

# Yellowknife Visitor Services Strategy

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FOR:



CITY OF YELLOWKNIFE

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# 1 Executive Summary

For over 25 years, Yellowknife visitor services has served as a key contact point for the community's tourism industry and has been a fundamental provider of destination and territory-wide information to visitors and the community while contributing greatly to the continued success of the business economies.

The Yellowknife Visitor Services Strategy serves as a plan of action to support and implement a new and effective visitor services model that will provide guidance towards a long-term and adaptable solution with the ability to influence visitor behaviour and positively contribute to the vibrant tourism industry in Yellowknife, the Great Slave Lake Region and Northwest Territories. This strategy will play a major role in ensuring Yellowknife remains competitive as a destination, adapts to consumer trends and maximizes influence on the visitor's demands and expectations.

An extensive review of the current situation, relevant best practices and market research was conducted to understand the opportunities for a sustainable visitor servicing model. Territorial and municipal government, First Nations, community business ambitions and values and the potential for a future community destination management organization were also considered.

Despite today's multi-channel approach to providing visitor services, the traditional means of welcoming visitors to a physical centre still provides the broad and positive economic impact to Yellowknife. While travelling to and from Yellowknife, visitors seek face to face interaction and the advice, information and guidance in their purchase decisions that the Yellowknife Visitor Centre Counsellors provide. This will continue to be a driving force in the creation of a memorable travel experience in the community and territory in the foreseeable future.

Essential to the considerations of an achievable strategy was the clear identification of available options. A thorough review of five various approaches were identified:

1. Iconic Gateway Visitor Centre
2. City Central Visitor Centre
3. Public Building Visitor Centre
4. New Construction
5. Decentralization

The recommendation of a City Central Visitor Centre has been customized to Yellowknife's unique situation and position within the Northwest Territories and is supported by a range of case studies and transferrable practices from other successful destinations. The Yellowknife Visitor Services Strategy provides a process, recommended governance model and implementation plan for the future delivery of visitor services while balancing the understanding of stakeholder contributions, available resources and the priorities of destination marketing and destination development.

## 2 Introduction

The tourism industry in Yellowknife plays a significant role by enhancing the prosperity of the local business economy, and by raising public awareness that Yellowknife is an attractive place to live, work, play and visit. Visitor spending contributes greatly towards the financial success of accommodation, retail, commercial, food and beverage, attractions and the entertainment sector of the local economy.

The Yellowknife Visitor Centre has been identified as one of the first locations sought out by the visitor and is often the starting point of discovering and exploring Yellowknife and the North Slave area. In the past year however, visitor information services have changed. Effective October 1, 2017, the previous entity responsible for providing visitor services, Northern Frontier Visitors Association (NFVA) terminated its service contract with the City of Yellowknife. A temporary Visitor Centre is currently operating inside City Hall through financial assistance of partners that include the City of Yellowknife, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) and other key partners.

Visitors have drastically changed how they plan vacations and use visitor information services when in the destination. International and national trends indicate a decline in walk-in traffic as visitors have quickly taken to using multiple sources to gain insights and information.

This Visitor Services Strategy takes direction from the broader [Yellowknife 2015-2019 Tourism Strategy \(June 2014\)](#) and dives deeper into behaviours and trends that focus specifically on the visitor experience when in destination. Significant effort, stakeholder input and community consultation was undertaken in the development of the 2015-2019 Tourism Strategy, and as such, this report builds off and aligns to the plan with specific focus on the best, most effective visitor services model for the future.

This strategy is designed to create solutions that maximize existing relationships and redeploy resources to initiatives that are uniquely suited to Yellowknife. Key learnings from the current operation provide foundational data, and best practice experience from other jurisdictions support the new program direction. Feedback from stakeholders was essential to gain insights and support and as such, government officials, complimentary business organizations, individual business operators and other interested parties were engaged.

The goal of a new Visitor Services Strategy is to develop and implement a model that will be executed effectively and efficiently and will play a pivotal role in building economic development through greater contributions to the visitor economy and be more in line with current trends. The strategy and new visitor servicing model should stay relevant to today's visitor and but look to the future providing the best opportunity to meet expectations around tourism revenues for Yellowknife in the years ahead.

This report is organized into the following sections:

**Section 1: Executive Summary**

**Section 2: Introduction**

**Section 3: Methodology**

**Section 4: Situation Analysis:** This section presents an overview of key trends and issues that are impacting or could impact growth and performance of Visitor Services for Tourism Yellowknife, including a review of the tourism industry, tourism in Yellowknife, Tourism Yellowknife’s Strategic Direction, trip planning and visitor behaviour, visitor services trends, visitor services in the Northwest Territories and Yellowknife, comparative review of visitor services in other jurisdictions, and a SWOT analysis.

**Section 5: Visitor Services Strategy:** This section outlines the options for visitor services in Yellowknife, including vision, goals, options analysis, the recommended solution, next steps and timelines.

**Section 6: Appendix**

### 3 Methodology

The following methodology was proposed and was used as a guideline to achieve the project goals:

#### Planning & Scoping

1. Inception Meeting
  - Facilitate meeting with project lead (and others as identified) to confirm project goals and gather relevant information
  - Determine list of key stakeholders to be engaged in the project
  - Understand partnerships between Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT), NWT Tourism (NWTT) and the City of Yellowknife
  - Understand position of Yellowknives Dene First Nations, Community Government of Behchoko and Tlicho Government
  - Obtain status on DMO and Accommodation Levy Legislation and understand timeline and implementation
  - Understand budget considerations, previous, current and future
  - Discuss timing of project, key deliverables and strategy
2. Project planning and set-up
  - Provide project plan with specific deliverables and time-line to ensure that project progresses forward and meets deadline

#### Research & Analysis

3. Situation Analysis and review of current research
  - Review all documents related to tourism and visitor servicing including but not limited to:
    - City of Yellowknife 2015-2019 Tourism Strategy (June 2014)
    - City of Yellowknife 2015-2019 Background Report (June 2014)
    - City of Yellowknife Destination Marketing Strategy (April 2016)
    - Visitor Centre data (based on availability)
    - Gov’t of NWT Tourism 2020 (Sept 2016)
    - Northwest Territories Tourism Marketing Plan (2017/18)

- Review applicable current research from external source governance and visitor servicing models including but not limited to Destination BC, Travel Yukon, Travel Alberta, Tourism New Brunswick, Tourism Queensland, Tourism New Zealand, Visit Britain, and various community models with similar size visitation and budgets.
  - Review applicable on trend visitor servicing tools and tactics i.e. LiveChat, Mobile Units, Global Greeter Network, kiosks and identify those best suited to servicing visitors to Yellowknife
  - Review technology implications and opportunities, understand wifi access
  - Develop a situation analysis that will provide an in-depth overview and evaluation of the current trends, opportunities or issues that are specific to visitor servicing in Yellowknife
  - Identify alignment with existing and future strategies and plans including NWT Tourism Marketing Plan to ensure visitor servicing strategies support efforts
  - Identify opportunities to deliver visitor services to key visitor types identified by Explorer Quotient (EQ) and by primary trip purpose (business, aurora viewing, general touring)
4. On Site Visit
    - Conduct onsite visit to:
      - meet with project lead
      - complete situation analysis
      - source possible bricks and mortar locations
      - conduct face to face meetings i.e. key stakeholder interviews
  5. Interviews
    - Conduct one-one interviews with key tourism stakeholders and if required conduct general online survey with broader group
    - Conduct interviews with external sources to confirm applicable details if required
  6. Organization Review
    - Review current situation, understand implications of dissolution of Northern Frontier Visitors Association
    - Review DMO Strategic Plan (if available)
  7. Asset inventory
    - Gather an inventory of visitor servicing assets including government owned and bricks and mortar locations and potential private sector partnerships.

### **Strategic Options**

8. Key Findings
  - Develop summary of key findings, implications and considerations
  - Develop notional direction including high level strategies and options
  - Submit to project lead for review and comment

### **Summary Report**

9. Write and Finalize Plan
  - Develop draft strategy for review including recommended model, objectives, strategies, priorities, tactics, timing, implementation plan, budget and performance measures
  - Provide draft to project lead for review and comment
  - Make revisions

- Provide final strategy and presentation deck
- Option to conduct in-person presentation of final strategy to City of Yellowknife

## 4 Situation Analysis

### 4.1 Tourism Industry Context

#### 4.1.1 Worldwide

Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world with international travel between countries representing the third largest export sector in the global economy. Based on data reported by the UNWTO, international tourism arrivals (ITA's) grew by an overwhelming 7% in 2017, reaching a total of 1,322 million. This momentum is expected to continue in the years to come, at a forecast rate of 4-5% annually.

Looking ahead, it is forecast there will be continued growth in the global tourism industry, growing at a much faster rate than the global economy as a whole and providing a source of growth for those countries that are able to attract today's increasingly diverse market of visitors.

The industry's continued growth has also resulted in increased competition among destinations including a rise of deepening diversification and emerging markets; not just travel destinations, but as sources of tourists as well. Asia is now the leading source of international tourists and it is expected to expand and play an increasingly important role in the tourism sector in the coming years.

North America is expected to continue to realize healthy growth, benefitting from increasing demand from Asia and the America's. The shift in exchange rates in recent years and the ability and perception of providing a safe and secure travel destination are considered the current contributing factors to the growth forecast.

#### 4.1.2 Canada

[Destination Canada](#) identifies tourism as Canada's top service export and in 2017 achieved a record-breaking 20.85 million overnight arrivals, surpassing the previous record set in 2002. Tourism generated \$41.2 billion in gross domestic product (GDP), up 6.3% from the previous year. Total tourism expenditures from domestic and international visitors in 2017 reached \$97.4 billion, also up 6.3% over 2016.

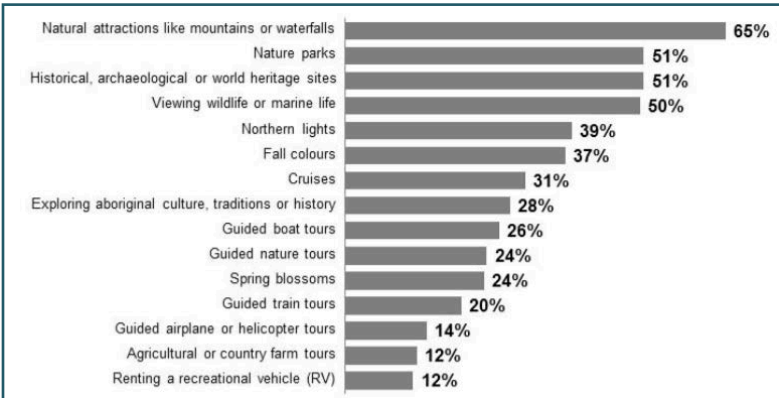
Despite the fact that Canada's current market share is not keeping pace with other countries on the global scale, it remains amongst the top twenty of most visited countries. Increased international visitation, favorable currency exchange rates, increased air capacity to Canada (7%) and increased marketing initiatives have set a platform for continued improvement. The share of international overnight arrivals to Canada from countries other than the United States reached an all-time high of 31% in 2017, up from 19% during the previous peak year of 2002. Overnight arrivals from non-US (overseas) origins (+7.2%) expanded at a pace slightly ahead of global international arrivals as reported by the UNWTO (+6.7%), with Destination Canada's ten overseas markets (+9.1%) expanding at twice the rate as non-Destination Canada markets (4%).



