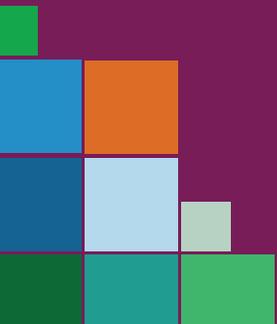




# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



**“WORKING TOGETHER  
TO ACHIEVE ALL THAT  
OUR COMMUNITIES  
WANT TO BE.”**





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report of the Northwest Territories Association of Communities. The report highlights our accomplishments, projects, and partnerships from the previous year. We are excited to share this with the members of our community.

The report highlights not only our accomplishments, projects, and partnerships from the past year but also provides an overview of how Northerners are combating issues such as climate change, wildfires and riverbank erosion. Our ability to persevere in the face of natural disasters as well as the economic and political challenges of these times demonstrates the spirit, strength and resolve of our communities and the collaboration of our colleagues.

As President of the NWTAC Board of Directors, I would like to thank everyone for your support since I stepped into this role following former NWTAC President and Yellowknife Mayor Rebecca Alty's election to the Parliament of Canada on April 28, 2025. (And, of course, a huge "congratulations" to MP Alty on her election!) It has been my honour to serve as President of the NWTAC Board of Directors these past 10 months, and I have enjoyed collaborating with individuals and organizations across Canada and the North, including our Board Members.

At the 2025 AGM, we thanked the returning board members and welcomed Mayor Patsy Klengenberg as our Vice-President for Charter Communities, Hamlets, and Tłı̄chq̄ or Community Governments and Directors Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault, Raymond Ruben Sr., Kathy Tsetso, Mike Keizer and Lyne Maisonneuve. MP Alty's election and my subsequent shift from Vice President of Cities, Towns and Villages to President required the appointment of an additional Director, so we welcome newly appointed Yellowknife Mayor Ben Hendriksen to our Board of Directors.

I'll close by thanking all our NWTAC members for your continued support of this invaluable organization as we work together to achieve all that our communities want to be!

President

Mayor Kandis Jameson



## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to present the NWTAC 2025 Annual Report at our 60th NWT Association of Communities AGM. As we take stock of the achievements of our 59th year, we are pleased with the progress we have achieved in promoting the objectives and initiatives that benefit our members.

Our communities, territory and nation face numerous challenges on many fronts including those posed by climate change such as flooding, riverfront erosion and wildfires, as well as the economic and political uncertainties of these times. We are committed in our ongoing efforts to present worthwhile initiatives, promote essential knowledge sharing, serve our members, and strengthen our communities via cooperation, solidarity, and togetherness – especially as we confront these shared problems.

The NWTAC continues to tirelessly advocate municipally, territorially and federally on behalf of our members on the critical issues of mental health and addictions, climate change and adaptation, economic transformation, affordable housing, and national sovereignty. Our purpose is to represent the collective voice of NWT communities by advocating for shared municipal objectives, highlighting the distinctiveness of our Northern area, and recognizing the obstacles we must overcome to live a healthy and productive life.

It is an honour to continue serving as the NWTAC's CEO, and I look forward to our Association's future endeavours. The board and our staff are dedicated to serving as your greatest advocates and offering support wherever and whenever possible. The NWTAC is your Association, and we are here to help. If there is anything we can do to help you, please don't hesitate to contact us.

In closing, I personally would like to say "Thank You" to the NWTAC Board of Directors and staff for their support this past year.

