

**NWT Association of Communities  
2021 NEW Resolutions**

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**NWTAC Resolutions are divided into the following categories:**

**CATEGORY A      Territorial Wide Municipal Issues**

This category will contain resolutions on issues that are of a direct or indirect concern to all territorial Communities.

**CATEGORY B      Issues which Pertain to Regional Concerns Only or  
Are Not Within Municipal Jurisdiction**

This category will contain resolutions, which are of a regional concern only or are not within municipal jurisdiction. No action is taken on Category B resolutions.

**CATEGORY C      Matters Dealt with by the NWTAC in the Previous Three  
Years**

This category will contain resolutions relating to specific matters, which have already been considered by the NWT Association of Communities within the previous three years.

**2021-01      Amendment to Disaster Assistance Policy – Solid Waste  
Management Facility Fires**

**WHEREAS** NWT communities that are responsible for operation and management of a municipal solid waste management facility will not have adequate financial resources to support the cost of extraordinary, emergency firefighting and associated environmental protection related activities during a community solid waste management facility fire.

**WHEREAS** the cost of firefighting and environmental protection activities associated with a solid waste management facility fire will not be adequately covered through Northern Communities Insurance Program.

**WHEREAS** increasing environmental regulations are equating to significant costs associated with emergency firefighting and associated air quality and water quality monitoring and mitigation.

**WHEREAS** the GNWT has recently ruled that a disaster classification requires proof of widespread damage that affects a significant number of people's properties.

**WHEREAS** the GNWT has recently ruled that environmental contaminants resulting from a significant solid waste management facility fire do not represent a risk to the health, safety and welfare of residents.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the NWT Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to recognize extraordinary, emergency fires at solid waste management facilities as a potential disaster that can lead to significant municipal property destruction, significant environmental damage, and put peoples' health, safety and welfare at risk.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the GNWT's Disaster Assistance Policy be updated to include the specific indication that extraordinary, emergency solid waste management facility fires can be considered a disaster.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the GNWT's Disaster Assistance Policy's maximum assistance payable be increased from \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 to more appropriately cover the costs associated with or prevention of a community disaster.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the fiscal status of the community should have no bearing on the eligibility or amount of coverage under the GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy.

**CATEGORY A      CONCURRENCE**

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## **2021-02      Property Tax Forgiveness When Property is Destroyed by Fire**

**WHEREAS** in the event that an improvement is damaged or destroyed by fire and the damage or destruction is so significant as to render the taxable property unfit for further use or occupation, the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* grants the Council of a municipal taxing authority to enact a by-law to reduce or rebate a portion of the property taxes, upon application by the assessed owner;

**AND WHEREAS** the ability to reduce or rebate a portion of the property taxes when fire damages or destroys an improvement and renders it unfit for further use is a reasonable action;

**AND WHEREAS** the current requirement to enact a by-law to effect the reduction or rebate of a portion of the property taxes under these circumstances introduces additional burden and potentially significant time delays, and unnecessarily brings public attention to what can be a very personal tragedy;

**AND WHEREAS** the reduction or rebate of a portion of the property taxes on a specific property under these conditions is largely prescriptive and can be achieved administratively without requiring policy direction from the Council of a municipal taxing authority;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to consider amending the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* to enable the Senior Administrative Officer of a municipal taxing authority to approve, upon application by the assessed owner, the reduction or rebate of a portion of the property taxes when an improvement is damaged or destroyed by a fire that has rendered it unfit for further use or occupation.

**CATEGORY A      CONCURRENCE**

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## **2021-03      Accessibility Legislation**

**WHEREAS** accessibility in Canada is about creating communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers.

**WHEREAS** according to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, more than 6 million Canadians aged 15 and over (22% of the population) identify as having a disability

**WHEREAS** the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects a number of our rights and freedoms, including banning the discrimination of people with a mental or physical disability.

**WHEREAS** the Canadian *Human Rights Act* and the Northwest Territories *Human Rights Act* prohibits the discrimination or harassment of people on a number of grounds, including disability.

**WHEREAS** the provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia and Manitoba have provincial accessibility legislation and British Columbia has introduced provincial accessibility legislation;

**WHEREAS** the *Accessible Canada Act* received Royal Assent on June 21, 2019 and came into force on July 11, 2019 and many provinces are expected to adopted mirroring legislation;

**WHEREAS** Canada joined the United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in 2010. The Convention protects and promotes the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities without discrimination and on an equal basis with others.

**WHEREAS** Courts and Human Rights Tribunals have determined that meeting the *National Building Code* is not always adequate for individuals and building owners to ensure they are meeting accessibility requirements under Human Rights Acts.

**WHEREAS** there is no clear guidance for in the Northwest Territories on how to address accessibility in facilities and services.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Government of the Northwest Territories establish comprehensive accessibility legislation that enables all persons to participate fully in society without barriers by providing clarity of requirements and standards to be met throughout the Northwest Territories.

**CATEGORY A      CONCURRENCE**

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**2021-04      NWT Association of Communities - Climate Change Call to Action  
Building Resilience Through Thriving and Inclusive Communities**

We stand together as community government leaders, acknowledging that wherever we are in the NWT, we are on indigenous land and expressing our highest concern at the climate crisis that the world is now facing.

With average temperature changes between 2-4 times of the average global rate, NWT communities are on the frontlines of climate change and that this will have impact on every aspect of our lives.

As we urgently increase our efforts to reduce emissions, we must give equal and increased urgency to build resilience for the future. Permafrost thaw, wildfires, devastating storms, coastal and shoreline erosion, sea level rise are just some of the climate impacts already threatening our communities. Our communities are centres of culture, commerce and innovation, yet these same strengths make us highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

As elected officials we have a unique and important role to play in building resilient and livable communities. We are on the frontlines – often the public face of a community's response to a disaster or an extreme weather event. Residents and businesses alike look to us for leadership, guidance, reassurance and a calm voice of reason in stressful situations. Building community resilience will help to empower the community to pull together in the face of climate change and related events. At the same time, building resilience will allow us to make progress on equity, inclusion and social justice.

We are all experiencing the impacts of climate change in a very real way. It is easy to get overwhelmed by the sense of urgency around these issues, but as community leaders we must use this urgency as an opportunity for action and forward momentum, and most importantly the opportunity to approach these issues with new ways of thinking and acting together.

The steps needed to address climate change necessitates the remaking of society's systems, from energy generation to housing to transportation to education to land use. In that remaking there are powerful opportunities to create healthier, more equitable and more just communities.

To address the climate challenge we call on **all leaders** to:

- Ensure that all actions that we take are done through a lens of: climate change, decolonization, health and well being, equity and inclusion, racial and social justice and ecological integrity
- Empower and resource our communities and use our role as leaders to create

opportunities for education, connection to each other and the land, belonging, and community building.

- Enrich the fabric of our communities by building communities that create a sense of place and a strong sense of connection to the land.
- Leverage the interconnection of issues and look for opportunities to solve complex challenges that generate multiple benefits and solutions.
- Seize the pockets of brilliance in our communities that are coming from elders, youth and residents as grassroots solutions to our collective challenges.
- Invest in our collective resources to deliver short and long term solutions that will have the greatest impact and help us to go further, faster together.

Based on the Call to Action developed at the 2019 Livable Cities Forum in Victoria, BC

**CATEGORY A      CONCURRENCE**

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