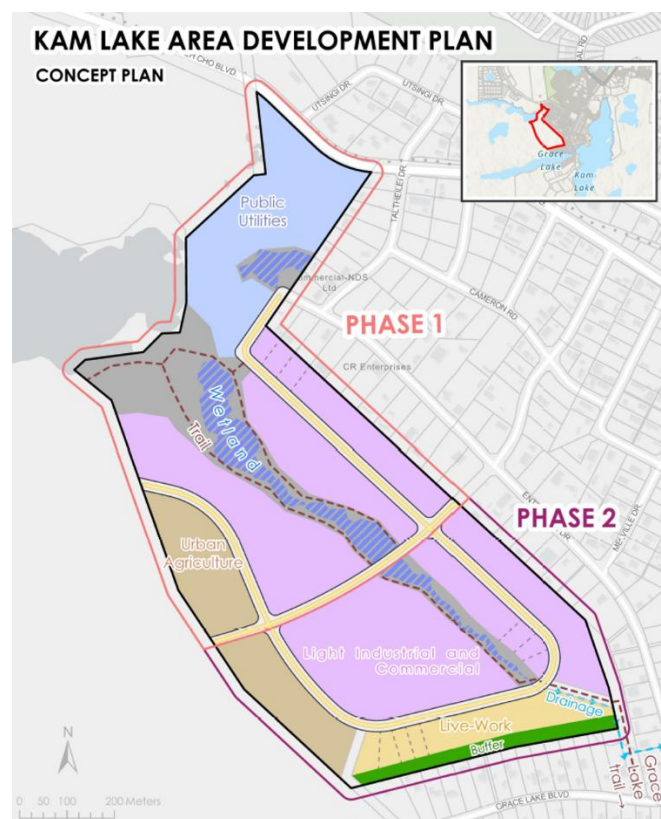
Project Overview

The City of Yellowknife is preparing an Area Development Plan for approximately 68 hectares of undeveloped City-owned land west of the existing Kam Lake area.

An Area Development Plan is a City Council-approved framework that guides subdivision and development, which may include land uses, roads, utilities, and open spaces.

The proposed concept plan has been informed by public engagement completed in 2024, the 2025 Kam Lake Market Study, 2026 Environmental Site Assessment, and professional planning analysis.

The draft concept plan presented at the open house included areas for light industrial and commercial development, live-work development, urban agriculture, public utilities, natural areas, trails and future roads.



Kam Lake Area Development Plan (Draft Concept)

About the Open House

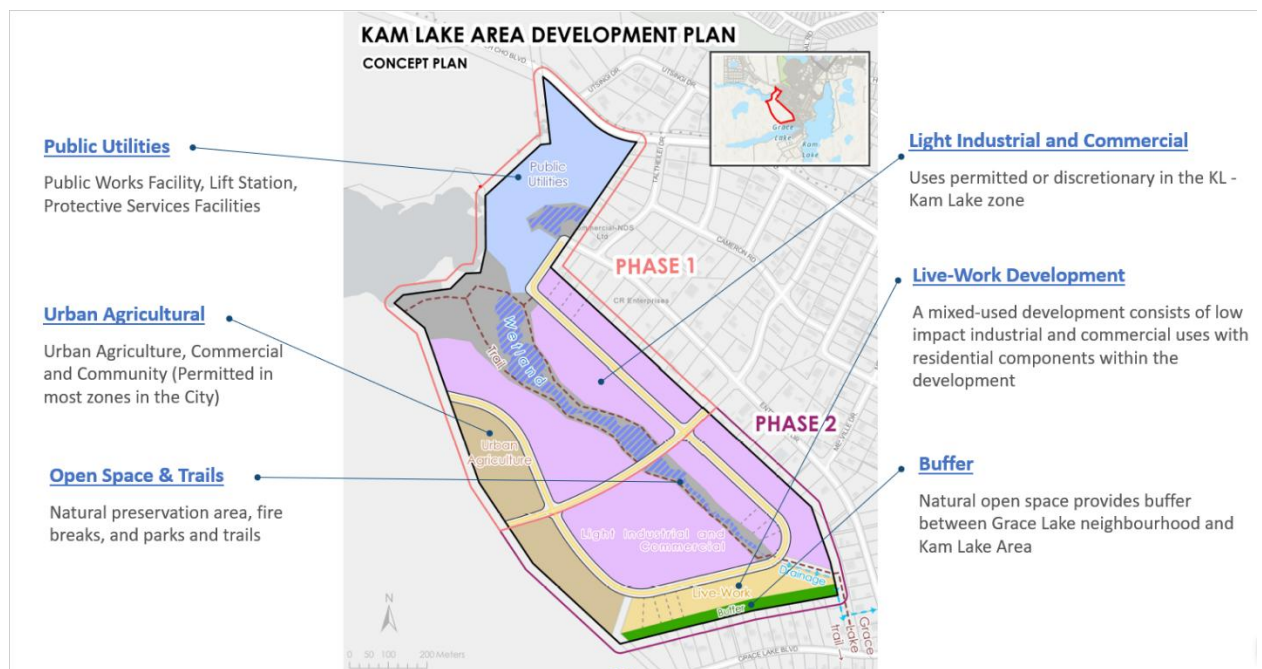
The City of Yellowknife organized a public open house on July 23rd, 2026, to discuss Kam Lake Extension Area Development Plan and Zoning Amendment. The open house was held at the **INFORM** level of the public engagement spectrum.