Sara Brown

Chief Executive Officer

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**President**  
Mayor Kandis Jameson  
Town of Hay River

## CHARTER COMMUNITIES, HAMLETS, AND SETTLEMENTS



**Vice President**  
Hamlets, Settlements and  
Charter or Tłıchq Community  
Governments  
Mayor Patsy Klengenberg  
Hamlet of Ulukhaktok



**Director**  
Councillor Tammy  
Steinwand-Deschambeault  
Community Government of  
Behchokq



**Director**  
Mayor Ray Ruben Sr.  
Hamlet of Paulatuk

## CITIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES



**Vice President**  
Cities, Towns and Villages  
Deputy Mayor Mike Keizer  
Town of Fort Smith



**Director**  
Deputy Mayor Kathy Tsetso  
Village of Fort Simpson



**Director**  
Mayor Ben Hendriksen  
City of Yellowknife

# NWTAC STAFF



**SARA BROWN**

Chief Executive Officer  
sara@nwtac.com



**CHRISTA DOMČEK**

Climate Change  
Community Liaison  
christa@nwtac.com



**YVONNE FLEMING**

Senior Financial Officer /  
Executive Assistant  
yvonne@nwtac.com



**MICHELLE ORTIZ**

Insurance Program  
Coordinator  
michelle@nwtac.com



**SHIRLEY FONTAINE**

Northern Communities  
Insurance Program  
Manager Coordinator  
shirley@nwtac.com



**BRAD HEATH**

Communications  
Coordinator  
brad@nwtac.com



**MIKI EHRlich**

Partnership Facilitator  
miki@nwtac.com



**SHEILA BASSI-KELLETT**

Policy Consultant  
sheila@nwtac.com

It was with mixed emotions that the NWTAC bid a fond farewell to amazing team members and dear friends NCIP Manager Karen Kuronen and Insurance Program Coordinator Sue Wyman who both retired during the past year. Although both are greatly missed at NWTAC, we take great pleasure in knowing that they are enjoying retirement!

# CLIMATE CHANGE PROJECTS

NWTAC staff have been working with many partners to strengthen support for communities to adapt to climate change impacts and mitigate their emissions. Below is a listing of initiatives that the NWTAC is leading and contributing to:

## CLIMATE CHANGE

- NWT Climate Change Council

## ENERGY

- Board of Arctic Energy Alliance – SRB
- Energy Partnership Table
- Collaboration with Pembina Institute to organize Conference
- Biomass Training Support

## ADAPTATION

- Various Grant Applications
- Permafrost School (CREATE LEAP)
- Hazard Mapping Standard Development & Promotion
- Flood Risk Management
- DMAF Funding to construct all NWT firebeaks (\$20M)
- SmartIce Update
- Liaison with Infrastructure Climate Change Lead
- Meetings with Senior Staff at ECC Climate Change Division
- Climate Change Preparedness in the North/ Climate Change Health Program
  - » Hosting Liaison Position
  - » Sitting on Committee

- Consultation on MACA's Infrastructure Vulnerability Assessment Project
- Sitting on the National Adaptation Strategy – Resilient Infrastructure Advisory Committee
- Community Planning and Climate Change Guide development
- Partnership Table Advisory Committee
- Secure funding for Wildfire and Riverbank Erosion Workshops Conferences
- Support GNWT Climate Change and Planning Workshop
- Support GNWT Climate Change Gathering
- Provide comments on GNWT Risk and Opportunities Strategy
- Provide comments on GNWT Climate Change Framework & Action Plan
- Winter Road Researcher meetings
- Yukon – Climate Change Forum Keynote Speaker
- Hazard Mapping Gaps Analysis
- Partnership on Clean & Cool Air Shelters
- Northern Infrastructure Standards Initiative – Standards Council of Canada

The NWTAC organized and hosted two highly successful workshops during 2025. These workshops demonstrated the value of our climate change risk-based partnership model, which pools resources and partners to support collaborative adaptation action on the most urgent risks facing communities. Financial support for the workshops, including travel funding for community government participants, was generously provided by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. To find out more about these workshops go to <https://eventsnwtac.com>.

## **NWT WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP (APRIL 23-25, 2025 IN YELLOWKNIFE)**

The devastating 2023 wildfire season exposed major gaps in readiness. The NWT Wildfire Preparedness Workshop was an important forum to collectively debrief, learn from each other and make plans for upcoming seasons. Over 120 people, including representatives from 25 communities, attended this first territory-wide event focused on community wildfire preparedness. Participants included community and Indigenous governments, community fire fighters, GNWT staff, and wildfire experts. The GNWT's Department of Environment and Climate Change (ECC) partnered on the workshop, contributing expertise and funding. Participants left energized to collaborate and build on the momentum, calling for urgent, coordinated action to strengthen community support and prioritize the timely development of a NWT Wildland–Urban Interface program.