Domestic tourism expenditures gained 6.3% in 2017, which was primarily driven by passenger rail transport (+12.1%), vehicle fuel (+12.0%), passenger air transport (+9.7%) and pre-trip expenditures (+5.8%).

*“Domestic visitors present an opportunity to act as advocates for Canada and share their experiences” – 2016 Canada Global Tourism Watch Report.*

In terms of things to see and do, Canadian visitors are most interested in natural attractions like mountains or waterfalls (65%). They also show strong interest in visiting nature parks (51%), visiting historical, archaeological or world heritage sites (51%), and viewing wildlife (50%). Older visitors aged 55+ are more interested in natural attractions and historical sites, and less interested in nature parks, the northern lights, guided airplane tours, agricultural tours, and renting an RV. Younger visitors aged 18-34 are the most interested in the northern lights and renting an RV



### 4.1.3 Northwest Territories and Yellowknife

The tourism industry continues to play a significant role in the economy of the Northwest Territories and in recent years, the industry has reached record heights. Visitor spending surpassed \$200 million in 2016/2017 with approximately 108,500 visitors travelling to the region during this period. This is a twenty-one percent (21%) increase in spend from the previous year, with an increase of sixteen percent (16%) in visitation from the same period.

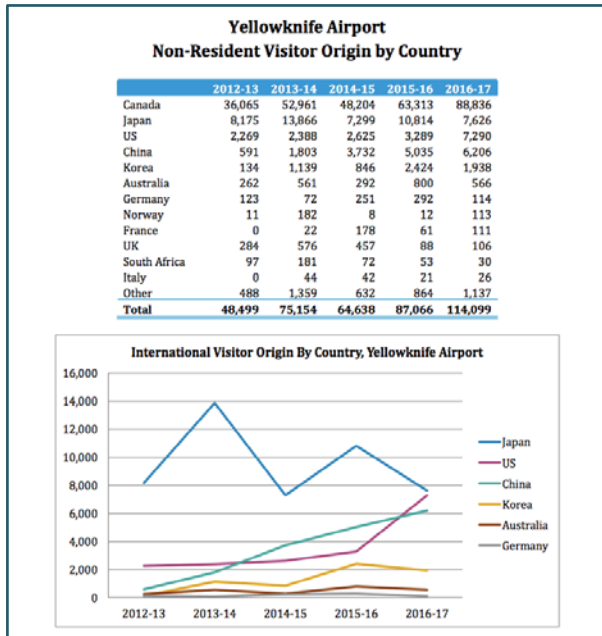
Northwest Territories Visitation Statistics						
Main Purpose of Travel	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Change
Aurora Viewing	15,700	21,700	16,400	24,300	29,800	23%
Fishing <sup>a</sup>	4,800	5,600	4,300	4,600	4,200	-9%
General Touring <sup>b</sup>	15,200	14,800	14,900	19,000	15,800	-17%
Hunting	500	510	510	510	480	-6%
Outdoor Adventure <sup>b</sup>	3,100	1,900	2,100	2,400	7,400	208%
Visiting Friends & Relatives	13,800	14,100	17,200	12,200	15,900	30%
<b>TOTAL LEISURE TRAVEL</b>	<b>53,100</b>	<b>58,610</b>	<b>55,410</b>	<b>63,010</b>	<b>73,580</b>	<b>17%</b>
Business Travel	24,100	35,300	29,400	30,900	34,900	13%
<b>TOTAL VISITORS</b>	<b>77,200</b>	<b>93,910</b>	<b>84,810</b>	<b>93,910</b>	<b>108,480</b>	<b>16%</b>

Northwest Territories Visitor Spending (millions)						
Main Purpose of Travel	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Change
Aurora Viewing	\$15.20	\$21.00	\$26.80	\$39.70	\$48.70	23%
Fishing <sup>a</sup>	\$11.60	\$14.00	\$9.30	\$9.70	\$9.20	-5%
General Touring <sup>b</sup>	\$12.60	\$12.60	\$14.00	\$19.80	\$19.30	-3%
Hunting	\$5.80	\$5.90	\$7.10	\$7.20	\$6.70	-7%
Outdoor Adventure <sup>b</sup>	\$6.00	\$4.10	\$6.00	\$7.00	\$21.40	206%
Visiting Friends & Relatives	\$8.40	\$8.90	\$12.00	\$8.50	\$11.30	33%
<b>TOTAL LEISURE TRAVEL</b>	<b>\$59.60</b>	<b>\$66.50</b>	<b>\$75.20</b>	<b>\$91.90</b>	<b>\$116.60</b>	<b>27%</b>
Business Travel	\$48.10	\$70.50	\$71.40	\$75.20	\$84.90	13%
<b>TOTAL VISITORS</b>	<b>\$107.70</b>	<b>\$137.00</b>	<b>\$146.60</b>	<b>\$167.10</b>	<b>\$201.40</b>	<b>21%</b>

Note: Last updated September 1, 2017  
Methodology Notes:

- a. Methodology and historical data revised in 2016-17
- b. Methodology for data collection was adjusted in 2016-17 to more accurately segment General Touring and Outdoor Adventure visitors. This adjustment must be taken into account when considering historical comparisons.



At the Yellowknife Airport, over 575,000 passengers passed through in 2016, a significant increase of over 7% from 2015. Over the 16-year period between 2000 and 2015, total passenger traffic increased at an average annual rate of 4.9%. Most traffic reports attribute volume increases to tourism; particularly the growing China tourism market, and higher business travel demand, including mine personnel.

The aurora-viewing sector is driving much of the growth and made up 27% of total visitors to the NWT in 2017-17, contributing nearly \$50 million to the economy. Outdoor adventure and leisure travel to the NWT has also increased with the ever-popular lure to iconic attractions that include wildlife viewing, Nahanni and the great lakes and the territorial and national parks. There continues to be a growing demand for high-end experiential travel with visitors willing to pay for a unique and authentic experience as evidenced by the increased visitation from Japan and China while the increase in direct flights from Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Whitehorse has aided in the growth from the VFR and domestic market.

The establishment of the Territories Conference Bureau, funded in part by the GNWT’s Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) was one of the recommendations of the Economic Opportunities Strategy. Since its establishment in 2014, there has been a significant growth in the meetings and conferences sector, contributing \$1.8 million in revenue for the territory.

Yellowknife markets itself as “*the best place in the world to see the northern lights*” due to the lands just below the aurora oval, a ring also known as the Earth’s geomagnetic North Pole above which the aurora appear. Add in a climate that sees little rain and a fairly flat landscape and Yellowknife makes for an excellent place to experience the northern lights, however, many other destinations are working hard to claim equal experiences. Iceland, Norway, Finland, Sweden and even Scotland are actively pursuing this adventure market, and all have much larger marketing budgets than Northwest Territories Tourism or the City of Yellowknife.

The significant growth also presents challenges. Accommodation vacancies are maximized during peak aurora viewing and some visitors are arriving in Yellowknife without accommodation. In effort to address accommodation shortfalls in peak season, disrupters such as Airbnb are increasing their share and there are concerns from operators regarding licensing which are similar to issues identified elsewhere in Canada.

Aurora viewing also presents a unique challenge in that the experience takes place at night, resulting in visitors sleeping during the day and emerging later in the afternoon to explore the area, often when local businesses are closing.

**Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**  
With limited resources and increased competition, this strategy needs to identify areas of collaboration and efficiency with NWTT. Consideration must be given on how to support visitors during peak periods and outside of the traditional business hours to ensure visitors have access to the information they need, resulting in a positive experience and lasting impression of Yellowknife.

**4.1.4 NWT Tourism Investment**

Since 2016, there has been an increased investment in tourism the Northwest Territories. The Tourism 2020 budget provides \$9.497 million over five years and aims to target an additional \$6.233 million in investment leveraging from other sources. Northwest Territories Tourism (NWTT) is the DMO contracted by the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) to market the NWT tourism industry. Through its refreshed *Spectacular Northwest Territories* brand, the organization uses a variety of strategies to help build destination awareness and to provide opportunities for operators to market their tourism products and services.

NWTT is active in several key domestic and international markets; primarily three geographic markets and six themes. Marketing activities of NWTT are directed at North America, German-speaking Europe and Asia-Pacific (mostly Japan and China) and focus on the aurora, parks and wilderness, lakes and rivers, people and culture, northern realities and meeting/convention/incentive travel. With the Territories continued development of indigenous tourism and further development of community tourism infrastructure, the territory is well positioned for continued industry growth in the years ahead.

**VISION**  
*The NWT is a premier travel destination, with a vibrant and sustainable tourism economy in all regions: sharing cultures and iconic landscapes with visitors from around the world.*

**MISSION**  
*To showcase the unique tourism potential of the NWT by offering innovative programs, services and experiences to attract tourists, encourage visitor spending and raise the profile of the NWT as a travel destination.*

**4.1.5 NWTT Strategic Alignment**

NWTT is directed by its five-year NWT Marketing Strategy “Towards a \$235 million NWT Tourism Industry” and operates from its annual Marketing Plan 2018/19. NWTT plans are aligned with the Government of Northwest Territories [“Tourism 2020, Opening our Spectacular Home to the World” \(September 2016\).](#)

**Tourism 2020** identifies visitor servicing as follows:

Visitor Experience Challenges

- visitor information centre service offerings are inconsistent across the territory and
- welcoming and directional (to attractions) signage needs improvement.