More than 30 people attended, including local business owners, people interested in starting businesses, Kam Lake and Grace Lake residents, and members of the general public.

Participants recognized the need to plan for future business and industrial growth, while asking the City to carefully consider environmental protection, nearby residential areas, servicing costs and how future development would be phased.

Key Themes and Takeaways

We heard a wide range of perspectives during the open house. The themes below summarize the questions, concerns and ideas that came up most often, rather than capturing every comment word for word.



- **Need for Additional Business Land:** Some participants questioned whether more commercial and light industrial land is needed and whether the proposed development is the best way to support economic growth. Others pointed to the

limited options available for light industrial businesses in Yellowknife and supported creating more land for local businesses. The 2025 Market Study was referenced as evidence of continued long-term demand.

- **Lot Size and Affordability:** Participants supported creating lots that are similar to, or smaller than, existing Kam Lake lots. Smaller lots were seen as more practical and affordable for entrepreneurs and growing businesses.
- **Live-work Development and Housing:** The City explained that live-work combines lower-impact commercial or industrial uses with housing on the same property. Participants asked if a residential component should be required and if the area set aside for live-work could be expanded or used entirely for housing. The City noted that industrial and residential uses must be carefully separated, while broader housing growth is being planned through the Community Plan and other initiatives.
- **Wetlands, Trails and Natural Areas:** Participants asked how the wetland would be protected, how close development could be, and if nearby lots would face additional requirements. The proposed trail was generally well received, with suggestions to extend it around the pond and wetland area. Further work is needed to confirm wetland protection measures and requirements for nearby development.
- **Drainage and Grading:** Participants stressed the need for careful drainage and grading planning, particularly to understand how future roads and lots may affect water flow and the wetland. The City advised that this work would be completed during future subdivision planning and information can be shared with the public as more details become available.
- **Buffer Areas and Grace Lake:** Concerns were raised about noise, land-use compatibility and the width of the proposed buffer between the proposed development and Grace Lake neighbourhood. Some participants suggested a wider buffer – about 100 metres - and asked that existing firebreaks not be considered as a substitute for noise separation.
- **Road Access and Traffic:** Participants asked the City to carefully review the proposed road network, particularly any connection to Grace Lake Boulevard and the potential for increased traffic near residential areas.
- **Urban Agriculture:** Questions focused on the suitability of the proposed area because of exposed bedrock, why urban agriculture is identified in one location and how the City would encourage that use through zoning or conditions of sale.

- **Public Utilities:** Participants asked whether future lots would use trucked water and sewage or receive full municipal services, in addition to what facilities may be in the public utilities area. Though these details have not yet been confirmed, it was clarified that the public utilities area is being reserved to allow the City to respond to future infrastructure needs, according to the requirements set out in the *Community Planning and Development Act*.
- **Wildfire Resilience and Firebreaks:** Questions focused on how wildfire risk and existing firebreaks are reflected in the concept plan, including if firebreaks would be maintained, revegetated or included in the buffer area. Further review is needed to confirm how firebreaks and other wildfire-protection measures will be addressed.
- **Climate and Environmental Considerations:** Participants asked that the proposed development plan align with the City's Climate Action Plan and consider opportunities for low- or zero-emission development. Environmental due diligence was identified as an important part of future planning.
- **Costs and Financial Viability:** Questions were raised about infrastructure costs, potential revenue, the financial viability of the subdivision and possible impacts on taxpayers.
- **Further Review and Participation:** Questions were raised about allowing more time for further analysis and refinement of the concept plan before it advances. Participants also wanted clear information on how comments from the open house would be considered, when further engagement would occur, and how they could take part in the Governance and Priorities Committee and statutory public hearing process.

Matters for further review

During the discussion, attendees identified several matters they would like the City to consider as planning progresses. They include:

- How wetlands will be protected through drainage, grading, and subdivision design.
- Whether the proposed buffer between Kam Lake Extension and Grace Lake should be increased.
- Whether the trail network can be extended or better connected.
- How live-work development will be encouraged or required.
- How urban agriculture will be supported if it is permitted more broadly under zoning.

- Whether smaller and more affordable lot sizes can be prioritized.
- Whether and how lots will be serviced with municipal water and sewer.
- How firebreaks will be incorporated and maintained.
- Whether road connections may affect Grace Lake Boulevard or nearby residential areas.
- How the plan aligns with the City's Climate Action Plan and emission reduction goals.
- Whether additional housing or residential uses should be considered in parts of the plan area.

What Happens Next

The City and project team will review the questions and comments received at the open house. This will help identify where more information is needed, technical questions require further review, or parts of the draft concept may need clarification or refinement for drafting the Kam Lake Extension Area Development Plan.

The next scheduled steps are:

- Staff will present the proposed Area Development Plan to the Governance and Priorities Committee and respond to questions.
- Council is expected to consider first reading of the Area Development Plan By-law and the related Zoning By-law amendment.
- A statutory public hearing will be held so residents can speak to Council about the proposed by-laws prior to final bylaw adoption.
- Council is expected to consider second and third readings and make a final decision.

Residents will be informed when the statutory public hearing is scheduled. Project updates and supporting documents will continue to be available on the City of Yellowknife project website. Residents are encouraged to visit the website for updated information.