# FEDERAL ADVOCACY

NWTAC continued to attend and participate in Federal meetings, consultations, and advocacy over the past year.

## FEDERAL ADVOCACY PRESENTATIONS AND MEETINGS

From October 20–24, 2025, the Northwest Territories Association of Communities (NWTAC) undertook an intensive federal advocacy week, meeting with 14 federal ministers, parliamentary secretaries, deputy ministers, associate deputy ministers, and senior staff.



This series of engagements provided an opportunity to advance NWTAC's message that strong, resilient communities are foundational to Canada's nation-building, sovereignty, climate adaptation, and economic transformation agenda.

### ACROSS ALL MEETINGS, FEDERAL OFFICIALS RECOGNIZED:

- 1) Northern realities require dedicated approaches: flexible, portfolio-based, and community-led.
- 2) Infrastructure and housing are enabling conditions, not stand-alone asks.
- 3) Sovereignty and climate resilience depend on thriving communities, not isolated federal assets.
- 4) Municipal partners are essential implementers with unmatched local insight and on-the-ground capacity.

**NWTAC successfully positioned itself as the unified voice of all 33 communities**, consistently demonstrating how investing in community governments directly advances federal priorities and facilitates the federal mandate to build infrastructure “at speeds not seen in generations.”

Our CEO, Sara Brown, continues to sit on the Canadian Infrastructure Council which released Canada's first National Infrastructure Assessment.

## FEDERAL ENGAGEMENTS

### MINISTERS

**Honourable Rebecca Alty**, MP for the Northwest Territories, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

**Honourable Eleanor Olszewski**, MP for Edmonton Centre, Minister of Emergency Management and Community Resilience, Minister Responsible for Prairies Economic Development Canada

**Honourable Rebecca Chartrand**, MP for Churchill-Keewatinook Aski Minister of Northern and Arctic Affairs Minister responsible for the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

### SECRETARY OF STATE

**Honourable Buckley Bélanger**, MP for Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill, River Secretary of State for Rural Development

### PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY

**Maggie Chi**, MP for Don Valley North Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health

### OPPOSITION MPS

**Scott Aitchison**, MP for Parry-Sound-Muskoka Official Opposition Housing Critic

### SENIOR PMO / MINISTERIAL STAFF

**Celine Yegani**, Prairies and North Advisor Prime Minister's Office

**Natalie Woodland**, Regional Advisor Office of the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

**Jaeda Schilke**, Regional Advisor Western and Northern Desk, Office of the Minister of Health

### DEPUTY MINISTERS / ADMS

**Paul Halucha**, Deputy Minister Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada

**Mollie Johnson**, Deputy Minister Environment and Climate Change Canada

**Jimi Onalik**, President Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency

**Rob Wright**, Associate Deputy Minister Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

**Natasha Kim** Associate, Deputy Minister National Defence



## FCM – ADVOCACY

The following are FCM collaborations that the NWTAC continues to be involved in:

- » Annual Conference
  - ▶ Co-Hosted “A Taste of the North” Reception
  - ▶ Speakers/Panels
- » Virtual Board Meeting
- » In Person Board Meetings
- » Northern and Remote Forum
- » Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation
- » Election Readiness
- Provincial/Territorial Association Meetings
- Lobby for replacement of Rail lines damaged in 2023 Wildfires

## FEDERAL ELECTION

The Northwest Territories Association of Communities (NWTAC) prepared a Federal Election Platform for the April 28, 2025 federal election in order to make prospective candidates aware of the issues that are of extreme importance to NWT Communities.

The platform was prepared by the NWTAC on the basis of the adopted resolutions of our organization, analysis of municipal governance issues and priorities for improvement of NWT economic and social conditions, and the priorities shared with partner organizations including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.