Focus 1: Visitor Attraction and Experience; Sustain Demand Through Visitor Experience Excellence

## Actions:

- Review existing models of service delivery at Visitor Information Centres and support service improvements.
- Support tourism services staff (Visitor Information Centre staff, hotel front desk clerks, etc.) to improve visitor experiences by improving delivery of information regarding tourism products and services available at the community, regional and territorial level.
- Improve the quality of tourism products through industry education and workshops.
- Work with Department of Transportation to strengthen ferry and road information, and signage, to support safe, informed and enjoyable travel for visitors.
- Develop a Welcoming Program by using existing programs and developing additional resources to make visitors feel welcome. This could include translating welcome signs into different languages, and providing visitor information for menus and brochures, etc.
- Continue delivering customized and comprehensive boat safety training for NWT tourism operators. • Revise and update the *NorthernMost* Host Program for customer service excellence.
- Provide support for front-line staff to become familiar with local tourism products.

### ***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

Clearly identify roles and responsibilities so as not to duplicate activities currently pursued at the Territory level. Look for ways to partner and collaborate.

## **NWT Five Year Marketing Strategy Towards a \$235 million NWT Tourism Industry**

### NWT TOURISM GOAL

To expand the NWT tourism industry and the economic benefit to participants in the industry, and to contribute to the economic development of the NWT.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the visitor spend to \$235 million by 2020
2. Strengthen and uphold the *SpectacularNWT* Brand
3. Lead with our best
4. Strengthen our partnerships to enhance marketing efforts.
5. Make digital marketing the centerpiece of all marketing programs
6. Strengthen how research and results drive our decision making

IN 2018-19 NWTT's one-year marketing plan focus on content and digital marketing with the following key tactical shifts that are directly related to visitor servicing:

- Reduced print presence and expenditure; the Explorers' Guide will be presented as a lure piece and will no longer contain any listings or advertisements.
- Increased content marketing efforts will focus new content into the planning and booking cycle all year long, as opposed to a single large integrated domestic campaign historically undertaken.

***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

As NWTT is the leader in attracting visitors, look for ways to partner to ensure that pre-planning services are delivered, for example, identify digital engagement roles and responsibilities. The City of Yellowknife may need to pick up demand for listing information, now removed from NWTT publications new format.

**NWTT Northern Tourism Industry Standards & Learning Program**

The Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut have established a Business, Market and Trade Ready Learning Program (BMT) to help northern tourism suppliers increase their global competitiveness when selling their products and experiences. The program outlines tourism sector standards for the three levels of readiness; business, market and trade. The learning resources are aimed to help businesses establish and maintain consumer confidence, help grow capacity in the northern tourism industry and promote a better understanding of the opportunities and requirements of working with the travel trade distribution sales channels.

The BMT- Ready program and tools help tourism suppliers better understand how applying standards can enable their business to access new marketing and distribution sales channels when they develop their policies, and administer their sales to meet expected service standards.

The BMT Standards training program is available online or can be taken through in-person workshops delivered in Canada’s North.

**4.2 Tourism in Yellowknife**

In 2014, funding was obtained from the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency to develop a tourism strategy for the City of Yellowknife and to identify how the City could most effectively support tourism. As a result, the *2015-2019 City of Yellowknife Tourism Strategy* was framed and adopted with the formal responsibility for tourism remaining at the City of Yellowknife and Economic Development. Current tourism activities include marketing, partnerships and promotions and visitor services. The City’s tourism related progress and initiatives are also motivated by the advocacy and activities of tourism and business related organizations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, the Hotel Association, etc.).

Prior to 2015, the City of Yellowknife and Economic Development undertook a range of tourism related activities and provided funding for tourism promotional initiatives that were conducted with key tourism partner organizations (i.e., NWT Tourism/NWTT, the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment/GNWT ITI, and the now defunct Northern Frontier Visitors Association/NFVA).

Today, the tourism industry is one of the fastest growing sectors of the Yellowknife economy. In 2016, there were over 70,000 visitors to Yellowknife with a spend of approximately \$90.5 million. This equated to a direct contribution of \$250,000 a day spent by visitors. By 2020, it is estimated there will be 85,000 visitors to Yellowknife, contributing \$300,000 per day to the local economy.

The benefits of spending to the local economy are multi-layered, with direct benefits primarily to hotels, restaurants, tour operators and transportation. With currently over 1,000 tourism-related jobs

in Yellowknife, there is also a benefit to local businesses, suppliers of goods and services as well as contributions to the local tax base.

The following tourism indicators describe tourism trends in the North Slave Region, including Yellowknife\*.

<b>Yellowknife Visitor Numbers - by Main Purpose of Travel and Fiscal Year</b>					
<b>Visitor Segments</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Aurora Viewing	5,400	6,800	7,305	15,493	21,191
Fishing	2,057	781	993	500	846
General Touring	9,941	8,841	9,330	10,507	10,210
Hunting	68	0	76	38	15
Outdoor Adventure	602	883	708	816	585
Visiting Friends & Relatives	11,289	11,519	10,105	12,113	12,610
<b>Total Leisure Visitors</b>	<b>29,357</b>	<b>28,824</b>	<b>28,517</b>	<b>39,467</b>	<b>45,457</b>
Business Travel	12,549	15,895	16,412	15,098	23,321
<b>Total Visitors</b>	<b>41,906</b>	<b>44,720</b>	<b>44,929</b>	<b>54,564</b>	<b>68,778</b>

<b>Yellowknife Visitor Spending (Millions) - by Main Purpose of Travel and Fiscal Year</b>					
<b>Visitor Segments</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Aurora Viewing	7.2	6.4	10.1	15.0	20.5
Fishing	4.0	1.9	2.7	1.3	2.3
General Touring	7.5	8.7	10.4	11.8	11.8
Hunting	0.9	0.0	0.9	0.4	0.2
Outdoor Adventure	1.9	2.7	1.6	1.6	1.3
Visiting Friends & Relatives	4.8	5.7	6.2	7.4	8.0
<b>Total Leisure Visitors</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>44.0</b>
Business Travel	27.8	31.7	32.8	30.1	46.6
<b>Total Spending (millions)</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>57.1</b>	<b>64.6</b>	<b>67.7</b>	<b>90.5</b>

\*www.itl.gov.net.ca

#### 4.2.1 Yellowknife Tourism Structure and Strategic Alignment

At this time, Yellowknife does not have an official tourism marketing organization or Destination Management Organization (DMO) and all activities currently come under the direction of the Policy, Communications and Economic Development department of the City of Yellowknife with informal and formal partnerships with NWTT and industry stakeholders.

#### 4.2.2 Yellowknife Tourism Strategy

In 2012, the City of Yellowknife commissioned the development of its first Tourism Strategy. The intention of the *City of Yellowknife Tourism Strategy* was to contribute to the achievement of the City vision:

*A welcoming, inclusive, vibrant and family-oriented City with a strong sense of community pride. We will strive to be self-sufficient while actively promoting economic development and tourism and protecting our unique history, culture and natural beauty.*

Chemistry Consulting was awarded the contract and executed a comprehensive strategic planning process which resulted in the [City of Yellowknife 2015-2019 Tourism Strategy June 2014](#). The overall

objective of the Tourism Strategy was to identify how the City could most effectively support tourism in Yellowknife over five years and three key goals were identified.

**Goal 1:** Enhance Yellowknife’s tourism management and partnership model. The potential of Yellowknife’s tourism industry is not being realized because a number of important tourism functions are not currently being filled, there is no dedicated tourism organization, and, stakeholders and operators are not communicating with each other as well as they could. These challenges can be addressed by filling important tourism function gaps, establishing a dedicated tourism organization, and improving communication between tourism stakeholders.

**Goal 2:** Increase destination awareness. Yellowknife can attract more visitors and/or encourage visitors to stay longer, by building its conference potential, raising its tourism market profile, and improving key visitor information tools.

**Goal 3:** Improve community tourism infrastructure and services. Once visitors come to Yellowknife it is important that they have a good visitor experience. While tourism service providers are responsible for the quality of the service and experience that they provide to visitors, there are a number of infrastructure and service initiatives that the City of Yellowknife can undertake in support of creating a positive visitor experience.

Important visitor servicing elements are found within each of the three goals;

- Goal 1: Structure and funding
- Goal 2: Visitor information tools
- Goal 3: Infrastructure

**4.2.3 Tourism Actions from Strategy Related to Visitor Servicing**

From the three goals, 25 actions (representing 18 initiatives) were developed. While all actions have indirect impact on the development of this strategy, the following are identified as having direct bearing on the strategy direction for visitor services. For a full review of all initiatives under each goal, see the Tourism Strategy.

**Actions in support of enhancing Yellowknife’s tourism management and partnership model:**

- Action 2: Pursue authority from GNWT to levy a hotel (tourist accommodation) tax. (Funding)
- Action 7: Engage local First Nations in Tourism (Partnership)
- Action 8: Establish a Convention and Visitors Bureau / DMO: (Visitor Servicing Management)

**Actions in support of increasing destination awareness**

- Action 13: In partnership with NFVA develop and deploy a summer mobile tourism kiosk (Visitor Servicing)

**Actions in support of improving community tourism infrastructure and services**

- Action 14: Help support and coordinate customer service training sessions in partnership with other levels of government (Training)
- Action 16: Improve tourism directional signage at key downtown intersections (Wayfinding)

While there has been some progress, the decision on the DMO and levy funding has left most actions in a holding pattern.

#### 4.2.4 Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and Accommodation Levy

In 2017, the City of Yellowknife formally requested legislative changes that would authorize the City to institute an accommodation levy. At the time of this report, the second reading has been passed, with the third (and final) reading scheduled for September 2018. Should the levy be successful for Yellowknife, the next step will likely be the creation of a Destination Management Organization (DMO) whose focus will be the development and implementation of a destination marketing plan and promotion for the city. The levy will be collected on the cost of overnight room accommodation that have four or more rooms for rent.

Based on current hotel rates, a Yellowknife Accommodation Levy could raise between \$350,000 (with a 1% charge), approximately \$750,000 at a 2% charge and approximately \$1.1 million at a 3% charge. Upon approval of the levy, various options for a DMO will be reviewed and considered. Based on projections, anticipated funds from the levy should start to flow to a designated service provider by Spring, 2019.

Traditionally, the funding of visitor services is separate from the funding of destination marketing. Both are recognized as very important in the travel cycle, however, destination marketing and visitor services have different mandates and goals as well as specific staffing expertise and day-to-day operating requirements. The purpose of a DMO is to market and promote the destination while the purpose of visitor services is to support and enhance the visitor experience. Both services work collectively to attracting, retaining and growing a tourism industry.

As stated, Goal 1 focused on the creation and development of a tourism model and Action 8: Establish a Convention Bureau/DMO spoke directly to the need for a DMO with a potential funding source of a hotel tax.

#### ***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

This strategy acknowledges the importance of the development of a DMO and funding model however at time of writing, neither the DMO or the levy is currently in place. This Strategy will endeavour to identify natural points of collaboration and makes its recommendations with the expectation that both the DMO and the levy will come to fruition.