APPENDIX A -OPEN HOUSE DISCUSSION NOTES

The following is a near-verbatim record of the questions, answers and comments documented during the Kam Lake Area Development Plan open house. Minor edits have been made for spelling, grammar, punctuation and readability. Notes recorded by different members of the project team have been grouped under related topics. Some questions were not answered during the open house, and some responses reflect the information available at the time rather than a final technical position.

Legend

- **Q – Question:** A question raised during the open house
- **A – Answer:** A response provided by the City or project team
- **C – Comment:** A comment, concern or suggestion shared during the discussion

Buffers and Grace Lake

Q: Will there be a sound buffer installed?

A: No. The buffer zone is a natural area between the Kam Lake development and Grace Lake.

C: The 30-metre buffer is not sufficient. A minimum of 100 metres was suggested, and the firebreak should not be considered part of the buffer zone because it does not help mitigate noise.

C: Suggestions were made to increase the buffer between the proposed development and Grace Lake North, potentially to approximately 100 metres. Some participants also suggested that the live-work area be designated for residential use only, rather than allowing industrial uses.

C: The City should not have been surprised by the Grace Lake development. Any successful city has demand for large waterfront lots. When the development occurred, there were no plans to expand light industrial uses up to the Grace Lake residential area, and the proposed development is unfair to those who invested in Grace Lake real estate.

Public Utilities and Municipal Servicing

Q: What are the specific facilities and services in the public utilities area?

A: The current plan is unconfirmed.

Q: Is the intention for these lots to be serviced with water and sewage, or to use trucked water?

A: This is unconfirmed at this time.

Q: If a lift station is installed, why is more land not being allocated to housing, given Yellowknife's needs?

A: A lift station is not confirmed at this time.

Q: Who should be contacted to ask if the lots will be serviced with water and sewage?

A: At this time, this cannot be answered. The public utilities area is being reserved to meet Yellowknife's future needs, but this does not mean the lots will be serviced.

C: Future municipal servicing was discussed, including whether a proposed lift station would support eventual full servicing of the lots. Future Department of National Defence infrastructure plans include extending utility services toward the airport.

Urban Agriculture

Q: Is urban agriculture permitted outside the specific urban agriculture area?

A: The map shows urban agriculture in beige, but it is not prohibited in other areas under the current zoning (Kam Lake zone).

Q: How will the exposed bedrock affect, or be dealt with, in the urban agriculture area?

A: Blasting is an option; however, development is still unconfirmed.

C: Bedrock along the urban agriculture area was raised as a concern. Blasting and levelling may help facilitate agriculture.

C: Concerns were raised about the presence of bedrock in the southwest portion of the site and its suitability for urban agriculture.

Q: What is the objective of identifying an urban agriculture area if it is not enforced through zoning, and can it be zoned differently?

A: No answer was provided.

C: If areas are enforced through zoning, banks will need to be notified so they know which projects they can provide loans for.

C: Questions were raised about the mechanisms that could encourage urban agriculture and live-work uses in the areas where they are shown, given the broad parameters of the Kam Lake Zone, which will apply across the whole area.

C: It was asked why urban agriculture is limited to a specific area of the concept plan when agricultural uses are already permitted throughout the Kam Lake Zone under the Zoning By-law.

Development Timing and Phasing

Q: What is the rough timeline to reach Phase 1 land sales?

A: Before 10 years, but this is not confirmed.

C: The speed at which lots can be sold and developed will depend on market conditions. This concept was designed to meet current needs; however, the plan will continue to be evaluated to determine if the live-work, urban agriculture, light industrial and commercial areas are practical and represent the best use.

Lot Sizes and Affordability

Q: Who are the targeted purchasers for the lots, and what are the expected lot sizes? Existing lots are large and expensive to develop, which limits the number of potential buyers.

A: Lots will be similar in size to, or smaller than, the existing lots in Kam Lake.

C: Similar or smaller lots would be more economical, as land in Yellowknife is very expensive.

C: Smaller lots would help reduce the risk entrepreneurs face when starting and operating a business.

C: Lot sizes should be comparable to, or smaller than, those currently found in the Kam Lake area. Lots in the Engle District are larger than what some businesses need.

Live-Work Development and Housing

Q: What does the phrase “live-work development” mean?

A: Mixed-use development consisting of low-impact industrial and commercial uses with a residential component within the development.

C: It was suggested that a residential component be required on lots sold and developed in the live-work development area.

A: The City can consider it.

C: Live-work development should be more clearly designated, such as through rezoning. It could also be made a condition of sale, although this could make the lots more difficult to develop and sell.

C: Questions were raised about the live-work area, including whether live-work requirements should be included as conditions within purchase agreements.

Q: With the expected population growth and temporary workers in Yellowknife, can the live-work area be increased?

A: A Community Plan will be published soon that will include residential development intended to address population growth.

Q: Housing needs outweigh light industrial needs. Is it possible to rezone part of the Kam Lake development for residential use?

A: The background on zoning was explained. Best practice is not to mix residential and industrial zones, and Kam Lake is already primarily an industrial area. The Market Study also identified a need for more light industrial and commercial zoning.

C: Some participants suggested that the live-work area be designated for residential use only, rather than allowing industrial use.

Wetlands, Trails and Natural Areas

Q: Why was the wetland selected for public use and the trail instead of the lake? The lake is more scenic than the wetland.

A: No answer was provided.

C: Why not have the trail around the northern pond instead of the wetland?

C: It was recommended that the trail network be extended and connected around the pond and wetland area in the northwest portion of the site.

C: The trail was well received.