The Federal Election Platform is available on the NWTAC website at:

[www.nwtac.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/FEDERAL-ELECTION-PLATFORM-2025-WEB.pdf](http://www.nwtac.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/FEDERAL-ELECTION-PLATFORM-2025-WEB.pdf)

# TERRITORIAL ADVOCACY

Throughout the year, NWTAC has partnered and participated in activities with the Territorial Government and other Territorial Organizations.

## TERRITORIAL

- Board Meeting with Minister of MACA
- Regular Meeting with Deputy Minister and Senior Staff – SRB
- Ministerial Waste Reduction Committee – SRB
- Meetings with Department of Infrastructure ADM – SRB
- Territorial Funding Policy Working Group
- Red Tape Working Group
- Municipal Election Awareness
- Board update for Wildfire Prep (DM's of MACA and ECC)
- Review of NWT Emergency Plan
- Mayors and Chiefs Meetings
- Wilfred Laurier University
- Aurora Research Institute
- Purchasing Program Updates
- Pan- Territorial Association Meetings
- Plain Language Version of Advice to Researchers on Reconciliation
- Insurance Meetings
- Insurance Underwriters Meetings
- Board Meetings
- Strategic Plan Renewal
- NWTAC Board of Directors, CEO, and Policy Consultant participating with LGANT in a review of the GNWT's *Emergency Management Act* as directed by NWTAC Resolution 2025-10

# NWTAC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

## 2025 AGM

The 59<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held in Yellowknife from February 27 to March 1, 2025.

President Alty welcomed everyone to the AGM of the NWTAC. She thanked the sponsors of this year's AGM without whom our AGM could not be a success. She thanked the Board of Directors and staff for their hard work and dedication.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nomination Committee was chaired by Mayor Rebecca Alty and Mayor Kandis Jameson.

This year the positions of Vice President for Hamlets, Charter Communities, Tłıchq Government and Community Governments and Directors for both Cities, Towns and Villages as well as Hamlets, Charter Communities, Tłıchq Government and Community Governments were up for election.

### President –

Mayor Rebecca Alty, City of Yellowknife

### Vice President, Cities/Towns/Villages –

Mayor Kandis Jameson, Town of Hay River

### Vice President, Hamlets/Charter Communities/ Tłıchq Government/Community Governments –

Mayor Patsy Klengenber, Hamlet of Ulukhaktok

### Director, City/Towns/Villages –

Councillor Mike Keizer, Town of Fort Smith

### Director, City/Towns/Villages –

VACANT

### Director, Charter Communities/ Hamlets/ Tłıchq Government/Community Governments

– Councillor Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault,  
Community Government of Behchokò

### Director, Charter Communities/Hamlets/ Tłıchq Government/Community Governments

– Deputy Mayor Lyne Maisonneuve, Hamlet of  
Enterprise

## INTERACTIVE SESSIONS

- **Marine Transportation Services** – 2025 Operational Update
- **Canadian Security Intelligence Service** – Building partnerships to support resiliency against national security threats
- **NWT Recreation and Parks** – Funding, Clean Air, Staff Training
- **Aurora College** – Updates
- **Research Partners** – How can research partnerships help your community address pressing issues?
- **NT Energy** – Renewable Energy and Support for Communities
- **Housing Infrastructure and Communities Canada** – Support for Climate Ready Infrastructure
- **Federation of Canadian Municipalities** – Updates and Feedback
- **Local Government Administrators of the NWT** – Updates
- **Elections NWT** – Can we support your elections?
- **MACA** – On-line voting & Community Elections
- **ECC/MACA** – Solid Waste Facilities and Wildlife
- **RCMP** – Body Worn Cameras – Transparency & Public Trust

