

NWT Association of Communities 2010 Reaffirmed Policies Summary

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RA-10-09-01

Climate Change

WHEREAS communities across the north are starting to see the impacts of Climate Change in their communities;

WHEREAS recent studies have shown that there will be significant changes to the permafrost in the NWT in the future due to Climate Change;

WHEREAS studies have estimated that without mitigation, the damages due to permafrost degradation will be in the order of hundreds of millions of dollars;

WHEREAS municipalities and community members build infrastructure and buildings that are expected to have 50 or 100 year life spans and therefore their designs must address these anticipated changes now;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC establish a working group to determine what work has been done or is being done to look at building and various design codes and Best Management Practices to ensure that permafrost degradation is impacts are being considered and secondly make recommendations for addressing any identified gaps;

AND FURTHER THAT the NWTAC apply to the GNWT and INAC for funding for a staff person and/or consultant(s) to provide the working group with administrative support;

AND FURTHER that the Working Group should report back to the NWTAC;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOVLED that the NWTAC request that the Northern Territories Waste and Water Association be requested to complete a review climate change impacts on Water, Wastewater and Waste facilities;

AND FURTHER that the Northern Territories Waste and Water Association be requested to share its findings and any recommendations to address these challenges such as the updating of design criteria and manuals with the NWTAC;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC work with LGANT to create a forum for sharing of information, best management practices and ideas to address both reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the mitigation and adaptation to Climate Change; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC seek funding from the GNWT and INAC to host workshops to educate Municipal Councils and staff about the potential impacts of Climate Change on their communities.

RA-10-09-04

Mackenzie Valley Highway

WHEREAS the economies of scale of the construction of the Mackenzie Valley Highway concurrent with the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline are self evident; and,

WHEREAS a Year Round Community Supply Route will improve the economic viability of the area; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Inuvik encourages both the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada to take advantage of the concurrent construction of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and Mackenzie Valley Highway;

AND FURTHER THAT this motion be circulated to The Prime Minister's Office, the Minister of INAC, MP for the Western Arctic, The Premier of the Northwest Territories, the Minister of Transportation and the MLA's for Inuvik and the NWT Association of Communities.

RA-10-09-06

Training for community fire departments

WHEREAS it is extremely critical that all Fire Departments are appropriately trained and equipped; and,

WHEREAS one of the largest areas of risk to municipalities is the Fire Department; and,

WHEREAS most Fire Departments in the NWT are finding it challenging to ensure that their Departments are staffed, trained and equipped; and,

WHEREAS legislatively it is the Fire Marshal's responsibility to ensure that these program are in place; and,

WHEREAS there are many partners such as the Fire Chiefs Association, NWTAC and municipalities willing to work with the Fire Marshal's office to assist with the implementation of their mandated programs; and,

WHEREAS the continued success of the NORCIX program is directly linked to addressing these fire department deficiencies; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC ask the Fire Marshal's Office work with the Fire Chiefs Association and NWTAC to open up a dialogue regarding the condition of the Departments and how to ensure that training is delivered in an appropriate manner;

AND FURTHER THAT the NWTAC request the GNWT undertake a baseline survey to be performed by an external consultant specializing in Fire Service Assessments during which all communities are reviewed;

AND FURTHER THAT the NWTAC ask the Fire Marshal to work with the Consultant and the other partners to develop a work plan to address the deficiencies identified in the study.

RA-10-09-08	Plumbing inspections
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WHEREAS the GNWT provides for licensing, regulation and inspection services for gas and electrical installations, for the purpose of public safety and assurance of quality services; and,

WHEREAS licensing, regulation and inspection services are not provided by the GNWT for the installation of plumbing services and fixtures; and,

WHEREAS the lack of licensing, regulation and inspection services for plumbing is resulting in unnecessary maintenance and repair expenses for homeowners and others due to shoddy and substandard plumbing works; and,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWT Association of Communities urges the GNWT to immediately implement a licensing, regulation and inspection service for all new plumbing installations to a minimum standard of the National Plumbing Code of Canada, and that such services be provided to all NWT Communities by the GNWT, where appropriate.

RA-10-09-09	Year round access to gravel
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WHEREAS many communities do not have year-round access to granular sources; and,

WHEREAS the residents and organizations cannot do proper maintenance of roads and driveways so that municipal services cannot be properly provided;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC petition the GNWT to construct a year-round access road to the granular sources, which will reduce infrastructure costs to communities and enable them to successfully implement their capital plans.