Q: If lots are permitted right up to the wetland, what research and measures will be taken to ensure the wetland is not affected?

A: The next step at the subdivision planning will be to look at the measures that need to be taken to ensure the wetland is not affected.

Q: What impacts and requirements will apply to developing lots near the wetland, and will they be different from other lots?

A: This will be assessed through development permit process.

Drainage and Grading

C: Serious drainage planning needs to be completed for the wetland.

C: A drainage plan will be completed in conjunction with the subdivision plan.

C: Questions were raised about whether the City intends to complete a detailed drainage and grading plan for the area and how development may affect the wetland.

Draft Concept and Further Review

Q: The audience is not confident in the areas proposed in the concept plan. Will further thought be given to the plan?

A: No answer was provided.

Q: Is there a possibility of extending the timelines to allow more time to analyze and improve the concept plan?

A: No answer was provided.

C: The presentation is intended to explain the plan and address the fact that Kam Lake is full, as well as the expected growth in light industrial and commercial needs. The areas shown are organized at a high level to allow these uses and harmonize with existing uses. This is not an official level of design, so some specific questions cannot be answered at this time. The concept will be refined further as the project advances.

C: Planning for Kam Lake has been underway for some time and is part of the broader Community Plan effort. The City has considered the continuation of industrial and commercial development in this area for some time. Residential growth is planned for other areas. Demand exists, but the surrounding context is also important.

C: Historically, when planning gets ahead of public engagement, Council may vote in favour despite public comments because significant work has already been completed.

Economic Development and Demand

Q: Has the City assessed if this is the best route for generating the greatest economic growth?

A: A Market Study was completed and assessed Yellowknife's commercial needs.

C: As a business owner, there are no other areas available for light industrial uses in Yellowknife.

Q: How will the major projects underway outside Yellowknife lead to an increase in population and demand for industry within Yellowknife?

A: The Market Study was completed before the major projects were announced and identified demand even without those projects.

C: The City is seeking information from the Department of National Defence regarding staffing levels. It is understood that the Department of National Defence-related workers may be located in Yellowknife temporarily.

C: Questions were raised about whether work camps should be permitted in both the Kam Lake and Engle areas.

C: Participants asked if the City has assessed the potential revenue associated with the proposed development.

C: Questions were raised about the financial viability of the subdivision and the potential cost implications for taxpayers.

Climate and Environmental Considerations

C: Environmental due diligence needs to occur. If emissions increase because of this project, emissions should be reduced elsewhere.

C: The concept plan should align with the City's Climate Action Plan and consider opportunities to support a low- or zero-emission development area.

Roads, Access and Traffic

Q: What is the plan for the area shown in white on the Kam Lake development concept map? If the plan includes a road and increased traffic, there will be public opposition.

A: No answer was recorded.

C: Concerns were raised about creating a road connection in the far southwest corner that would connect to Grace Lake Boulevard.

Wildfire Resilience and Firebreaks

Q: What is the current plan for the firebreak if the buffer zone is intended to remain a natural area? Has the City incorporated the firebreak into the plan, and will it be revegetated?

A: The City will confirm if the specific firebreak exists and how it will be incorporated.

C: Questions were raised about the firebreak behind the Grace Lake housing, including the long-term plan and which organization has jurisdiction.

C: Questions were raised about the City’s wildfire strategy, including the proposed and existing firebreaks and sprinkler systems. One participant noted that an existing firebreak overlaps with the proposed buffer area.

Q: What is the long-term plan for firebreaks in Yellowknife, and does the City currently recognize them as active firebreaks that are being maintained?

A: There are currently no regulations establishing firebreak maintenance standards.

Public Engagement and Decision-Making

Q: If comments are considered formal engagement, how will the comments be used?

A: Questions are being recorded, and there will be future public engagement sessions. This is not the end of the process, and the public is welcome to attend the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting and statutory public hearing.

Q: When the project reaches the subdivision planning stage, when and what will the engagement be?

A: There are different levels of engagement. There will be opportunities at each level, and development permits can be appealed.

Q: What happens with these questions? To speak at City Council, you need to be on the agenda at least one week in advance. How can residents be notified so they can submit comments and attend?

A: The City can send notice when the project is on the Governance and Priorities Committee agenda and when the statutory public hearing is scheduled, using the email addresses provided on the registration forms. Residents can also comment on matters before Council without being listed on the agenda.

APPENDIX B – EMAILS FROM RESIDENTS DURING PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

This appendix includes emails received from residents during the public comment period, which ran from **July 24 to August 7, 2026**. The emails are presented as submitted.

RESIDENT 1

Mr. Tatsuyuki Setta
Development Officer
City of Yellowknife

Dear Mr. Setta,

I recommend that you change the “Live/Work” area adjacent the lots along Grace Lake Boulevard to “Urban Agriculture” and maintain the “Buffer Zone”. The Live/Work area could go in the space currently designated Urban Agriculture. This seems to me to be a simple solution to the residents’ concerns regarding noise, lighting etc.

I also strongly agree with [REDACTED] comment at the Public Presentation on July 23rd that there should be no roadway connecting the proposed development to the current end of Grace Lake Boulevard.

RESIDENT 2

Good afternoon. I have reviewed the materials produced to date on the Kam Lake Extension and I, together with my spouse, attended the Public Engagement session on July 23. I certainly hope that detailed notes were taken by the Planning and Development staff, as there was a great deal of valuable and considered input provided by the members of the public that attended. This is in addition to the many constructive written submissions that have been provided by residents. I would hope that the concept plan as presented at the Engagement session is revised to reflect the input that was provided.