- **Centre for Indigenous Statistics and Partnerships** – Indigenous Data
- **NWT Chief Public Health Officer** – Drugs 101 & Smoking Cessation Support
- **NWTAC** – Funding and Partnerships to address climate change risks
- **Northern REACHE** – Resources for your Energy Projects
- **Arctic Inspiration Prize**
- **Thebacha Leadership Council** – Initiatives & lessons learned
- **EIA** – An Update on Service Integration & Integrated Service Delivery
- **MACA/HSS** – NWT 911 / Ground Ambulance
- **MACA** – Hosting Evacuated Communities
- **MACA** – Debris Management Plans
- **NWT Ombud & Acting Language Commissioner** – Addressing unfairness in the GNWT & protection of the NWT's 11 Official Languages
- **ECC** – Waste Reduction and Management: Spotlight on Compost!
- **United Way** – Emergency, Recovery, Community Planning support – We can assist
- **Federation of Canadian Municipalities** – Climate Adaptation funding priorities consultation
- **Arctic Energy Alliance** – How can AEA programs support you?
- **Canadian Urban Institute** – Technical Support for Climate Ready Infrastructure



# COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARDS

SPONSORED BY AON

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD – MARGARET IRELAND

Margaret Ireland is an elected Councillor and has worked for many years as the Resource Management Coordinator for Ttjets'éhk'edéll First Nation, or Jean Marie River First Nation. Margaret is widely known for her long-standing commitment to her community. She has been a trailblazer in tackling climate change and supporting community-led research. Most of her career has focused on helping Jean Marie River First Nation build resilience to the effects of a changing climate.

## COMMUNITY BUILDER AWARD – SAMBAA K'E FIRST NATION

For many years Sambaa K'e First Nation has been building partnerships and pioneering innovative approaches to protect the land and water, strengthen food security, spur economic development, and adapt to a changing climate. Back in 2010, they took a bold step forward by teaming up with various partners to assess their water resources and identify vulnerabilities. Years ago, the community made a firm commitment to building food security. In addition to food growing, SKFN has redoubled efforts to support intergenerational on-the land activities including youth and elder trapping programs and seasonal community harvesting initiatives. Sambaa K'e has also been at the forefront of climate change adaptation initiatives. SKFN is a long-standing leader in Indigenous-led conservation work.



## 2025 EVELYN KRUTKO MIGHTY WARRIOR AWARD – ELEANOR YOUNG

The Evelyn Krutko Mighty Warrior Award was inaugurated at the 2022 AGM. This award embodies everything Evelyn Krutko stood for: hard-working, honest, never giving up, a strong leader, and one that goes the extra mile. Eleanor Young's life's work has been a journey and a career marked by dedication, hard work, long hours and unwavering commitment. Her dedication was not just about putting the hours in. It was also her belief in the work she did for the people of the NWT. It was about understanding what decisions she made at her job and how it affected the NWT that made her stand out.

## HEALTHY COMMUNITY AWARD – TOWN OF HAY RIVER

The Healthy Community Award aims to celebrate an NWT community that encourages and supports residents in adopting healthy lifestyle choices by providing programs promoting physical activities, nutrition and social connections that foster positive mental health. The award includes a \$5,000 to the winner's community. Hay River has always been a vibrant community. But in recent years, especially after the challenges of COVID-19, natural disasters, and growing social health issues, the town has shown an incredible commitment to becoming a healthier place for everyone who lives here. The community of Hay River has come together to address these challenges in a thoughtful, strategic manner. In 2024, the town launched the Healthy Community Strategy, a comprehensive plan that will guide local health initiatives for the next decade. This strategy isn't just a set of ideas — it's an active, collaborative effort to ensure that everyone in Hay River has the opportunity to live a full, healthy life.



## ENERGY EXCELLENCE AWARD – HAMLET OF FORT MCPHERSON

The Energy Excellence Award celebrates an NWT community demonstrating leadership in improving energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The award includes a \$5,000 to the winner's community. Fort McPherson's journey toward energy leadership started several years ago when, through the Indigenous Off-Diesel Initiative, Richard Nerysoo stepped forward to lead the development of a Community Energy Plan. This plan set out a vision tailored to local needs and priorities—laying the groundwork for coordinated, informed decision-making and meaningful action on energy efficiency and renewable energy. From that foundation, steady progress has been made. Over the past few years, this community has seen a remarkable series of energy efficiency projects take shape.

## CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE AWARD – JEAN MARIE RIVER FIRST NATION

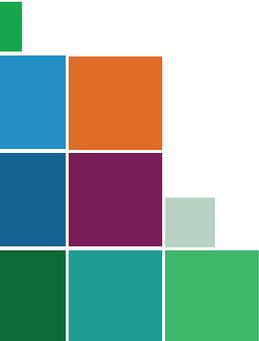
The Climate Change Resilience Award honours communities that take a proactive approach to the challenges caused by climate change and that have strengthened community resilience through their actions. It also celebrates NWT communities that demonstrate leadership in climate change adaptation. The award includes a \$5,000 to the winner's community. Tthets'éhk'édélj First Nation, also known as Jean Marie River First Nation, has demonstrated consistent leadership in climate change research and adaptation planning and action over many years demonstrates this vision and determination.

**PRESIDENT'S AWARD –  
KAREN KURONEN, MANAGER OF THE  
NORTHERN COMMUNITIES INSURANCE  
PROGRAM**

The NWTAC President's Award is a special award presented at the discretion of the NWT Association of Communities' President and Board of Directors. Karen Kuronen was the cornerstone of the Northern Communities Insurance Program for the past decade. Karen is someone the NWTAC could always count on, no matter what the situation. Karen's hard work, reliability, and constant sense of humor have left a lasting impact on everyone at the NWTAC. Karen was more than just a colleague — she was a friend, a mentor, and a presence that has made NWTAC a better place every day.

**ROLL OF HONOUR AWARD – COUNCILLOR  
ROBERT BOUCHARD, TOWN OF HAY  
RIVER**

The NWTAC Roll of Honour Award is presented to an elected official who has demonstrated exceptional commitment through 15 years or more of service to their community government. Robert Bouchard's commitment to public service is demonstrated by his 15 years on the Town Council, serving first from 1993 to 2005, and then again from 2018 to the present day. During his Council terms he actively contributed to the construction of the new aquatic center in 2006 and provided vital support during three separate community evacuations. Robert represented the community of Hay River as an MLA from 2011 to 2015. His involvement in local organizations such as the Hay River Golf Club and Polar Pond Hockey further highlights his commitment to the community's well-being.





## MEMBER SERVICES

The NWTAC provides several services and resources to its members, including:

- Member Advisory Services
- Purchasing Program
- SAO Hiring and Managing Toolkits for Mayors and Councils
- Human Resources Policy Suite
- Election Posters
- Pothole Advertising
- Anti-Littering Posters
- Anti-Vandalism Poster
- Sample By-laws
- Sample Tenders and Contracts
- Contract Reviews
- Tool Kits
- Election Resources

## MEMBERS ADVISORY SERVICES

NWTAC members have access to advisory services, including:

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### LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Member Communities have access to legal advice through the NWTAC partnership with Brownlee LLP.

- Informal verbal advice by phone on the Municipal Helpline
- 3 hours of prepaid formal legal advice/opinion per year
- Access to NWT licensed lawyers in litigation, corporate and municipal fields
- Development of resource materials for use by all members

**Call the Toll-Free Municipal Helpline at 1-800-661-9069**

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### PURCHASING PROGRAM

NWTAC members have access to the largest purchasing program in Canada. For more information on how your community government can join in the savings, please see the **Canoe Procurement** website and contact:

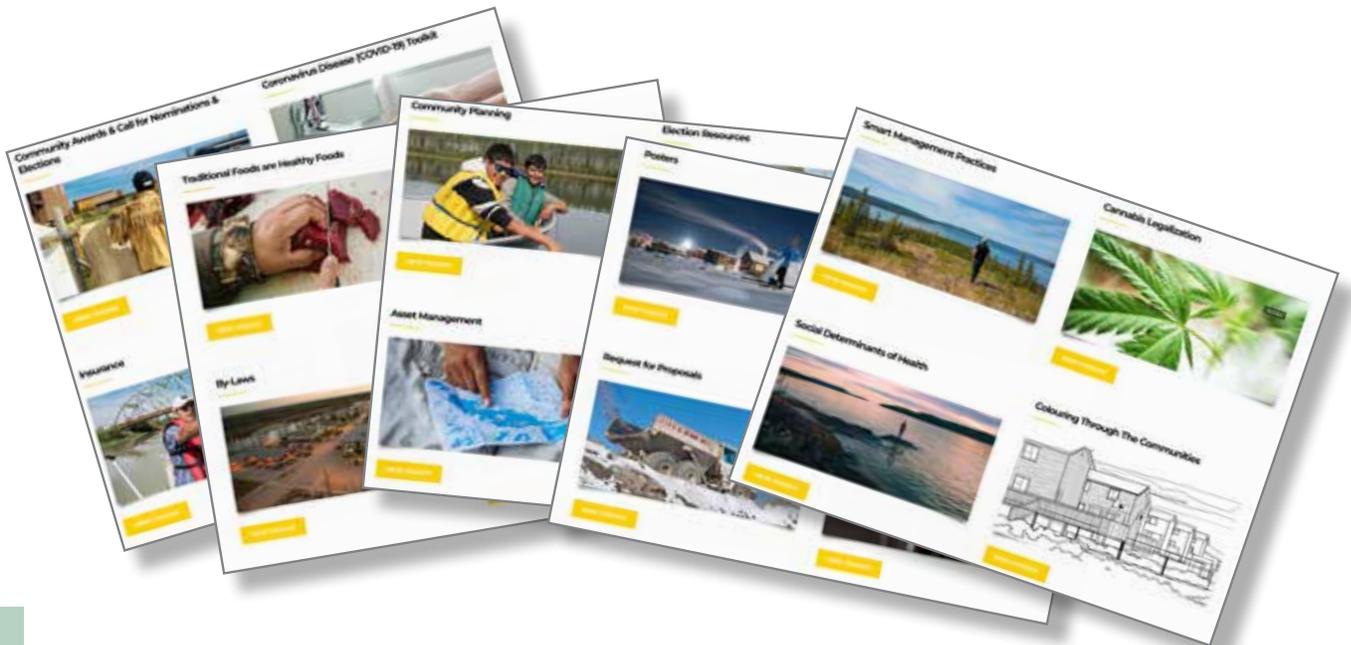
**Client Relations Manager at (780) 720-5145**

# TOOLKITS

## Toolkits available on our website:

- 2022 Climate Change and Asset Management Conference
- Advocacy Documents
- Asset Management
- Built Environment Guide
- By-Laws
- Cannabis Legalization
- Climate Change
- Communities of Research: Building Relationships & Reconciliation
- Community Awards
- Community Planning
- Coloring Through the Communities
- COVID-19
- Election Resources
- Energy
- Healthy Communities
- Human Resources
- Insurance
- Posters
- Request for Proposals
- Smart Management Practices
- Social Determinants of Health
- Tenders
- Traditional Foods are Healthy Foods
- Wildfire Resources

