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Nalini Naidoo
Director, Planning & Development
City of Yellowknife
4807 52nd Street, Box 580
Yellowknife, NT
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May 28th, 2019

Re: City of Yellowknife Community Plan

Dear Nalini Naidoo,

Thank you for extending an invitation for the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce to provide input on the City of Yellowknife's Community Plan review. We were pleased that our President, Kyle Thomas, and Executive Director, Deneen Everett, were able to attend the recent focus groups, hosted by Dillon Consulting Limited.

In addition to the feedback we provided during the focus groups, please accept this formal submission.

We believe that in planning for the future – the City of Yellowknife should pay particular attention to four key matters: the lack of commercial land availability, making better use of the spaces currently available, ensuring space is available for our community's diverse needs and preparing for potential development at the Yellowknife Airport.

We've heard from our membership that there is a significant shortage of commercial land available. For example, in our 2018 membership survey, 10.77% of survey respondents identified this as one of the most important issues facing their business. We recommend that the City of Yellowknife explore opportunities to create affordable commercial land that is zoned for a wide range of commercial uses.

In addition to zoning more land for commercial use, we recommend that the City of Yellowknife adopt strategies to make better use of the spaces that are currently available. The goal is to create flexibility so that current spaces become more appealing to developers. This could include:

- Up-zoning, or modifying zoning to allow for higher-value or more dense use;
- Expanding the range of permitted uses within each zone;
- Airspace development, specifically in the downtown core and on municipal infrastructure;
- In-fill, or allowing for development to occur on vacant or underused property, or between existing buildings, and
- Implementing policies and creating incentives to address vacant lots and decrepit buildings throughout the City, but particularly in the downtown core.



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Another important consideration is ensuring that the Community Plan accounts for our community's diverse needs, some of which may include – agricultural zoning, a visitor information centre with parking, affordable housing, tourism infrastructure, a business park, quarries, and water access for recreational and business opportunities, to name a few. We believe the key to success is flexibility and a land-use planning strategy that is based on research and market analysis.

In closing, we'd like to share our position on development at the Yellowknife Airport. Our position is that we're generally supportive of commercial development – we see this as an opportunity to increase commercial space (at potentially a low cost for the City of Yellowknife, depending on who pays for the required water and sewer infrastructure), as well as an opportunity for the City of Yellowknife to generate additional revenue through grants and payments in lieu of property taxes. However, we want to ensure that potential development at the Yellowknife Airport does not create an environment that will reduce the number of tourists entering the City and supporting local businesses.

When it comes to development at the Yellowknife Airport, we know the City of Yellowknife is in a precarious position and there's still lots of questions to be answered. We hope that the City of Yellowknife will consider the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce as a strong ally and lobbying partner in the coming months as we both work towards strengthening and growing the Yellowknife business community.

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Thomas, President
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce

Deneen Everett, Executive Director
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce

Submitted via email to:
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