There were several key issues that were identified in the course of the engagement and I would like to reiterate several of them.

Has the need for light industrial and commercial land been clearly identified? The Market Study that was done is highly speculative and based largely on estimates, projections and extrapolations of historical statistics. There is no substantiated proof of land requirements, such as actual documented requests for "light industrial lots". There were a number of suggested alternate uses for the area, including single family residential housing lots in the southern ("Phase 2") portion of the area. This would certainly be more in keeping with the current Grace Lake development and would meet a critical housing need in the City. Given the huge subscription that occurs for any ballot draw for single-family residential lots in the City, there is clearly a need for these lots. Multi-unit or multi-family developments would be wholly incompatible with the current Grace Lake development. Light industrial or commercial lots could still be developed in the northern ("Phase 1") portion of the area.

There was a 30 meter "buffer" identified on the plan between the current Grace Lake Estate Residential area and the Kam Lake Expansion area. This is wholly inadequate to provide the quiet, pristine, natural setting that was promised by the City to the purchasers of the Grace Lake properties when they purchased and heavily invested personally and financially in those properties. It is particularly inadequate given that the area identified as "buffer" is currently within an approximately 50 meter firebreak that has been totally cleared of all vegetation. While effective as a firebreak, it is not even slightly effective to "buffer" a residential area from things such as noise, dust, light pollution and odours from an industrial area. The buffer should be at least 100 meters in width to be of any effect, and this should not include the current firebreak, unless the City is prepared to re-vegetate the firebreak if a new firebreak is built immediately to the West of the new development.

Adjacent to the area identified as "buffer" was an area identified as "Live-Work". This is described in the presentation materials as "a transition to commercial and industrial lands" and "A mixed-used (sp.) development consists of low impact industrial and commercial uses with residential components within the development". While the presentation suggested that what is intended by this is essentially a combined home and office in the same small building, there is no guarantee that this will occur with the current Kam Lake zoning. Rather than simply encouraging these "Live-Work" lots, they need to be specifically defined in the bylaw and enforcement to ensure proper use needs to occur. Otherwise, as one participant dramatically pointed out, there is nothing to stop the chain saw carver from using one of these lots to conduct his business immediately adjacent to the Grace Lake residential area.

The plan appeared to identify an access road at the end of Grace Lake Boulevard that connected directly to the roads in the proposed Extension area. This is clearly an error in the plan as it would be poor planning indeed to route industrial traffic directly through a quiet residential area. This access road should be removed from the concept plan and any development plan that is prepared for this area. Residents in the Grace Lake neighbourhood strongly oppose such road, particularly since the City promised them a quiet, pristine natural setting when they purchased and heavily invested personally and financially in their properties. Even if it was decided that such a road was needed for emergency purposes (which is unnecessary as there is adequate access to the area through other routes), the access road should be gated and only emergency personnel (fire department and police) should have the ability to open the gate.

There needs to be much greater enforcement of existing municipal bylaws in the current Kam Lake area and a commitment to do the same in the proposed Kam Lake expansion. As many commenters have pointed out, Kam Lake is currently "a mess" in terms of inappropriate uses and outright illegal activities. Bylaw enforcement needs to be proactive rather than simply reactive,

particularly given that the concept plan identifies a wetland area that is going to be preserved. Preservation of the wetland is only going to be possible by implementing grading, drainage, fuel storage, spill containment, water use and other requirements in the bylaws and enforcing those bylaws. In addition, regular water quality testing is going to be required to ensure that contamination is not occurring and fines and penalties levied if it does occur.

Unfortunately, this project has been plagued by an initial inherent bias when the City issued an RFP in early 2021 for engineering services to complete the design of the Kam Lake Industrial Expansion and administer its construction to begin in 2022. The RFP included a concept design, which placed industrial lots effectively adjoining the Grace Lake residential properties. While the then Mayor later stated that the RFP had been inadvertently released and was cancelled, that only occurred after many residents questioned the release of the RFP. Unfortunately, the perception still remains that City administration had made up its mind about the development long before any public consultation was done or considered. The public engagement survey that was subsequently done was confusing (eg. asking the same question in both a positive and negative context), biased (uses that should not have been included, others that should have been, but were not, such as green spaces, trails or single family properties which are so badly needed) and presupposed that not only was the development going to occur, but what type of development was going to occur.

Despite these obvious flaws in the process, the conclusion of the Engagement Summary Report states: "Overall, the feedback indicates a strong desire *[by residents]* for the City to prioritize transparency, enforcement, and community-centric planning in any new developments. The emphasis is on respecting previous commitments, preserving environmental and recreational spaces, and ensuring that any new development is based on a clear and demonstrated demand." Given the public perception that City Administration has a poor record of actually listening to public input as opposed to simply "checking the box" when it comes to public consultation, and given the seemingly systemic destruction of prime single-family residential areas within the City through poor planning and zoning or re-zoning decisions, there needs to be a careful re-thinking of the proposed Kam Lake Expansion to ensure that it truly meets the needs and the considered input of residents.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

RESIDENT 3

Hello Tatsuyuki,

Thank you for the presentation and subsequent discussion during Thursday's Open House on the proposed expansion of the Kam Lake industrial area. One of the issues raised during the Open House was the fire break constructed in 2023 and its necessary consideration during the current planning process.