#### 4.2.5 Yellowknife Brand Strategy

The “*Extraordinary Yellowknife*” brand was launched in March 2018 including a full brand refresh and website design.



The Extraordinary Yellowknife logo is the foundation of the new tourism brand identity. It conveys the incredible personality of the Northwest Territories’ capital city and hints to the awe and wonder of the Aurora’s slow swaying dance in the night sky. It evokes the relaxed ‘no big city stress’ lifestyle and a connection to Yellowknife’s natural environment.



**Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**

Design choices for infrastructure, digital communication, marketing materials and any other applications must align with the new brand strategy to deliver a cohesive message and maximum brand potential.

### 4.3 Trip Planning/Visitor Behaviour

#### 4.3.1 Overview

It is well documented there are significant shifts in trip planning and visitor behaviour over the past number of years as access to information and content has grown and social networks and other channels expand. This shift is important to visitor services as the use of the internet, mobile technologies and social networks for trip planning before departure has also created shifts in demand while 'in destination'. Some overarching thoughts on these changes and how they affect visitor servicing *in destination* taken from Destination BC's initial research are as follows:

- Travellers expect a multitude of trip planning information sources and they will use various methods to verify and sift through all of the information available to them. Multiple information sources are not only expected, they are preferred.
- While *in destination* visitors will continue to want to use word of mouth (locals, visitor centres and tourism businesses) and printed materials (maps, brochures and guidebooks) as information sources; word of mouth is the most influential.
- For some travellers while *in destination*, visitor centres represent an important source of word of mouth information and opportunity to gather printed materials. Other travellers (younger, those with children) are less likely to use visitor centres and rely more on *pre-trip* planning or online sources of information.
- The use of mobile devices will continue to grow for both *pre-trip* and *in destination* planning. Travellers' expectations of mobile device use while *in destination* should drive attempts to reduce barriers (especially for international visitors) for easy access to the Internet.
- Visitors are more likely to use mainstream information and applications (e.g. mapping, TripAdvisor) rather than destination-specific applications while *in-destination*.

#### 4.3.2 Trip Planning NWT

The 2010-2011 NWT Visitor Exit Survey Report (published June 2013) identifies the trip planning horizon for visitors to the NWT. Dependent on the activity, the range for thinking about a trip to the NWT was between six months – five years and the decision to travel ranged between three months and fifteen months. The NWT Road Visitor Survey Final Report (2016) also indicated that visitors planned their trip eight months in advance on average and made a firm decision to travel to the NWT four months in advance.

This relatively long lead time provides an opportunity for visitor servicing to engage with the visitor in their planning stage and offer additional information and ideas to influence trip length and spend.

Table 11 - NWT Travel Decision Making Timing:

When did you...	Start Thinking about a trip to the NWT	Make a firm decision to travel to the NWT
Aurora Viewing	6 Months Prior	3 Months Prior
Fishing: Guided	2 Years Prior	5 Months Prior
Fishing: Independent	8 Months Prior	5 Months Prior
General Touring	4 Years Prior	6 Months Prior
Hunting	14 Months Prior	10 Months Prior
Outdoor Adventure: Guided	3 Years Prior	7 Months Prior
Outdoor Adventure: Independent	5 Years Prior	15 Months Prior
Visiting Friends & Relatives	11 Months Prior	3 Months Prior

#### 4.4 Customer Service Trends

While customer service trends are larger than tourism visitor services, a few key trends provide insights to how consumers in general have expectations around service:

- There is a shifting focus from product development to experience development for big business (e.g. Apple, Starbucks). This is important because visitors and potential visitors will have the expectation of exceptional visitor services, especially because Northwest Territories is not perceived as a 'value' destination.
- There are evolving consumer preferences for customer service channels. From one-on-one, personalized channels (e.g. telephone) to self-service (on-line information) to crowd service (e.g. online help bulletin boards). Consumers expect consistent, high quality but fast information across multiple channels. (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Self-service Trends



Source: Forrester, October 2016; Digital Customer Experience: State of Industry and How to Win in 2017

#### 4.5 Visitor Servicing Roles

##### 4.5.1 Role as a Gateway

Based on the geographical location of Yellowknife and the types of enquiries being logged, Yellowknife visitor services does play somewhat of a role as a gateway information centre for visitors on their way into the Great Slave Region and beyond. Likewise, other visitor servicing centres in the NWT are providing information on Yellowknife, however, there is little evidence to suggest that Yellowknife visitor services is influential on what visitors do in the greater region.

Digital channels, review sites and other sources of information are more likely to influence the structure of a visitor's itinerary through the NWT and North Slave region. This makes Yellowknife a potential key touch-point for both air and road visitors and as a result, information about the NWT should be prominent. It is significant that there are only nine visitor servicing centres in the NWT and the opportunity for a strategic gateway centre in Yellowknife becomes a real consideration. To consider a gateway model that represents the Territory, the future location will have to ensure showcasing and sharing the stories of the Great Slave Region and NWT and have well informed staff to support this model.

#### 4.5.2 Visitor Services in the Territory

There are several types of visitor service offerings throughout the Northwest Territories, and each Centre has been designed to service the needs of the visitor and community. There are nine Visitor Centres in the NWT, and one in Dawson City, Yukon; six are funded by the GNWT. Each have distinct models including funding, partnerships and operations. As a result, the service offerings are inconsistent across the Territory and visitor centre data is inconsistently collected, making thorough analysis of the impact of visitor services in the territory, the region and the respective communities challenging.

##### Year-Round Visitor Services:

*Yellowknife* and *Norman Wells* offer year-round visitor services. In Norman Wells, the Norman Wells Historical Society offers regional information at their Canol Heritage Centre. The Museum and Visitor Information Centre also includes a retail store, carrying gifts and clothing, fossils and Dene crafts from the Sahtu area.

##### Seasonal Visitor Services:

Seasonal visitor centres are found at key points along major routes and highways. On Highway 1, the *60<sup>th</sup> Parallel Visitor Centre* is located close to the main campground. *Hay River* offers travel information at the Hay River Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre in *Fort Simpson* is operated by the Chamber of Commerce and includes a display of regional history, selling a selection of arts and crafts made by local artists of the Dehcho region. The *Blackstone Visitor Centre* located on Highway 7 is located at a campground and features regional history.

The *Western Arctic Visitor Centre* in Inuvik combines a unique regional display. The GNWT funds a Visitor Centre in *Dawson City* and features information on the Dempster Highway and Western Arctic Region of the NWT. It is located in a historic building in Dawson City, Yukon. There is also the *Nitainlaih Territorial Park Visitor Centre*, an interpretive centre displaying Gwich'in historical exhibits. It is located south of Fort McPherson on the Dempster Highway and open daily, early June until early September. The *Tsiigehtchic Tourism Centre* operates from June to August and serves visitors to the Mackenzie and Arctic Red rivers.

The following indicates the four operating models, building ownership and financial contributions from GNWT ITI for visitor services in the NWT<sup>1</sup>.

REGION	CENTRE/COMMUNITY	OWNER	OPERATOR	ITI FUNDING	
				16/17	17/18
Beaufort Delta	<u>Inuvik</u> Western Arctic Regional Visitors Centre	GNWT - ITI	GNWT – ITI	105,000	127,000
	<u>Dawson City, Yukon</u> Dempster Delta Visitors Centre	Parks Canada	GNWT – ITI	115,000	102,000
South Slave	<u>NWT/AB Border</u> 60 <sup>th</sup> Parallel Visitors Centre	GNWT - ITI	Contractor	104,000	99,000
Sahtu	<u>Norman Wells</u> Norman Wells Historical Centre	Norman Wells Historical Centre	Norman Wells Historical Centre	20,000	TBD
North Slave*	<u>Yellowknife</u> Yellowknife City Hall	City of Yellowknife – ITI	City of Yellowknife – ITI	161,000	161,000
Dehcho	<u>Fort Simpson</u> Fort Simpson Visitor Information Centre	Village of Fort Simpson	Village of Fort Simpson	50,000	50,000

1. [http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td\\_429-182.pdf](http://www.assembly.gov.nt.ca/sites/default/files/td_429-182.pdf)

\*Note: Previous to Nov. 2017, the not-for-profit Northern Frontier Visitors Association (NFVA) was the owner/operator of visitor services for Yellowknife. Despite the closure of the NFVA operations, ITI remained committed to financial contributions for Yellowknife.

## 4.6 Visitor Services in Yellowknife

### 4.6.1 Background

Prior to October 2017, the non-profit organization Northern Frontier Visitors Association (NFVA) was the entity responsible for providing visitor services in the city. The NFVA operated for approximately 25 years and received annual financial assistance from the GNWT and the City of Yellowknife for its operation out of the stand-alone Northern Frontier Visitor Centre located near the downtown core of the city.

In April 2017, the NFVA advised both the City and the Government of the Northwest Territories that it could no longer operate the visitors centre out of its building which was experiencing major structural issues. The NFVA relocated to a temporary, scaled down visitor servicing model in the neighboring Prince of Wales Heritage Centre in June 2017. One month later, the entity advised the City of its intention to terminate its service contract effective October 1, 2017.

With the pending change, and through continued financial assistance of partners such as the GNWT and the City, a short-term solution for the provision of visitor services in the main boardroom of City Hall ensured both a seamless transition and no disruption to the demands of serving and welcoming visitors to the City.