RA-10-09-11

Bottled Water

WHEREAS bottled water consumes significant amounts of non-renewable fossil fuels to extract, package and transport water creating unnecessary air quality and climate change impacts; and,

WHEREAS it takes about three litres of water to manufacture a one litre plastic bottle of water; and

WHEREAS bottled water companies use municipal water and groundwater sources when a growing percentage of Canadian municipalities have faced water shortages in recent years; and,

WHEREAS although bottled water is distributed in a container that can be recycled, between 40% and 80% of empty bottles end up as litter and/or are placed directly into the garbage and take up unnecessary space in landfills; and,

WHEREAS tap water is safe, healthy, highly regulated and accessible to residents, employers, employees and visitors to Canadian municipalities and substantially more sustainable than bottled water; and,

WHEREAS some municipalities have enacted by-laws to restrict the sale and purchase of water bottles within their own operations; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWT Association of Communities urge all municipalities to phase out the sale and purchase of bottled water at their own facilities where appropriate and where potable water is available;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT municipalities be urged to develop awareness campaigns about the positive benefits and quality of municipal water supplies.

RA-10-09-12

**Review and Amendment of the
Commissioner's Land Act**

WHEREAS municipal corporations are encouraged to assume responsibility for disposal of land to the public, in keeping with the willingness and capability of the municipal corporation; and,

WHEREAS municipal corporations have the authority and capacity to administer by-laws relating to land disposal, zoning and land use, taxation, and as such are best able to assume responsibility for disposal of land in a fair and consistent manner which reflects the needs and priorities of the municipality; and,

WHEREAS there have been instances where land has been transferred in fee simple or lease directly from the Federal Government or the Commissioner to the private or public sector without providing first option to municipal governments; and,

WHEREAS the Land Lease-Only Policy prohibits the sale of Commissioner's Land in unsettled land claim areas to ensure that land claim and treaty land entitlement negotiations are not prejudiced;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to consider amending the *Commissioner's Land Act* and associated policies so as to ensure that all land transfers within the Block Land Transfer Areas that are considered by the Commissioner or the Federal Government be provided first to municipal governments that have expressed the desire to be responsible for land administration and have the capacity to dispose of land in accordance with land administration by-laws, thereby allowing the municipal government to determine if the land to be disposed of should first be transferred to the municipality.

RA-10-09-14	Fuel sales data
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WHEREAS under the Federal Gas Tax Agreement, all communities are required to complete an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan by March 2010; and,

WHEREAS one of the required components of an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is a Community Energy Plan; and,

WHEREAS the first step in creating a Community Energy Plan is to conduct a community energy and emissions baseline study; and,

WHEREAS the collection of fuel sales data by municipalities from individual suppliers can be very time-consuming and depends on the cooperation of each supplier; and,

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Finance has access to data on fuel sales by community;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Northwest Territories Association of Communities request the Government of the Northwest Territories to supply fuel sales data to each community in the NWT as soon as possible; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the President of the NWTAC send a letter to this effect to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs.

RA-10-09-15	Fire Underwriter Survey for Community Fire Protection
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WHEREAS Community fire protection is of utmost importance to the residents, businesses and Insurance industry throughout the Northwest Territories; and,

WHEREAS proper fire protection has a direct impact on the insurance premium that residents and businesses pay; and,

WHEREAS the insurance industry sets rates and determines coverage limits based on a “town grading method” for the level of fire protection in a community as determined by a properly accredited organization such as SCM Risk Management Services by means of a Fire Underwriter Survey; and,

WHEREAS only Fort Smith, Inuvik and Yellowknife have had a survey performed which occurred in the last 20 years (1989); and,

WHEREAS other NWT Communities were last surveyed in 1968 or earlier with a number of communities shown as having no fire protection because a Fire Underwriter Survey has never been performed;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWTAC urge the Government of the Northwest Territories to have a Fire Underwriter Survey completed for each Community prior to December 31, 2011 through an accredited organization, which is recognized by the insurance industry, to ensure all Communities are properly assessed and graded according to National insurance industry standards.