I have reviewed the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared by BluMetric Environmental and noted the absence of any description or inclusion of the fire break in the report, despite the fire break being clearly distinguishable in Figures 1-4. As you are aware, the objective of a Phase I ESA is to assemble historical and current information to determine the likelihood of contamination and identify other human made or natural factors which may influence future use and development of the land. It is my opinion that the fire break should have been identified in the ESA as a major human made physical factor and must be considered when planning for future use of the area. Its absence is a significant oversight by BluMetric.

Barb and I walked the fire break area on the weekend. The fire break continues to be a major unnatural open space located immediately north and adjacent to the Grace Lake sub-division. Significant vegetation has not re-established itself and wood debris and brush continue to be scattered through much of the area. The average width along its length is estimated to be 50 meters, slightly greater than the 30 meters described during the Open House.

In my opinion, the existence of the current fire break must be considered in any plan for the Kam Lake area expansion. The existing fire break should not be considered part of the proposed buffer due to its unnatural state, general unsightliness and ineffectiveness to attenuate the potential impacts of adjacent industrial lots. If the fire break is to be maintained, the debris and other fire fuel materials should be removed. Overall, any buffer should be a minimum of 100 meters in width to be effective, plus the width of any retained fire break.

I have attached several pictures of the fire break taken over the weekend and the 2023 aerial picture provided to you at the Open House. I encourage you or your staff to visit the fire break and would be happy to accompany you.







RESIDENT 4

Dear Mayor and Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed Kam Lake Extension Area Development Plan.

My husband and I moved to Grace Lake in 2019 specifically because of the character of the neighbourhood. We chose Grace Lake for its quiet atmosphere, large estate-sized lots, access to trails, wetlands, natural open space, and the unique residential environment that is unlike anywhere else in Yellowknife. Before purchasing our home, we reviewed the City's planning documents and found no indication that a significant industrial expansion was planned immediately north of the Grace Lake residential area.

I want to be clear that I am not opposed to development. I am opposed to poor planning.

Consistency with the Community Plan

The City of Yellowknife Community Plan Bylaw No. 5007 contains several policies that appear difficult to reconcile with the current proposal.

Section 3.1.2 General Development Goals states that the City should:

"Reduce land use conflicts by providing clear policies that limit and mitigate incompatible uses."

The Community Plan also identifies Grace Lake as a low-density residential neighbourhood intended to support estate-style living and preserve access to natural features and recreational opportunities.

Section 4.7 Grace Lake specifically states:

"The land use in this area will continue to be low density residential."

It further notes:

"Other uses such as industrial and commercial activity will not be permitted."

The same section recognizes Grace Lake as a natural feature used by residents for passive recreation and commits to maintaining public access and recreational opportunities.

Meanwhile, Section 4.8 Kam Lake acknowledges that industrial and commercial activities may generate noise, vibration, emissions, outdoor storage, heavy equipment activity, and other nuisances that are often incompatible with residential uses.

The Community Plan therefore explicitly recognizes both the value of Grace Lake as a residential and recreational area and the potential incompatibility between industrial activities and residential neighbourhoods.

Industrial Land Supply and Demonstrated Need

The Community Plan states that existing industrial land inventory was expected to satisfy demand until at least 2035 and identifies the Engle Business District as the primary location for industrial growth.

Section 5.4.3 Industrial states that:

"Current demand analysis shows that there is enough industrial land supply to satisfy demand until at least 2035."

It further states that future industrial expansion would occur through continued development of the Engle Business District and future lands associated with that area.

When we purchased our home, these policy directions gave residents confidence that industrial growth would continue to be directed toward existing industrial areas rather than expanding into undeveloped lands adjacent to Grace Lake.

I remain unconvinced that the need for this expansion has been clearly demonstrated. We have also lost trust in the City since roads and development and RFPs were already started from Enterprise into the undeveloped area, seemingly doing this expansion of Kam to satisfy other business or backdoor promises already in the works.

Public Engagement Findings

The City's own public engagement process identified concerns that closely mirror those being raised today.

The Kam Lake Area Development Plan Public Engagement Summary documents concerns regarding:

- compatibility with residential areas;
- noise, dust, odours, and traffic;
- wetland protection;
- drainage and runoff;
- protection of recreational areas;
- transparency and trust; and
- whether sufficient demand exists to justify additional industrial land.

These concerns are neither new nor isolated (previously shared comments from 2021 below). They have been consistently raised throughout the planning process and should continue to carry significant weight in Council's decision-making.

Buffering and Land Use Transitions

One of the most significant shortcomings of the current proposal is the lack of clarity surrounding the proposed buffer.

The open house presentation repeatedly refers to an "adequate buffer" and a "natural buffer" between the Grace Lake neighbourhood and future development. It also states that a proposed "live-work area" would serve as a transition between Grace Lake and industrial lands.

However, nowhere does the presentation clearly explain:

- how wide the buffer will be;
- whether it will be permanently protected;
- what activities will be permitted within it;
- whether future roads, utilities, drainage works, or development could encroach upon it; or
- how it will be maintained over time.
- Or even how the current fire line will be incorporated.

Residents are being asked to support a concept rather than a defined plan.

I am also concerned about the introduction of the proposed "live-work" area. The presentation describes this as:

"A mixed-use development consisting of low impact industrial and commercial uses with residential components."

A live-work area is not a buffer. It is another form of development.