### 4.6.2 NFVA Operations

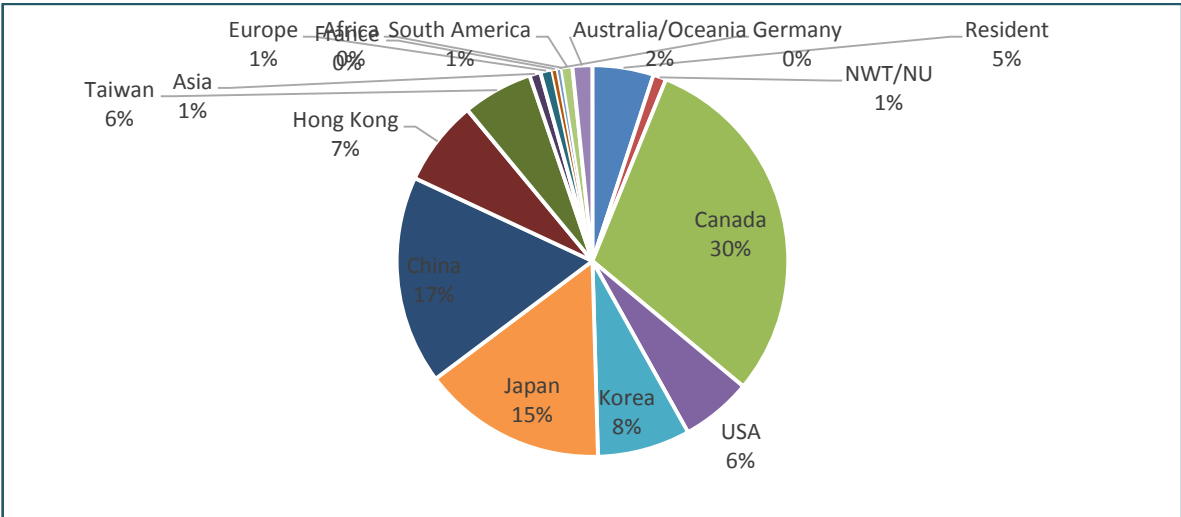
The NFVA Status report as part of The Business Case for the Sustainability of the Northern Frontier Visitor Centre (April 2017) provided the following information:

- Only visitor centre in the NWT that is open year round
- Operates 360 days per year, 10 hours weekdays, 8 hours on weekends and holidays
- Majority of operational funding (59%) is self-generated by NFVA. (Balance is from the territorial government and the City of Yellowknife)
- 2016 operating budget, including airport store, was \$865,400
- Traffic thru the centre has increased by 400% in the past 10 years; 11,940 visitors in 2007 and 50,233 visitors in 2016
- Supports numerous indigenous and other artists, craftspeople and small manufacturers with sales of their products
- Assists local tourism operators with referrals
- Promotes the entire NWT as well as Yellowknife

VC - TOTAL WALK IN VISITORS BY MONTH 2006-2017 COMPARISON												
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
January	928	854	652	510	942	877	1313	1282	1653	2658	3502	4636
February	966	1058	947	894	1238	1265	2196	1883	2169	4503	5023	5611
March	1197	891	1121	793	1256	1736	2512	2666	2749	3862	5396	5944
April	500	530	542	475	693	789	1126	1303	1075	1862	2386	2303
May	590	694	666	811	932	1160	1026	1210	1062	1556	1470	
June	1415	1688	1799	1992	1689	1968	1706	2653	1913	3559	2994	1035
July	2118	2305	1828	2058	2457	2069	2515	3005	1846	3096	3018	
August	2127	1838	1631	1863	2112	1301	2756	2716	2618	4061	4991	
September	1510	733	1046	1354	1555	2796	1411	2303	3538	6101	8100	
October	532	430	524	639	777	1394	859	1468	1838	2852	3743	
November	359	374	344	582	748	1338	789	1194	1552	2199	3101	
December	748	545	635	945	1017	987	1170	1832	3362	4450	6509	
YTD	12990	11940	11735	12916	15416	17680	19379	23515	25375	40759	50233	19529

Other than walk in visitors, limited data is available to assess visitor attributes or the value and ability to influence. Data available and captured in 2017 indicates the highest volume of visitors were from Canada (30%) followed by China (17%) and Japan (15%). No trend information has been sourced as yet.

**Origin of Visitors January to April & June 2017**



The Yellowknife Visitor Centre has become part of the itinerary of several tour operators, ensuring guests receive a complimentary city pin and *North of 60* certificate. Since October 2017, approximately 60,000 pins and 40,000 certificates were distributed to visitors, approximately 95% of the distribution was during the peak aurora viewing season. (Note: Pin and certificate distribution includes visitors to the centre and mail out information packages). It is believed that this is one of the primary reasons for visitors to the Yellowknife Visitor Centre.

**Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**  
 The previous operation evolved over time and provided a range of services that were directed to both serving the visitor and generating revenue to cover operational costs. A new model will likely have different requirements and therefore caution should be used when comparing data.

**4.6.3 Previous Study & Recommendations**

[The Business Case for the Sustainability of the Northern Frontier Visitor Centre](#) was an exhaustive effort (200+ pages) encompassing a report from the owner/operator NFVC, Williams Engineering and Outcrop Communications. Options presented by the NFVC all focused on a new visitor centre that was purpose built within the same area as the uninhabitable site:

1. Build a new smaller visitor centre at current location (estimate \$2-3 million)
2. Build a new larger visitor centre (estimate \$3-4.5 million)
3. Build a new much larger visitor centre (estimate \$3.77-5.25 million)

**4.6.4 Current Visitor Servicing**

Currently, Yellowknife Visitor Services offers a range of information services and provisions to visitors.

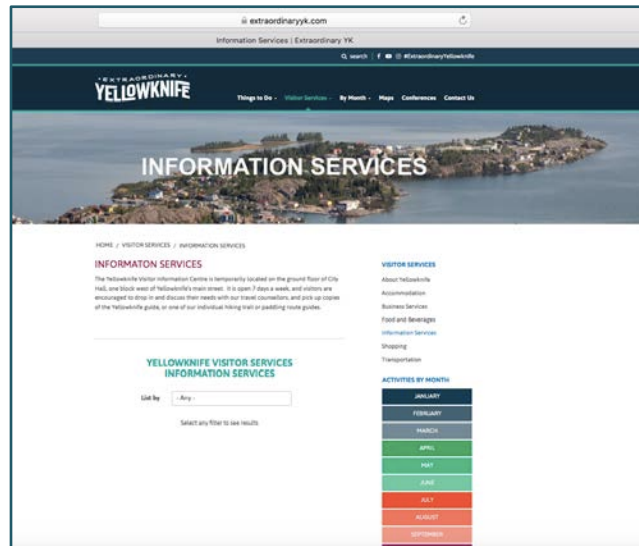
Information Desk @ City Hall:

- o Professional and trained city staff provide face to face orientation, advice and information to the visitors that arrive at the Centre.

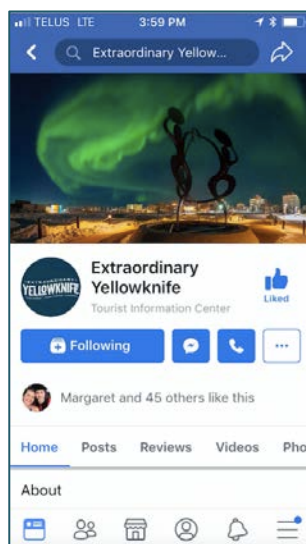
- Hours of Operation  
 Monday to Friday: 8am to 4:30pm  
 Saturday, Sunday: 10am to 5pm  
 Closed on Statutory Holidays.  
 Tour bus parking is available across the street from City Hall.

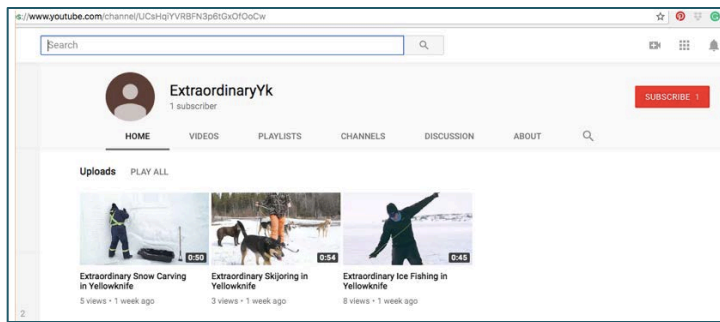
Website:

To coincide with the spring 2018 launch of the city's new brand *Extraordinary Yellowknife*, a new website [extraordinaryyk.com](http://extraordinaryyk.com) was unveiled. The site is designed for visitors to navigate to basic information that includes activities, accommodation, calendar of events and contacts and displays helpful information and inspiration on Yellowknife and repurposes well on mobile devices.



To compliment the online distribution, Facebook @ExtraordinaryYK with 48 followers, and Instagram #ExtraordinaryYK with 95 followers. ExtraordinaryYK also subscribes to Twitter and YouTube. At this time there is limited engagement on the digital channels, however, there are several competing sites that raise awareness of the community and its industry related attributes i.e. [www.ykonline.ca](http://www.ykonline.ca).





**Print Material:**

- 45,000 *ExtraordinaryYK* branded Yellowknife Visitor’s Guides, produced by the City of Yellowknife, are printed and distributed annually throughout the city and NWT Visitor Centres. Additionally, the Northern News Services distributes Yellowknife Visitor’s Guides through various channels including newspaper subscribers, the Yellowknife Visitor Centre and the Yellowknife airport. Both publications are available in digital format.
- The Visitor Services staff produce flat sheets targeted to special interest for distribution in the Visitor Centre, specific to the frequently asked questions by visitors; i.e. accommodation listings, food and beverage listings, aurora-viewing operators and summer tour companies.
- *Extraordinaryyk* branded city maps
- Safe aurora-viewing location maps, printed in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Japanese and French.

The Yellowknife visitor services team provides a booking service to tour operators and accommodation providers upon request and supports relocation and events, providing event organizers and conference delegates with information packages and print materials when requested.

**Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**  
 Social media engagement with the new branded sites is extremely low. Consideration should be given to the effort required to build the brand versus options to partner with already established channels and reducing duplication of service.

**4.6.5 Mobile/Roaming Visitor Services**

In recent years, there has been a drive by communities to break away from the traditional theme of visitor servicing, evolving to the provisions of in-person visitor services at key events and locations during peak visitor seasons. Portable mobile visitor servicing displays are developed for use for on-the-ground visitor servicing at key events that address target markets.

Mobile visitor servicing models are typically supported by a strong online presence and provides the ability to deliver a personalized level of engagement while assisting visitors and residents at events and public spaces where there is visitor volume.

In June 2018, the City of Yellowknife introduced a summer mobile information kiosk. This self-contained unit has been designed to be deployed to strategic, high visitor concentrated locations, enabling face to face conversations with visitors and a greater opportunity to promote to a wider audience. The mobile unit distributes collateral materials and provides information about the amenities of Yellowknife and region while capitalizing on the many visitors that are exploring the community.

***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

The new mobile kiosk offers an opportunity to review the potential and value of future visitor services programming.

**4.6.6 Arctic Ambassador Program**

Since 2008, a group of senior volunteers have been providing information services to visitors arriving at the Yellowknife airport. The Arctic Ambassadors, sponsored by the NWT Seniors Society greet visitors upon arrivals, offering guidance and information about Yellowknife as well as distributing maps and visitor’s guides. In addition to the airport services, the Ambassadors program supports Yellowknife on a need and demand basis, acting as tour guides to key attractions and welcoming delegates and visitors to conferences and events.

***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

The visitor servicing strategy must include a communication plan that integrates the Arctic Ambassador Program to ensure cohesive messaging and service to Yellowknife and NWT visitors.