RA-10-09-16

Updated inventory of community infrastructure needs

WHEREAS in 2004, the NWTAC and Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) cooperated to research and produce Building Healthy Communities: A Plan for addressing the public infrastructure deficit in the Northwest Territories; and,

WHEREAS the infrastructure deficit including deferred maintenance in 2004 was estimated to be \$303 million and that by some estimates the infrastructure deficit has increased at over \$400 million by late 2008; and,

WHEREAS the Building Healthy Communities report was an incredibly valuable tool to demonstrate the need for capital dollars for NWT Community Governments and develop baseline information for moving forward; and,

WHEREAS the infrastructure deficit calculated in Building Healthy Communities was obtained from the GNWT's 20-year infrastructure needs assessment; and,

WHEREAS the Building Healthy Communities assessment did not include recreation and cultural needs of many communities due to the GNWT's fiscal capacity at that time; and,

WHEREAS in 2007 Community Governments assumed responsibility for developing their own capital investment plans, which are more reflective of each community's needs; and,

WHEREAS five years have passed since the last territorial-wide survey of community public infrastructure needs was undertaken; and,

WHEREAS the need for quality, up-to-date information is essential for sound fiscal and infrastructure planning by Community Governments, the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Federal Government;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC petition MACA to update the Building Healthy Communities report based on community capital plans and establish a procedure to update the report on an annual basis in time for consideration as part of the GNWT's annual budget consultations.

RA-10-09-18	Amendment of the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act, RSNWT 1988,c 50(Supp)
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WHEREAS the Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief Act, RSNWT, 1988, c50 (Supp.), as amended, provides that the Council of a Municipal Taxing Authority may, by bylaw, exempt the eligible property of a senior citizen or a disabled person from a part of the taxes where the senior citizen or a disabled person is the owner or part owner of the eligible property and ordinarily resides on it; and,

WHEREAS a bylaw adopted by a Municipal Taxing Authority shall not exempt from taxes the eligible property of a senior citizen or a disabled person who is a part owner of the eligible property unless the other part owner or all other part owners are senior citizens, disabled persons or dependents of the senior citizen or disabled persons; and,

WHEREAS in providing Property Tax Relief, Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons are encouraged to retain ownership of their homes and property, retaining quality of life, and both directly and indirectly minimizing the costs of seniors homes and seniors affordable housing; and,

WHEREAS in the adoption of such bylaws, a Municipal Taxing Authority is losing up to 50% of municipal taxes payable on such exempt properties, placing additional tax burden on non-exempt property taxpayers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NWT Association of Communities urge the GNWT to assume full fiscal responsibility for the provision of Property Tax Relief for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons, and that a Municipal Taxing Authority no longer lose municipal taxes as a result of providing Property Tax Relief for Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons.

RA-10-01-01	Eligible Categories under the Gas Tax Infrastructure Program
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WHEREAS The Government of Canada signed a gas tax agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories in November 2005;

AND WHEREAS The Government of the Northwest Territories signed a gas tax agreement with the community governments commencing the 2005/06 fiscal year;

AND WHEREAS The gas tax program was designed to provide funds for infrastructure designed for potable water distribution and environmental protection purposes such as energy efficiencies to provide savings by the reduction of fuel or electrical consumption.

AND WHEREAS The Government of Canada restricts mobile assets other than water/sewer/solid waste vehicles to transport water/sewage/solid waste and public transit to be eligible for this funding.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC urge the Government of Canada to expand the eligible categories for expenditures under the gas tax infrastructure program to include the purchase of hybrid mobile equipment used for municipal purposes.

RA-10-07-02

Community Funding Formula

WHEREAS the Government of the Northwest Territories has developed formulas for municipal operations, water distribution and capital programs;

AND WHEREAS there are several Northwest Territories' communities with separate community sites within their boundaries due to geographic barriers;

AND WHEREAS these communities require duplicate infrastructure and operations that require additional expenditures due to their multiple site requirements.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC encourage the Government of the Northwest Territories to develop a complimentary funding program that recognizes those communities with unique circumstances.

RA-10-07-06	Amendments to the Summary Offences Procedures Act
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WHEREAS communities in the Northwest Territories have the authority to issue tickets pursuant to the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* and the Summary Offences Procedures Act (“Act”); and

WHEREAS the Act does not currently establish a standardized parking ticket format that allows for official services to be effected by the placement of a parking ticket on a vehicle; and

WHEREAS the Act also does not establish a parking ticket as a legal document for Court purposes in and of itself, which requires an additional document to be sworn, nor does it allow for automatic convictions for persons who fail to either pay for or contest a parking ticket; and

WHEREAS amending the Act to allow for the above would improve the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and overall administration of the conviction process with respect to parking tickets.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Territorial Government to consider amending the Act so as to allow for the above described efficiencies to be achieved.