The City has not clearly explained what uses will be permitted, how "low impact" will be defined, what enforcement mechanisms will exist, or how conflicts with adjacent residential properties will be prevented.

More importantly, if the plan requires a live-work area to act as an additional transition between Grace Lake and industrial lands, that raises a fundamental planning question: If the natural buffer is sufficient, why is another layer required?

Conversely, if a live-work area is necessary to reduce conflict, does that not suggest the industrial lands are already too close to the residential neighbourhood?

Good Planning Requires Meaningful Transitions

Good planning typically creates gradual transitions between land uses.

The City itself recognizes this principle in other planning discussions. For example, planning conversations regarding the future evolution of neighbourhoods such as Niven have considered transitions between low-density and medium-density residential forms as communities evolve. This is a common planning approach because gradual transitions reduce conflict and improve compatibility.

The Kam Lake Extension proposal effectively moves from:

Low-density residential → narrow buffer → live-work development → industrial/commercial development.

That is not a meaningful transition.

A more appropriate transition would consist of:

Low-density residential → significant natural open space/environmental reserve/parks/trails/community gardens → lower intensity mixed-use development/or residential knowing it is backing industrial → commercial uses → industrial uses.

Such an approach would better align with the Community Plan's objective of reducing land-use conflicts and would better protect the long-term character of Grace Lake.

In my view, an adequate buffer is not a narrow strip of undeveloped land measured in tens of metres. A meaningful buffer would consist of a substantial permanently protected corridor of natural open space that preserves wetlands, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, and visual separation. **A buffer exceeding 100 metres, combined with protected open space, trails, community gardens, natural vegetation, or parkland, would provide a far more effective transition than the undefined buffer currently proposed.**

Environmental Concerns

I remain deeply concerned about impacts to wetlands, drainage systems, wildlife habitat, and the long-term health of Grace Lake.

The Grace Lake Development Scheme contemplated the preservation of natural drainage patterns and wetlands and recognized the importance of buffering residential areas from adjacent land uses.

The recently completed Environmental Site Assessment identified potential environmental concerns and recommended further investigation before development proceeds. Residents deserve a clear understanding of:

- how stormwater will be managed;
- whether runoff patterns will change;
- how wetlands will be preserved;
- how wildlife habitat will be protected; and
- how Grace Lake's water quality will be protected over the long term.

Once wetlands are disturbed and natural drainage systems are altered, those impacts may be permanent.

Recreation and Community Character

The lands north of Grace Lake are not simply vacant lands awaiting development.

They are actively used by residents for walking, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, wildlife viewing, and access to surrounding natural areas. They contribute significantly to the character of Grace Lake and to the quality of life that residents sought when choosing to live in this neighbourhood.

Grace Lake is valuable because it is different. Yellowknife benefits from having diverse neighbourhoods and housing options, including areas where residents can live close to nature.

Not every undeveloped parcel of land needs to become industrial land simply because it can.

Request to Council

Before approving the Kam Lake Extension Area Development Plan, I respectfully request that Council:

1. Demonstrate the need for additional industrial land beyond the existing industrial land inventory, not just fulfilling promises to potential land developers and a proper public process.
2. Complete and publicly release all recommended environmental, drainage, traffic, and supporting technical studies.
3. Clearly define the proposed buffer, including its width, permitted uses, and long-term protections.
4. Reconsider the adequacy of the proposed transition between Grace Lake and industrial development.
5. Protect wetlands, natural drainage systems, wildlife habitat, and water quality.
6. Preserve significant environmental and recreational lands adjacent to Grace Lake.
7. Ensure future land uses are consistent with the Community Plan's objective of reducing land-use conflicts.

Residents are not asking the City to stop planning for growth. We are asking the City to take the time to get the planning right before permanently altering a neighbourhood and natural area that cannot be replaced once it is gone.

Council should not be deciding whether development can occur in this area. Council should first determine whether the current plan represents good planning. In my view, the current proposal has not yet demonstrated that it does.

Sincerely,

RESIDENT 5

I attended the Kam Lake Open House a few weeks ago and just read the summary of the evening. I feel my comments are well reflected.

We are living in a new world order guided by the negative impacts of climate change: wild fires across Canada and Europe, hundreds of thousands of people evacuated, deadly storms, droughts and floods occurring on a regular basis. It is more than ever time to talk about climate "mitigation" (reducing greenhouse emissions) vs climate adaptation. When we start talking about climate change mitigation in the midst of a natural disaster, we are often told: it is too soon to talk about it when people are in the midst of an evacuation. So when is a good time? Maybe the new development planned by the City is a great opportunity to show leadership.

There is only one way out of the polycrisis we are in: we need to reduce our greenhouse emissions, drastically and yesterday! So, if the City is planning a large expansion which will undoubtedly increase our greenhouse emissions, we need to either reduce our emissions elsewhere or design the new development as Zero Emissions. Not reducing our emissions shows a lack of vision and a denial of the crises we are facing.

Yes, it is more costly upfront to build in a sustainable way with renewable energy, but you save in the long run. It is too expensive is no longer valid. Is there money to pay for the wildfire evacuations which are now a regular affair? Do we have money to help home owners who did not have home insurance? Do we have money to deal with the health impacts of the trauma caused by all these incidents? We pay now or we pay more later.

I would encourage the City to envision a Zero Emission new development. Let's get creative. Let's aim for a better future, and not just repeat same old patterns. This is a great opportunity to shine with a clear vision of sustainability and reduction of our emissions.