**4.7 Stakeholder Engagement**

As part of the visitor servicing engagement process, two Open Houses were held at the Yellowknife Visitor Centre on June 5, 2018. Email invitations were sent to industry stakeholders and follow up phone calls were conducted by Visitor Centre staff. Radio and newspaper advertising promoted the event. The objective of the sessions was to seek input on the strengths and weaknesses of the previous and current operation and identify considerations and opportunities for the future model. While the initial intend was for the session to be drop in, the outcome was more of a group discussion facilitated by the contractors and input was captured anecdotally.

A total of 15 participants attended. In summary, feedback from the sessions determined there is a range of opinions on the role of the Yellowknife Visitor Centre and the extent of service offerings that should be delivered, however, there is support and business demand to continue with a dedicated location with a visitor servicing model that is welcoming, accessible, supported by informative staff and reflects a strong physical presence in the city. A more detailed list of comments is provided in Appendix 1. It is important to note that the statements in the full summary represent individual opinions and not consensus.

In addition to the Open Houses, one on one meetings were held with the following industry stakeholders identified by the City of Yellowknife as sources of information:



Sheila Bassi-Kellett, SAO, City of Yellowknife  
Yvonne Quick, Artic Explorers and former President of Northern Frontier Visitors Association (NFVA)  
Deneen Everett, Executive Director, Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce  
Cathie Boldstad, Executive Director, Northwest Territories Tourism  
Kyle Thomas, Yellowknife Online, Vice President Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce and former President Northern Frontier Visitor Association  
Julie Ross, Assistant Director Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Museum

A meeting was also held with retail business owners to discuss specific issues regarding concerns of unfair competition.

**Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**  
Overall, tourism stakeholders are supportive of visitor servicing and all felt that a physical presence was an important element of the new model. Perspective on the type of centre, service and operating model varied and will need to be taken into consideration to ensure stakeholder support.

### 4.8 Comparative Reviews

Four destinations were reviewed and were selected to provide insights into visitor servicing operations based on their type of business model, location and product offering and serves to provide a variety of options for City of Yellowknife visitor servicing consideration.

#### 4.8.1 Whitehorse, Yukon

**Business Model:** Partnership with Travel Yukon  
**Product:** Outdoor adventure, touring, RV, heritage & culture, aurora viewing, gold rush  
**Location:** Closest proximity to Yellowknife

In 2012 and again in 2015, as part of its multi-year strategic plan, the City of Whitehorse decided in effort to reduce duplication, develop a partnership with Travel Yukon in which Travel Yukon provides all tourism services. The agreement covers sport tourism, providing travel advice to visitors, distributing parking passes and pins to visitors, continuing the coordination of tourism banners throughout the city, and working together on tourism items identified in the City’s new economic development strategy. The parties also work to improve the promotion of local events by using Tourism Yukon marketing tools such as the Travel Yukon website.

The City of Whitehorse is essentially “out of the tourism business” as defined by Lindsay Agar, Events Manager for the City. She indicated that the existing annual tourism budget of \$80,000 was not enough to effectively operate a tourism marketing department and that by removing themselves from the market, it allows for streamlining services for the visitor. The City of Whitehorse provides no funding to Tourism Yukon to provide visitor servicing.



#### 4.8.2 Reykjavik, Iceland

**Business Model:** DMO with partners

**Product:** heritage & culture, outdoor adventure including whale watching, aurora viewing, volcano viewing

**Location:** Iceland

[Visit Reykjavik](#) runs the Tourist Information Centre with funding from the City of Reykjavik, a grant provided by the Icelandic Tourist Board and now also in collaboration with the company Guide to Iceland. Visit Reykjavik is the marketing office for the greater Reykjavik area, working closely with all the surrounding municipalities in promoting the area as a destination.

In January 2018, the Reykjavik Tourist Information Centre relocated to their City Hall. The Information Centre, which has an average of nine staff, is open every day of the year (except Christmas Day) 8.00 to 20.00. Services include information, activity and accommodation book sales and free wifi charging.

Most visitors to Reykjavik stop at the Tourist Information Centre before planning what to do on their visit to Iceland. Last year 475,000 tourists received the Information Centre's help and guidance, at their location in Aðalstræti. Information from the Visitor Centre Manager indicates that since the move, visitor volume has maintained at the same level however the type of enquiries has changed, and sales of activities and attractions has decreased. This shift is somewhat attributed to the location now adjacent to a bus tour pick up and drop off location resulting in more general interest in the building itself which has a large relief map of Iceland and is considered an attraction.

While Visit Reykjavik has worked with a private sales and booking partner since 2005, the collaboration with [Guide to Iceland](#) has created a new way of providing information with the goal to book accommodation, tours and activities. Guide to Iceland represents over 1000 Icelandic travel operators and positions itself as the world's largest collaboration for Icelandic travel services. The company has developed its own proprietary booking engine and its platform includes a variety of content such as blogs, local resident profiles and connections, social media engagement as well as booking capability.

When asked how they manage the collaboration and ensure unbiased service, Visit Reykjavik Information Centre Manager Karen Jonsdottir provided the following:

*"As a public institution we also face the obligation of being unbiased in our operation. Guide to Iceland, being our partner, has to fulfil this obligation too even though they are a private company.*

*This is for example done through a very big marketplace which they operate. Every tourist operator can register their products / businesses on their marketplace, which then gives the customer different options to tailor and choose according to his/her needs, build on an open search engine. It is in Gtl interest that all operators are happy so they do their best to create an objective system to serve.*

*Of course, it is a choice to offers sales and bookings. Our view is that we want to be able to service our customers fully, meaning not only giving visitors information but also book their adventures. Because travellers often do not know their real options until they are presented with them.*

*My counsellors are able to book activities off the Guide to Iceland system in addition to providing information but Gtl also has their own desk."*



### 4.8.3 Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Centre, British Columbia

**Business Model:** Chamber of Commerce with Partners

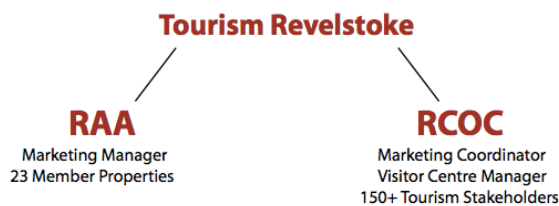
**Product:** Outdoor adventure, winter (all), hot springs, national parks, craft beer & distilleries, rail heritage

**Location:** British Columbia

The Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce is a not for profit organization, dependent on membership to deliver services, business advocacy and events to its membership and community at large. The Chamber manages the community Visitor Centre and has a tourism marketing in partnership with the City of Revelstoke, The Revelstoke Accommodation Association, Destination BC and Kootenay Rockies Tourism.

Tourism Revelstoke is a member driven Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). This collaborative effort includes the Revelstoke Accommodation Association (RAA) and the Tourism Marketing department of the Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce (RCOC). These entities work in cooperation with the City of Revelstoke and other federal, provincial and community organizations.

The City of Revelstoke has designated the RAA to oversee the management, governance and administration of Tourism Revelstoke, including marketing efforts supported by MRDT funds towards tourism marketing.



The Revelstoke Visitor Centre operates in a multi-unit commercial building on the ground level. Services provided include information, free wifi, retail (limited) and accessible washroom facilities and free visitor parking is available.

During an interview with Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce Manager Jana Thompson and Tourism Revelstoke Marketing Manager Meghan Tabor, the following key elements of success to this operating model for visitor servicing were identified:

- Clear communication, regular meetings and shared strategic planning sessions (they even share an email inbox)
- Clear lines of responsibility, who leads and who supports on what topic
- Mutually agreed upon MOU for reference but not as a directive (they spoke to their ability to work together to solve issues as their preferred method to address issues)
- Co-locating; besides the obvious share in operating expenses, the regular communication and engagement is extremely valuable
- Multi-year agreements and secured funding allow for planning and reporting
- Confidence from tourism community in chamber of commerce ability to deliver visitor servicing on their behalf

A less tangible reason this model is successful is because both Managers have the same vision for the community and bring unique skill sets to their jobs. They recognize the value each brings to the table and how collectively they are stronger. This relationship is critical, and both agreed that they weren't sure how they would operate if they didn't have the same degree of comfort with their counterpart.

#### 4.8.4 Destination Campbell River and Tourism Dawson Creek, British Columbia

**Business Model:** Fee for Service contract agreement with municipality and contractor/service provider

**Product:** Outdoor Adventure (fishing and wildlife viewing), heritage & culture (Alaska Highway corridor, indigenous product), RV and touring

**Location:** British Columbia



In 2017, both the City of Campbell River and the City of Dawson Creek pursued opportunities to invite submissions for proposals from qualified proponents for the provision of managing and operating their city's visitor information services. Both municipalities entered into Fee for Service contracts that provided a legal framework for the joint strategy of providing visitor services.

The RFP process enabled their Selection Committees to source the most suitable service provider that could meet the strategic objectives of the municipality, be at arms-length of municipal government while offering visitors excellent tourism and visitor services and could promote their city's businesses, attractions and events. In both examples, the proponents were rated on their ability to provide:

- Company history and background in providing similar services;
- Experience with operating visitor servicing;
- Explain how tourism and visitor servicing would be provided;
- Identify innovative ways to delivery visitor servicing;
- Staffing complement for the operations;
- Capacity to carry out services;
- Collaborative partnerships with other community organizations;

- Method, processes, and standards to be followed;
- Amount of assistance and support expected from City staff and resources;
- Draft operating budget with projected costs, operating budget, proposed fee schedule, sources of revenue, etc.

The five-year Fee for Service contracts include sustainable governance and funding models as well as details to Terms of Reference and Terms of Agreement; funding for the organizations slightly differ. *Destination Campbell River* receive \$250,000 annually from the City of Campbell River and funds from the 3% accommodation tax (approximately \$250,000 annually), with the expectation for the service provider/contractor to seek additional funding opportunities and leveraging funding. In total, Destination Campbell River has an annual budget of approximately \$600,000.

The City of Dawson Creek provides *Tourism Dawson Creek* with approximately \$450,000 annually from their general revenue. Tourism Dawson Creek leverages its funding to obtain supplemental program funding while also generates revenue through retail sales.

The municipalities are the governing authority and are guided by their appointed Tourism Advisory Committees.

Destination Campbell River: Marketing agency *Destination Think!* is the service provider.  
 Tourism Dawson Creek: *Spectra Comcast Spectator* is the service provider.