RA-10-07-12

Amendment to the GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy

WHEREAS Community members who are affected by a disaster as per the GNWT Disaster Assistance Policy must fill out a claim to receive compensation for damages from a disaster; and

WHEREAS elders and other residents don't have the funds to do repairs and then submit their paid invoices to the GNWT for financial compensation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC request that the GNWT include community governments in the screening process of applicant so that elders and other residents who can't afford paying for their repairs up front can still be considered for financial assistance under the Disaster Assistance Policy.

RA-10-07-13	Emergency Services
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WHEREAS emergency response services play a vital role in the health and safety of residents of the NWT; and

WHEREAS centralized dispatch services are the standard throughout North America and can save lives and property; and

WHEREAS community governments provide emergency services in cooperation with the GNWT but do not have the authority or capacity to provide centralized 911 dispatch facilities to meet North American standards.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the NWTAC urge the GNWT to formulate an implementation plan to provide 911-dispatch service to all households in the NWT.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the NWTAC urge the GNWT to formulate an implementation plan to provide 911-dispatch service to all households in the NWT.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the NWTAC urge the GNWT to adopt a phased approach for implementation, beginning in the regions with pre-existing telephone switching infrastructure suitable for 911 services.

RA-10-06-04

Building Inspectors

WHEREAS construction of new buildings both residential and commercial is done on an on-going basis in the NWT

AND WHEREAS structural integrity and occupant safety is a primary concern;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the GNWT create positions of building inspectors in all regions.

RA-10-06-07

Legislation governing ambulance and emergency services

WHEREAS we believe the responsibility of the government of the Northwest Territories is to provide legislation governing ambulance and emergency services for the citizens of the northwest territories; and

WHEREAS ambulance services effect the delivery of health services and as it is the GNWT's responsibility to provide health services for the protection of the citizens of the Northwest Territories, they must accept this as part of their mandate; and

WHEREAS it has become increasingly more difficult to provide these services from a community level through a lack of adequate legislation, funding resources, and personnel.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NWTAC direct the government of the Northwest Territories to develop legislation that provides an act for ambulance services for the entire territory during this session of the legislature.

RA-10-01-11

**Permanent Placement of a Community RCMP
Officer**

WHEREAS several remote municipalities have not had a permanent stationary police officer to effectively, monitor and enforce laws and various legislation; and

WHEREAS the absences of proper police protection can sometimes put un-due stress on community residents.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the Government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Justice, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other relevant government bodies within all levels of government for a permanent Police Officer in all remote communities within the NWT.

RA-10-01-20

GNWT Consultation with the NWTAC

WHEREAS the GNWT enacts legislation, regulations and policies that have both a direct and indirect impact on municipal operations; and

WHEREAS the NWTAM serves as the collective voice of all NWT communities and its Board of Directors is comprised of representation from Municipal Governments, Charter Communities, Settlements, Hamlets and Cities/Towns;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors enter into negotiations with the GNWT to develop a formal protocol defining a process for effective consultation with the NWTAC.

RA-10-01-07	Permanent Stationary Placement of a community registered nurse
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WHEREAS remote communities in the Northwest Territories are experiencing the deepest impact from the national nurses shortage, often leaving the community with no experienced health care provider; and

WHEREAS remote communities in the Northwest Territories already experience health standards far below the national average, the impact of the nurse's shortage has dramatically affected the overall situation in these communities.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwest Territories Association of Communities urge the government of the Northwest Territories, Department of Health & Social Services and other relevant governmental bodies to assist in ensuring permanent stationary placement of a community Registered Nurse in all northern communities within the Northwest Territories.

RA-10-08-01	Debt Limits
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WHEREAS the cities, towns and villages act requires tax based communities to obtain the approval of the voters each and every time money must be borrowed to finance a sub-division of land and;

WHEREAS the cost of conducting a plebiscite must be absorbed by the future purchasers of the sub-divided lands and;

WHEREAS short-term borrowing for sub-divisions is secured by the lands available for sale; not just general revenue from normal municipal operations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that communities should not have to go to the voters for sub-division borrowing if they meet the requirements of debt limits in the cities, towns and villages debt regulations.