RESIDENT 6

Dear Council,

We are writing to express our explicit concern with your plan for the area behind Grace Lake Blvd. This current plan does not meet what most would accept as an acceptable green space between a residential zone and a mixed use zone - this idea also need to be clear. A 30 meter buffer zone is not enough for avoid light pollution or noise pollution- not to mention the possibility of chemical pollution. The terrain that buffers these properties behind is all rock and will carry any sound for a much further distance than you would expect. There are no trees or natural vegetation to help mitigate any sound from these properties. A better option for the area would be simply to allow houses. We already can hear quite easily the dogs at the corner of Kam Lake Rd and Curry Drive and those lots are situated at a much greater distance than a mere 30 meters.

We are opposed to this decision and this development as it stands and feel it violates the spirit of what the City sold to us approximately ten years ago.

Regards,

RESIDENT 7

Hello

After reviewing the Kam Lake extension concept plan I have some comments:

- The space set aside for public utilities is excessive in size. This space should be for commercial-industrial development with only the required spaces removed for utilities.
- On the West side of the wetland area, the road network appears to be minimal and would cause the lots to be very large when compared to other lots in the Kam Lake area. We have space for large industrial lots in the Engle district. Businesses requiring this type of space should be located only in Engle and not encouraged to set up in Kam Lake. Lot sizing and pricing in this extension should be similar to the Enterprise Drive extension from 10 years ago.
- The urban agriculture area should be shifted further North, away from the Grace Lake Residential development. The space adjacent to the Grace Lake homes should exclusively be for live-work lots.
- The buffer to the North of Grace Lake Blvd is actually an open fire break. This is an inadequate buffer and should be enlarged to include green space with trees.
- The road connection from Grace Lake Blvd to the extension roads should be removed. Adding this road connection would route heavy traffic through Grace Lake Blvd, altering its safety and intended use as a residential street.

Thank you,

RESIDENT 8

To whom it may concern,

Aug 07, 2026

I have added both of our letters that were previously submitted in October 2021 and June 2024 regarding the Kam Lake extension below. Our position on Kam Lake being extended into our back yard has not changed since that time and we are still opposed to this development going ahead.

Since 2021, when this was first proposed, nothing has changed in Kam Lake. There is no oversight whatsoever as to what happens there. If this development goes in behind our homes there is nothing stopping a person from having a junk yard, refrigerator trucks running 24/7 during the winter months (which we already hear and deal with on Enterprise Drive), dog kennels or sled dogs (that were promised by the City to be moved when Grace Lake development was first starting and lots were being established) and anything else you currently see in Kam Lake. We were sold on the area of Grace Lake as it was advertised by the City as having a **"dream home in a quiet, and pristine and natural setting"**. Kam Lake industrial park, doesn't feel "quiet, pristine, or natural". The City's website used to state **"Kam Lake Industrial Park allows activities and development that does not integrate well with residential street scapes and neighborhoods"**. I find it strange that we keep revisiting this when the City has already known and has stated the obvious.

At one of the meetings the residents were asking why can't we have a bigger buffer behind our homes. Most were asking if the Kam Lake Industrial Park can be extended north of Taltheilei Drive to keep "industrial like" activities together. Or at minimum extend out Nahanni Drive where the road is already semi pushed in a develop north of there. I think the fact that the city has still only proposed a 30 meter buffer says it all...The city is not listening to the residences and they don't care. They sold all the residents on Grace Lake of having a home in a "quiet, pristine and natural setting" only to back out on that promise after we have all invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to build homes in this area. On top of that we are currently paying almost \$11000/year in property tax (which includes the \$1900 increase just in the past year). Grace residents pay the highest residential property taxes and we have no services, and no one in the city who sees Kam Lake going in behind the most expensive properties in Yellowknife as an issue.

A larger buffer between the residential area and Kam Lake extension would protect the residents from noise, light, air pollution and potential run off (which we have seen happen in Kam Lake). I started above, and in our previous letters, we are approximately 500 meters from where there are refrigerator trucks running 24/7 in the winter (Manitoulin Transport/Grimshaw). When they are running it sounds like they are right in our back yard. There is also ARCAN Construction (previously Northern Builders) on Enterprise Drive right off of Grace Lake. When it is dark, every light they have in the yard is left on. Take 201 and 203 Grace Lake as an example. Both are right next to ARCAN and they have bright lights shining into those homes all winter long and when it is dark in the spring/fall. This is a perfect example as to what can happen. It would be zoned as "light industrial" right behind our home and we would have no recourse to stop a business from running trucks 24/7 or putting up lights similar to ARCAN on their property. Also, in 2023 there was a fire break put in behind our house. They came within our property line and cut all the trees down, which by the way have still not been cleaned up. Now with the trees down there is nothing to block light from these potential businesses. We have never complained about the activities or businesses that are on Enterprise drive, however, we are adamantly opposed to having businesses like these, which are considered "light industrial", 30 meters off of our property line.

We hope that you take our concerns seriously. If you wish to discuss further please reach out.

RESIDENT 9

Hi there:

As a resident of Grace Lake boulevard, I want to thank the City for letting their resident to engage in a proper manner. This new proposed plan seems to align better with current residential zoning.

One question that I have is: Why the Buffer Zone width is not in line with the Fire break specification (30m vs 50m).

I understand that 30m has been current practice for years. Climate is changing rapidly, perhaps should we keep the 50m firebreak?

Thanks