#### 4.9 Best Practices & Case Studies

In terms of Best Practice visitor servicing strategies we need look no further than British Columbia for inspiration and direction. The Destination BC Visitor Servicing Strategy released in March 2018 focuses on the end-to-end process ensuring visitors experience quality information and service throughout their travels from preplanning, in destination and post trip memories.

While the strategy is designed to lead at a provincial level, there are a number of relative learnings that can support the Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy. The following offers a brief overview and applicable information for Yellowknife.

Four strategic themes have been developed to action the strategy:

1. Managing a Seamless Visitor Experience
2. Delivering Quality Experiences and Amenities
3. Building Innovative Approaches to Information and Inspiration Delivery
4. Evolving Visitor Service Delivery

Twelve sub-strategies have been developed to support the themes ranging from creating a framework for management to improving telecommunications and signage. Creating meaningful content and partnering with platforms to ensure visitors get the right information at the right time is a foundational piece of this strategy as is ensuring alignment with the broader tourism ecosystem.

Destination BC intends to focus its attention in three key areas.

1. Consumer Travel Journey

*“The consumer travel journey is no longer linear and has become subject to frequent disruption, as consumers are bombarded by new messages, ideas and destination possibilities. Defining our role in the consumer’s travel journey focuses our efforts on the stages where we can have **the biggest***

*impact on our customers' decisions and the overall experience they have engaging with BC. We need to ensure we are delivering the tools and information that help travellers commit to choosing BC as a destination, choose to book the components of their visit, enjoy a seamless visitor experience, and advocate for BC during and after their journey."*

## 2. Platforms and Publishers

*"We will focus on working with major online platforms and content publishers, such as Google and Facebook, that are investing in highly integrated, detailed content at every stage of the traveler's consumer journey, which are sources of travel inspiration and information for consumers."*

## 3. Tourism Partners

*"Providing a seamless visitor experience requires the collaborative efforts of governments, First Nations, regional and community DMOs, sector marketing organizations, communities, corridors and tourism businesses to engage in proactive destination management."*

### **Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:**

The key here is to focus where there is the potential for the biggest impact. This is critical to Yellowknife's plan as resources are limited and the lead time for visitors to choose and plan for a visit to Yellowknife is long.

The following programs operated by DMO's in British Columbia provide examples of visitor servicing supporting the new Visitor Strategy.

#### **4.9.1 Digital Visitor Services**

In Langley, B.C., Tourism Langley is an example of a common model where the visitor services network works in harmony with the DMO. The destination management organization (DMO) embraces the brand, while the visitor servicing program is responsible to deliver and sell experiences and services. Through extensive research in 2014, the organization determined that due to the increased importance of online information, the value proposition of the Visitor Centre had been eroded to the point where it was no longer relevant to stakeholders and was not effectively meeting the demands of the visitor.

In March 2015, Tourism Langley closed the doors to the community's traditional-style Visitor Centre and implemented a new model of serving visitors via the digital space. This online approach was also complemented by on-the-ground visitor servicing with a mobile vehicle at strategic locations and key events throughout the year. The new model of visitor servicing focused on supporting visitors with information on an "as needed", "on demand" and "real time" basis as well as increased online visitor engagement and shared experiences of their visit to the community and region. The benefits of the new model also enabled visitor services to be flexible, not adhering to strict hours of operation, rather adapting to the specific demands of the community's visitor servicing requirements.

Adjustment to the new model also meant fine tuning reporting and evaluation methods and identification of effective digital channels that were best suited for online engagement. The modernized visitor services model was extremely well received by residents, local businesses, visitors

and the travelling public and as a result, Tourism Langley experienced a significant increase in the engagement of the community in both crowd sourcing channels and stakeholder investment.

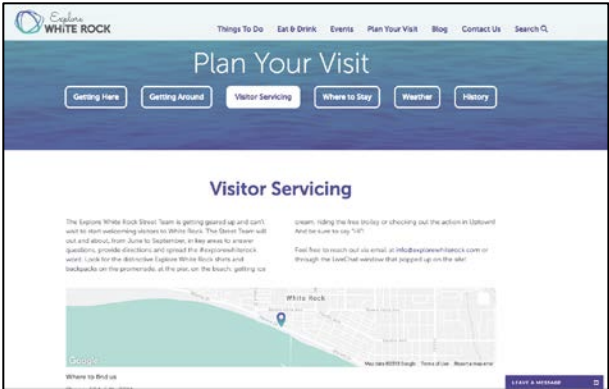
**4.9.2 Virtual Assistance (Live Chat)**

Virtual Assistance or Live Chat, as it is frequently called, is a cost-effective tool growing in popularity to increase customer engagement, predominately in on-line retail space. Live chat applications are designed to provide immediate online assistance to multiple users efficiently through “chat boxes”. Businesses see this solution as an excellent alternative or addition to more expensive call centre services or bricks and mortar customer service outlets as multiple conversations can take place with just one agent providing the service.

A number of DMO’s internationally, nationally and locally have identified its potential to assist visitors with trip planning and to actively provide more detailed support. Live chat can be considered virtual “face to face” visitor counselling. Tourism Abbotsford uses Olark software to provide virtual assistance. Tourism Whistler has engaged [www.livehelpnow.net](http://www.livehelpnow.net) to supplement their visitor servicing capability online and Tourism Surrey and Tourism White Rock are both using [www.LiveChatinc.com](http://www.LiveChatinc.com).

**4.9.3 Mobile Visitor Services Enhancement & Street Teams**

The City of White Rock experienced a similar situation to Yellowknife in that their visitor centre had to be demolished to make way for new construction on the waterfront. This situation afforded them the opportunity to revisit how they were providing visitor services and shape their future delivery plan. What they discovered is that over 60% of visitors to their centre were residents and the opportunity to influence a longer stay in White Rock with this market was minimal. They chose instead to create a mobile visitor centre program with greater focus on social engagement. This provides them greater flexibility to go to where the visitors of greatest opportunity are.



**4.10 Strengths, Weaknesses & Opportunities (SWOT)**

Based on situation analysis findings including feedback from stakeholders, the following visitor servicing in Yellowknife Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats have been identified.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There is a year-round demand from visitors for visitor servicing in Yellowknife</li> <li>○ Yellowknife is the hub and gateway to the NWT</li> <li>○ City is committed to a solution for visitor servicing</li> <li>○ Some operators experience strong pre-book business ≈80%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clearly defined roles and responsibilities on all visitor servicing elements for all regions throughout the Territory can reduce duplication and provide a collaborative solution</li> <li>○ Coordinated effort to extend brand through distribution channels</li> <li>○ Increase engagement on social</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Visitor experience is authentic (people &amp; place)</li> <li>○ Industry is in support of a visitor servicing program</li> <li>○ No preconceived solution is evident allowing creativity and flexibility for a forward-thinking model</li> <li>○ Strong and revitalized Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>○ Prince of Wales Heritage Centre open to collaboration</li> <li>○ Vision 2020 commitment goal to ensure an excellent visitor experience across the Territory</li> <li>○ Interest from Indigenous community for future opportunities (partnership?)</li> <li>○ High engagement levels through private sector social media channel <a href="http://www.ykonline.ca">www.ykonline.ca</a> demonstrates interest from visitors</li> <li>○ Introduction of mobile visitor services in 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ distribution channels with potential private sector partnership (i.e. <a href="http://www.ykonline.ca">www.ykonline.ca</a>)</li> <li>○ Information delivery and presentation could represent the region/territory in addition to the city</li> <li>○ Streamlined method to provide last minute solution for visitors (accommodation primarily but extended to activities is possible)</li> <li>○ Extend wifi services throughout the community</li> <li>○ Seek additional partnership(s) opportunities</li> <li>○ Expand presence of mobile visitor services kiosk to high density visitor locations</li> </ul>
<b>WEAKNESSES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No consistent brand application across marketing materials or distribution channels</li> <li>○ Limited engagement on official (social) distribution channels</li> <li>○ Limited data on how and when visitors need information and ability to influence their trip planning</li> <li>○ Inconsistent visitor data collection across the Territory</li> <li>○ No wifi hotspots</li> <li>○ No method to support accommodation shortfall information during peak aurora viewing times</li> <li>○ No designated Yellowknife DMO</li> <li>○ No accommodation levy in place</li> <li>○ Industry has very limited collaboration opportunities (or desire-business is good)</li> <li>○ Perceived imbalance of government support for regional/territory VC's vs Yellowknife VC</li> <li>○ Lack of trust from some operators/retailers resulting from history of NFVA</li> <li>○ Minimal legacy policies, procedures and processes</li> <li>○ Wayfinding/signage to temporary location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Negative reputation if visitor servicing solution not solved in timely fashion</li> <li>○ Varying opinions on who should operate and fund visitor servicing may cause friction depending on solution</li> <li>○ A retail decision not in favour of local retailers could result in legal battle</li> <li>○ A significant capital investment is a pain point</li> <li>○ Loss or decrease in partnership funding model (City of Yellowknife and GNWT)</li> <li>○ Accommodation levy is not passed</li> <li>○ Changes to government and current support for industry</li> </ul>

## 5 Visitor Services Strategy

### 5.1 Goals

The Visitor Services Strategy supports the Yellowknife Tourism Strategy Goals:

*Goal 1:* Enhance Yellowknife's tourism management and partnership model.

*Goal 2:* Increase destination awareness.

*Goal 3:* Improve community tourism infrastructure and services.



## 5.2 Principles

The Visitor Services strategy was designed based on the following principles:

- Strive to reduce resources (time and budget) for visitor services while still providing an appropriate service to visitors, recognizing the primary goal is to direct as much of the Yellowknife budget to marketing and promotional activities that increase visitation and occupancy levels.
- Focus on those visitors where there is an ability to influence their decisions that result in an increase in spend and repeat visitation.
- Leverage existing infrastructure/resources as opposed to invest in new infrastructure/resources.
- Leverage existing and new partnerships where available and appropriate.
- Develop an efficient, flexible system than be easily adjusted as markets and technology change the visitor services needs in the future.
- Stakeholder are engaged and partners in the process

## 5.3 Options for Visitor Services Consideration

Traditional bricks and mortar style Visitor Centres and visitor servicing models are housed in a physical location and provides visitor information to visitors. The location is used to deliver a face to face welcoming service while providing unbiased information about the destination, often acting as the entry way to the community, and in some cases region or larger geographical territory. A physical location enables visitors to seek a comfortable space to begin their trip, acquaint themselves with the location and to further plan their time in the destination.

The traditional visitor servicing model continues to be an important engagement channel with the traveller to Yellowknife and the NWT with a primary goal of delivering effective visitor servicing that will fulfill the visitor needs and serve the market.

