

NWT Association of Communities 2025 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.

2025-01 Air Transportation

WHEREAS: Air Transportation services is responsible for the efficient delivery of passenger flights, freight to the isolated communities.

AND WHEREAS: Remote Isolated Communities are experiencing logistical issues that bring into question of the services performed by Air transportation to the remotely isolated communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: We are requesting that the GNWT conduct a review on Air Transportation to the remotely isolated communities affected by the services by air travel. A list to reference to:

- a) Scheduled flights
- b) Medical travel passenger seat availability
- c) Financial cost to airfare and cargo rates
- d) Travel to community-to-community routes

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-02 Create a Plan for the Future of the Northwest Territories

WHEREAS the economy of the North, and all of Canada, affects the services that communities in the Northwest Territories (NWT) can provide to their people; and

WHEREAS the current government of the NWT needs to give more decision-making power back to the regions so that communities can have more control over decisions that affect them; and

WHEREAS communities are now competing with each other for limited money and resources, which can hurt others, and this could be solved by having one clear vision and mission for the whole NWT; and

WHEREAS it is important for the GNWT and community governments to work together on a strong plan for the future that benefits everyone;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NWT Association of Communities ask the GNWT to lead a project to create a vision and plan for the future of the Northwest Territories. This plan should include ideas and input from all communities and Indigenous governments and explain where the NWT wants to be in 5 and 10 years; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this plan prioritize key issues related to Infrastructure, Environment and Climate Change, Education, Culture and Employment, Justice, and Health and Social Services and Executive and Indigenous Affairs with a focus on delivering equitable services to all, enhancing community health and wellness, and fostering economic growth that benefits all regions and individuals.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

WHEREAS the supply of electrical power to residents of the NWT is an essential service and serves as a key utility required for survival of communities and is a powerful agent and critical in almost all aspects of life including economic growth, social wellbeing and stability, improvement of health and livelihoods. It must be considered a vital service and be recognized as a service like water, education, health services and critical infrastructure - such as roads and airports and as such, is best delivered and managed by a government department accountable directly to the citizens of **the NWT**.

AND WHEREAS the Northwest Territories Power Corporation has continued to demonstrate that under their current crown corporation model, their inability to provide affordable and reliable electricity services to customers in a cost-effective manner through-out the NWT.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Minister responsible for NTPC and by extension the GNWT take immediate steps to complete a comprehensive review of organizational structure and operational efficiency review as well as an assessment of value-for-money evaluation of NTPC under its current model of management.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the review be undertaken by an independent party prior to any further significant management or operational reorganization and prior to approval of any pending rate increase applications to any regulating agency.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-05 Land is Vital for Municipalities to Grow their Communities and Taxbase

WHEREAS access to land is vital for municipalities to grow their communities and taxbase;

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Environment and Climate Change administers Commissioners Land and the land transfer process to municipalities.

AND WHEREAS municipalities understand and support any required duty to consult with affected Indigenous communities under section 35, of the Constitution Act of Canada, federal and territorial legislation implementing the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as well as all modern and historic treaties in the territory.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC urge the Government of the Northwest Territories undertake on a priority basis, the work necessary to undertake legislative analysis, options development, and engagement with NWTAC and its members to amend all relevant legislation to expedite the timely, legitimate, and practical transfer of Commissioners land to willing municipalities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED best efforts be made by the Government of the Northwest Territories to complete this work, including legislative changes, within the life of the 20th Legislative Assembly.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-06 Aurora College Community Learning Centre Closures

WHEREAS Aurora College recently announced closures of Community Learning Centres in 19 communities

WHEREAS there are huge educational disparities in the NWT.

WHEREAS Remote communities depend on local learning centres for foundational education and skills development

WHEREAS Aurora College has since released data and made statements that the Community Learning Centres are an outdated and inefficient delivery method

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Aurora College engage with the impacted communities to create alternative solutions that prioritize educational access

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Aurora College needs to design the replacement program before the Community Learning Centres are closed if they proceed with said closures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED indigenous, first nations and community governments have first right of refusal for the disposal of the building

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is conducting a review of the 2030 Energy Strategy;

WHEREAS the GNWT has recently committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, and that commitment will shape the revised strategy;

WHEREAS despite this increased focus on emission reduction, no objective metric or indicator has yet been articulated for affordability nor reliability of energy, leaving these critical aspects of the energy transition without clear metrics or a narrative to guide the process;

WHEREAS it is assumed that Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, calling to "*ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all*", applies to NWT communities;

WHEREAS climate change is already affecting NWT energy assets and the transportation infrastructure feeding them;

WHEREAS the ownership structures of these assets and infrastructures are fragmented and complex, adding an additional challenge to the holistic and partnership-based approach required;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the forthcoming renewed NWT Energy Strategy should:

1. Establish an end-user-oriented approach that reflects the distinct realities and transition pathways of the different stakeholders, including industry, communities, and the GNWT itself and its agencies and corporations;
2. Ensure that, regardless of the stream, end-users are treated as partners, adequately supported and resourced, and actively involved in decision-making so that energy transition advances climate justice;

3. Explicitly recognize that affordability and reliability are concurrent and non-negotiable goals, and define metrics or indicators to inform energy policy;
4. Acknowledge that the energy strategy is not solely about mitigation of emissions but must also support the adaptation of energy systems and assets, with resilience metrics helping different owners' action.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Strategy will clearly articulate levels of resources, including dedicated funding, and that the corresponding action plan will be released concurrently to ensure timely implementation and accountability.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-08 SUPPLY CHAIN ANALYSIS

WHEREAS Recent events like evacuations, low water levels, mild winters, and damage to infrastructure have seriously impacted on supply chains in the NWT and demonstrated their serious sensitivity to climate change

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GNWT have a Supply Chain Strategic Analysis completed for the entire territory including a risk assessment that includes among other things climate change and alternative routes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this analysis should also include recommendations to reduce this vulnerability

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-09 PELLET SUPPLY CHAIN

WHEREAS the GNWT already facilitates oil and gas resupply to many communities and

WHEREAS the GNWT also has the fostering of biomass in their Energy Strategy

WHEREAS It needs to be established that burn areas have the opportunity to be harvested

WHEREAS burn area harvesting will improve fire protection

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the GNWT foster and facilitate the delivery of pellets to communities and their subsequent delivery within communities

AND FURTHER THAT and analysis of burn area harvesting and its recommendations be implemented.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-10 EMERGENCY PLAN WORKING GROUP

WHEREAS in recent years, there has been an increase in the number of emergencies that have activated municipal and Territorial emergency plans;

WHEREAS with each activation, there have been lessons learned but there has not been a comprehensive opportunity to work together to address the lessons learned;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the GNWT form a working group comprised of at least representatives from the NWTAC and LGANT to review and update the *Emergency Management Act*; the NWT Emergency Plan; and emergency management processes.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-11 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 \$2,000,000 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.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-12 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.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-13 Building Code Act

WHEREAS at this time, the Northwest Territories (NWT) is the only jurisdiction within Canada without a regulatory building regime framework. Compared to our sister territories, the Yukon Territory and Nunavut, the NWT does not have any legislation that regulates construction in detail. The Yukon Territory has a *Building Standards Act* and Nunavut has a *Building Code Act*. The NWT does not have similar legislation, leading to an absence of clear building-related responsibilities for municipalities.

WHEREAS through the *Cities, Towns, and Villages (CTV) Act*, CTV's can choose to adopt by-laws to regulate the safety, health and welfare of people and the protection of people and property. Pursuant to this, the City of Yellowknife has chosen to create the Building By-law, that regulates local construction; however, the *CTV Act* does not formally define the building-related responsibilities and interconnection between the function of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and tax based municipalities.

WHEREAS a *Building Code Act* is different than a *Fire Prevention Act (FPA)*, and work on a *Building Code Act* should not be tied to the completion of the *FPA* review and update. Both Yukon and Nunavut have legislation regarding building codes and fire prevention.

WHEREAS individuals and developers are often frustrated because they need to deal with multiple regulatory offices for building plans, electrical permits, construction, inspections and occupancy. By having a *Building Code Act*, the clarity on who is the ultimate authority and how regulatory requirements are interpreted would improve the terms for development considerably.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) establish a comprehensive building regime for the purpose of providing regulatory clarity throughout the Northwest Territories.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-14 REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS AND DISABLED PERSONS PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ACT, R.S.N.W.T. 1988,c.50(Supp.), as amended

WHEREAS the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* grants municipalities the authority to exempt the eligible property of a senior citizen or a disabled person from part of the property taxes;

AND WHEREAS the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* requires other property owners to be dependent on the senior or disabled owner in order for the relief to apply;

AND WHEREAS the definition of dependent within the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* is vague and allows for a wide range of diverse and potentially conflicting interpretations;

AND WHEREAS the vagueness of this definition can create confusion and misunderstanding;

AND WHEREAS this confusion and misunderstanding may inhibit fair and consistent application of the tax relief provisions;

AND WHEREAS the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* determines eligibility strictly on the basis of age and/or disability;

AND WHEREAS the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* does not provide any mechanism for municipalities to consider financial need when considering eligibility for property tax relief;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to consider:

- (i) Amending the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* to allow municipalities to determine how dependency is defined and determined in situations where not all owners are seniors and/or disabled; and
- (ii) Amending the *Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act* to allow municipalities to define and apply a means test to ensure that property tax relief is directed at property owners who need it.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-15