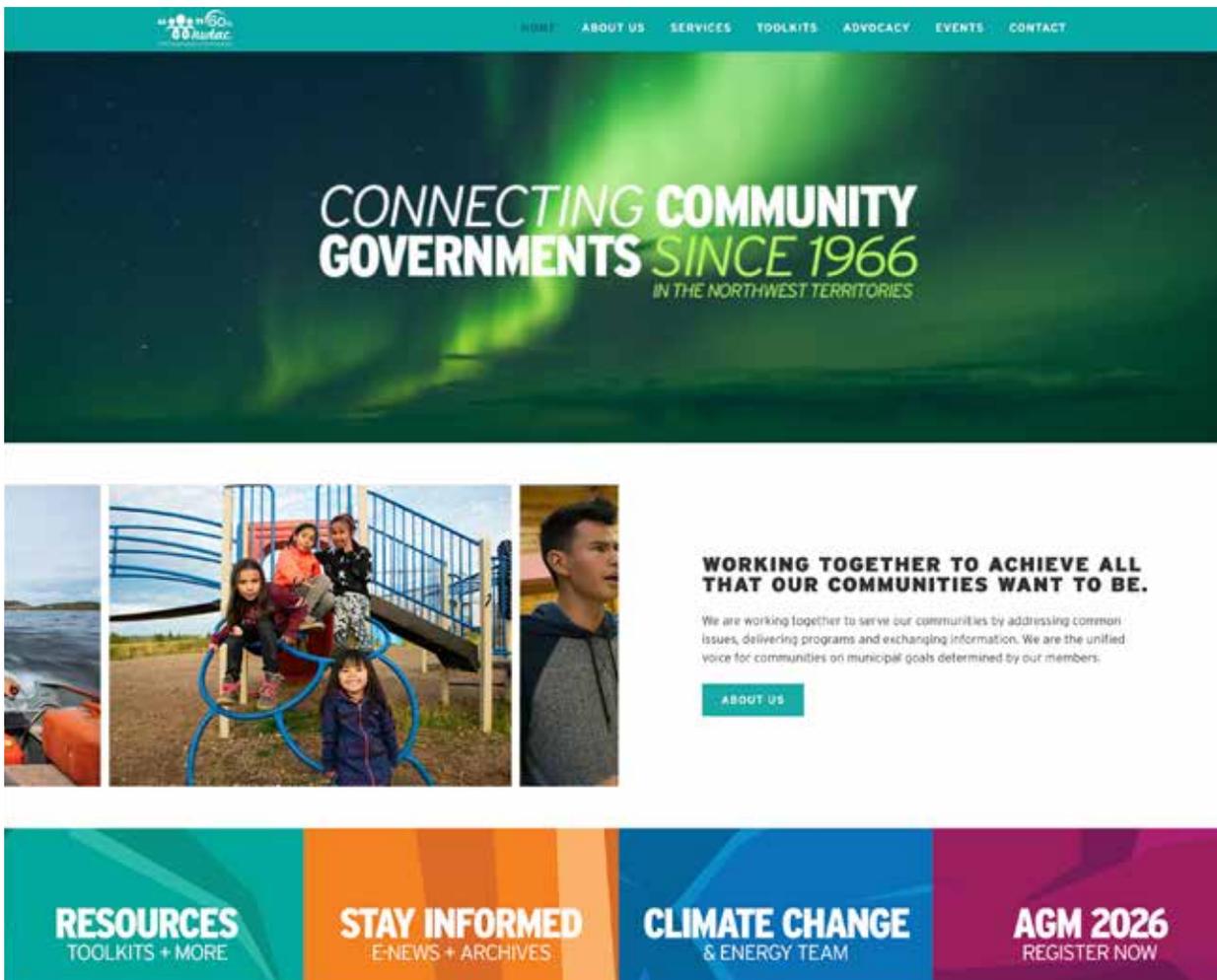
**CHECK OUT ALL OF THESE TOOLKITS AT  
[WWW.TOOLKITNWTAC.COM](http://WWW.TOOLKITNWTAC.COM)**



# OUR WEBSITE CONTINUES TO HOUSE OUR RESOURCES AND SHOWCASE OUR EVENTS AND PROGRAMS.

We invite all members to explore the site and see what we offer.

[WWW.NWTAC.COM](http://WWW.NWTAC.COM)









*NWT Association of Communities*

Connecting Community Governments Since 1966

200, 5105-50<sup>th</sup> Street  
Yellowknife, NT X1A 1S1

-  Tel. (867) 873-8359
-  [info@nwtac.com](mailto:info@nwtac.com)
-  [www.nwtac.com](http://www.nwtac.com)
-  [www.facebook.com/nwtac1966](http://www.facebook.com/nwtac1966)
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