Alternative Voting Methods

WHEREAS Section 52.1 .(1 } of the Local Authorities Elections Act authorizes a local authority, that is a municipality, to pass a by-law to provide for voting by way of mail-in- ballot or the casting of ballots at the office of the returning officer;

AND WHEREAS other jurisdictions within Canada allow for Alternative Voting Methods such as telephone voting and internet voting;

AND WHEREAS the acceptance of digital technology in society is increasing exponentially;

AND WHEREAS the use of technology can improve accessibility, enhance voter privacy and convenience, reduce ballot errors and increase efficiency of elections;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwest Territories Association of Communities lobby the Government of the Northwest Territories to amend the Local Authorities Elections Act to incorporate technological advancements and alternative voting methods such as, but not limited to telephone voting and internet voting.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-16 Wildfires

WHEREAS Localized drought conditions seem to cause more and more severe fire seasons;

WHEREAS Many NWT communities are surrounded by old-growth coniferous forests that are ready to burn;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED RESOLVED That the GNWT's department of Municipal and Community Affairs and Environment and Climate Change bring more resources and focus more on ways to safeguard our communities from wildfires and at the same time put a higher priority on bolstering emergency measures organizations in the community so they can better deal with the imminent threat from a fire threatening their community.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

2025-17 Highway Rescue and Ambulance Services

WHEREAS municipalities operate a full-time fire and ambulance service through the City of Yellowknife Fire Division;

WHEREAS municipalities also respond to calls for service outside of the municipal boundary;

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) has initiated a review of highway rescue and ground ambulance services within the territory;

WHEREAS community governments across the territory must prioritize their services with the funding available to them;

WHEREAS the cost recovery for emergency services provided outside of municipal boundaries may be difficult for a number of NWT community governments;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that until such time as the GNWT has reviewed the strategy for Highway Rescue Services (RA-17-13-05) and conducted a feasibility study towards a Territorial Ground Ambulance Service (RA-17-15-03), that the GNWT should adequately fund those communities conducting ground ambulance or highway rescue services outside of their respective community boundaries.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE

**2013-18 Review and Amendment of the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*,
R.S.N.W.T. 1988 c.P-10, as amended and the *Grants-In-Lieu of Property
Taxes Policy 21.09***

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Commissioner are not liable to taxation pursuant to Section 73(2) of the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*; and

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories makes grants in lieu of taxes pursuant to the *Grants-In-Lieu Of Property Taxes Policy 21.09* in recognition of the services it receives from municipal governments and to pay its share of the costs to municipalities where territorial property is located; and

AND WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories does not pay Grants-In-Lieu of Property Taxes on property it leases to third parties; and

AND WHEREAS municipal governments cannot sell territorial property to recover unpaid taxes against defaulting tenants and are forced to take other measures, including making court applications, to recover unpaid taxes and such actions often never allow a municipality to recoup the loss; and

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada is exempt from taxation pursuant to Section 125 of the *Constitution Act, 1867* but makes payments in lieu of property taxes to local governments; and

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada recognized that the term "grant" for the payments made in lieu of property taxes did not reflect the value of the services provided by municipal levels of government to federal properties and proceeded to amend the name of the act to "Payments in Lieu of Taxes"; and

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada recognized the difficulty encountered by municipal governments in recovering unpaid taxes against tenants of federal property and beginning in the 2000 tax year included a provision in the *Property in Lieu of Taxes Act* for municipalities to request a payment in lieu of taxes on federal property occupied by a defaulting tenant, after demonstrating that every reasonable attempt has been made to collect the taxes from the tenant without success;

AND WHEREAS various provincial governments have recognized the difficulty encountered by municipal governments in recovering unpaid taxes against tenants of provincial property and have included provisions in the applicable legislation to allow municipal governments to

request a payment in lieu of taxes if all reasonable attempts to collect the outstanding taxes have not been successful;

AND WHEREAS there have been instances where municipal governments have not been able to collect unpaid property taxes from tenants of territorial property and have not received any grant in lieu of taxes; and

AND WHEREAS the purpose of the grants made in lieu of taxes is to deal equitably and fairly with municipalities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to consider:

- (i) amending the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* and the Grants-In-Lieu of Properties Policy to allow municipal governments to request a payment in lieu of taxes if all reasonable attempts to collect the outstanding taxes have not been successful in accordance with what the federal and other provincial governments have already done; and
- (ii) changing the name of the 'Grants-In-Lieu of Properties Policy' to the 'Payments-In-Lieu of Properties Policy' to emphasize the territorial government's responsibility as a property owner to share in the cost of local government, rather than its generosity in making a payment which it is not legally obliged to make.

RECOMMEND: CATEGORY A CONCURRENCE