There are a variety of ways to achieve successful visitor servicing. The following outline is a summary of options and where applicable, examples of possible solutions that have been reviewed and considered for the revised Yellowknife visitor services strategy:

1. **Iconic Gateway Visitor Centre** - A joint facility located within or at a prime traffic area with a receptive audience. This type of centre typically hosts a variety of services that are of interest to the visitor such as a museum, and attraction or an interpretive centre. Positioned as a gateway, information for the territory and the city is provided and the operating model for visitor servicing can be contracted to a third party or to the primary tenant.
2. **City Central Visitor Centre** – Typically located in the downtown core, this model is positioned to service visitor traffic looking for community information and provides a storefront opportunity for local tourism businesses. Operating models can include but are not limited to contracted services by agencies, businesses or not-for-profit organizations which leverage shared administrative services.
3. **Public Building Visitor Centre** – Some communities choose to house visitor servicing within a public facility similar to the current Yellowknife Centre in City Hall. This model provides some convenience to shared services but is limited in its operational flexibility.
4. **New Construction** – A purpose-built facility in a chosen location based on strategy. Operating model varies.

5. **Decentralization** – This option provides visitor servicing in a variety of ways with no central physical centre. Services are provided through digital channels such as web and social media, mobile units such as a van or trailer and/or through the distribution of information at various businesses.

1. Iconic Gateway Visitor Centre	
<b>Example: Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre</b>	
<b>Considerations:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This solution needs to be all inclusive to the Territory or Great Slave Region requiring a balance with Yellowknife and NWT brand</li> <li>○ There is some perception this is a city museum and a Yellowknife VC presence may reinforce that</li> <li>○ Museum staff do not have bandwidth or mandate to manage visitor services operation, however, have set precedence with contract operations</li> <li>○ May require some staff restructuring, determining clear roles and responsibilities to ensure no duplication</li> <li>○ If new DMO operates VC, there may be additional space required for office and operations.</li> <li>○ Current budget for museum has been decreased and if decline continues, could affect programming and ability to partner</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pros</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Iconic building, positive first impression</li> <li>○ Infrastructure in place; parking, restrooms, food &amp; beverage, etc.</li> <li>○ High visitor traffic location</li> <li>○ Ease of access for visitors</li> <li>○ Organization open to collaboration</li> <li>○ Opportunity to extend museum programming/shared visitor servicing projects</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cons</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Long and significant negotiation with the Territory required</li> <li>○ GNWT funding is Dept. of Education, Culture &amp; Employment/not ITI</li> <li>○ Renovation required</li> <li>○ Wifi needs substantial upgrade</li> <li>○ Limited space for admin &amp; storage requirements</li> <li>○ Increased activity may be deterrent to noise level and ambiance of current museum atmosphere</li> <li>○ Governance model would require changes</li> <li>○ Union site</li> </ul>
<b>Conclusive Summary:</b>	
<p>An iconic established location, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre is a consideration. While significant steps will have to be taken to ensure a smooth transition from the temporary location located in City Hall, a relationship between the museum and visitor services remains positive and supportive. A test model in 2017 during the transition from the NFVA and the current situation also proved to be a manageable collaboration.</p> <p>Upgrades to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre will have to ensue for an effective and efficient visitor servicing model, however, may be timely in relation to the agreed upon transition date. Additionally, further discussion will have to include if this becomes a local, regional or territorial representation.</p>	
2. City Central Visitor Centre	
<b>Example: Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce</b>	
<b>Considerations:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A storefront location would need to be sourced.</li> <li>○ Chamber of Commerce is a membership model, currently representing only 10% of tourism businesses</li> <li>○ Several business models for the DMO could be considered from co-housing to sub-contracting.</li> <li>○ There may be other not-for-profit organizations that would be interested in the opportunity therefore an RFP for services may be required.</li> </ul>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strong and effective management system team in place</li> <li>○ Organizational and administrative structure in place</li> <li>○ Perceived unbiased organization</li> <li>○ Seeking downtown core for relocation</li> <li>○ Well attended B2B events, training, FAM's etc.</li> <li>○ Strong relationship with NWT Chamber of Commerce and Territory knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Timing of required relocation does not meet City of Yellowknife goal to transition VC</li> <li>○ No confirmation of new location, may not find suitable space and re-negotiate existing lease</li> <li>○ Capital budget for storefront (no legacy VC elements)</li> <li>○ Governance model would require changes</li> </ul>
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**Conclusive Summary:**

The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce is a consideration. With a strong organizational and management leadership in place, the support for the organization from the local business community combined with their anticipated office relocation in 2019, the Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce is well positioned to enhance the current situation and may provide a win-win for both organizations including providing the Chamber of Commerce with additional opportunities to grow their membership base.

This model could be delivered either through a direct award/partnership with the Chamber or through an RFP process that enable other organizations to respond.

**3. Public Building Visitor Centre**

**Example: Current Visitor Centre at Yellowknife City Hall**

**Considerations:**

- City would have to find alternative boardroom space as the current site is considered temporary and is impacting meeting functions
- While a capital investment is required to transition from “office space” to welcoming space, the investment is likely less than other options
- City may have to consider restructure of staffing to include a dedicated tourism manager/supervisor.

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Existing space available</li> <li>○ Reasonable parking (relative to other locations)</li> <li>○ Free wifi</li> <li>○ Staff management efficient if City operates</li> <li>○ Location of high density visitation; Frame Lake, Frame Lake trail system, Somba K'e Civic Plaza</li> <li>○ Close proximity to Prince of Wales, Legislative Assembly</li> <li>○ Has potential to extend City Hall hours if cross functional.</li> <li>○ Local businesses and residents familiar with temporary location</li> <li>○ Potential for DMO office space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Marketing investment required to drive visitation</li> <li>○ Reduced opportunity to partner with GNWT as a regional centre</li> <li>○ Perception of government investment in public facility</li> <li>○ Wages and benefits of City employees</li> </ul>

**Conclusive Summary:**

The Yellowknife City Hall, and current location for Yellowknife Visitor Services is not a consideration for a long-term and sustainable location. While there is no hard deadline to reclaim the space, Yellowknife City Hall is an interim solution with plans in place to return the space to its former boardroom use.

**4. New Construction**

**Considerations:**

- Potential to be a new local attraction within the downtown core

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Addresses short period free-time demands from aurora viewing guests</li> <li>○ Seek available land that can also provide ease of access and meet parking demands (i.e. 50/50 site)</li> <li>○ If visitation to Visitor Centres declines (as in other jurisdictions), the centre may have a shorter shelf life and may have to be re-purposed</li> </ul>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Opportunity to increase partnerships, extending to private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Requires marketing to drive visitation</li> <li>○ Difficult to secure joint and sustainable funding from GNWT</li> <li>○ Long lead time from concept to implementation</li> <li>○ No opportunity to share services or costs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusive Summary:</b> A new construction facility will be the most expensive and time consuming option. With consideration to the resources available that would be required to source an ideal location, secure partnerships, design and implement space and operation requirements, etc., this is an unsuitable option at this time.</p>	
<p><b>5. Decentralization</b></p>	
<p><b>Considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Model works best in destinations where there is no natural gathering place for visitors and/or multiple locations in which no one location services majority</li> <li>○ Requires high social engagement from visitors</li> <li>○ Industry stakeholders indicated a strong attachment to a more traditional model and would therefore require a powerful communication strategy to garner their support</li> </ul>	
<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Flexibility to locate to high density visitor locations (i.e. parks, campsites, festivals &amp; events, etc.)</li> <li>○ Ability to communicate with visitors during pre-planning, in-destination and post trip stages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Weather dependent and harsh winter conditions</li> <li>○ Wifi availability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusive Summary:</b> Decentralization of the current bricks and mortar visitor servicing model to a non-traditional model is not a suitable option for Yellowknife. Whatever extended role is defined for visitor servicing in Yellowknife in the future, the common understanding and foundation expectation from visitors and stakeholders is to provide a central service location. Several significant factors including wifi, seasonal weather conditions and consensus from stakeholders to support a “Visitor Centre” conclude this is an unsuitable option for Yellowknife.</p>	

***Implication for Yellowknife Visitor Servicing Strategy:***

The Visitor Servicing Strategy must include location as an explicit consideration, along with an understanding of the potential uplift benefits of a high-visibility and accessible location and an operating model that provides the greatest efficiency and effectiveness.

**5.4 Options Analysis & Recommendation Summary**

In determining the options for the future delivery of visitor services in Yellowknife, the following influencing factors have been taken into consideration:

- Yellowknife is well positioned geographically to further develop as a regional and territorial tourism hub.

- The current location of operation and delivery of visitor services in Yellowknife will not be available in the future.
- Location is an important issue and a prominent location can better serve the market.
- The primary role of the Yellowknife Visitor Services strategy is the provision of tourism-related information.
- There are opportunities to re-develop or co-locate with other community facilities and/or services.
- The business environment is changing rapidly and becoming more complex; visitors are increasingly using technology to source information; both in the pre-trip and in-destination stage.

Upon review of the considerations, options for a public building location, new construction or decentralization (options 3, 4 and 5) can readily be eliminated. While an iconic gateway location (1) has significant merit for the City, the capital expenditure and negotiations required with the Territory may prove too complex and lengthy for a successful outcome. ***The analysis of the options presented therefore suggests that the best approach is to pursue opportunities to work with a city-based business or organization in a co-location approach within the downtown city core (2).***

#### **5.4.1 Governance Model for City Central Visitor Centre**

An effective and well-governed structure will be essential to achieving the goal of the visitor servicing strategy and should also set a foundation for the future of destination management in Yellowknife. It is recommended that a Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) is formulated and appointed by the City of Yellowknife Council by the Fall of 2018. A TAC can serve as an excellent resource in that they can provide valuable input and two-way communication between the City of Yellowknife and its stakeholders.

The purpose of the TAC will be to advise Council and assist staff and other stakeholders in implementing the visitor servicing strategy. Duties may also include advising Council on matters relating to the tourism sector, providing policy advice and recommendations to Council that will advance the city's progress towards its tourism vision, provide leadership and act as ambassadors, profiling the tourism opportunities in Yellowknife. The TAC may also be responsible for input and oversight of the Yellowknife Tourism Plan, and provide future recommendations on tourism strategies including the expenditures and accountability of the city's accommodation levy should it become in effect.

The majority of the TAC members should represent businesses and organizations that are involved with or associated with tourism activities, services or attractions in Yellowknife and should follow a skills-based public application process that includes submission of their resume detailing their experience in tourism services delivery, strategic leadership, destination marketing, etc. The composition of the TAC should capture a broad representation that may include:

- Accommodation providers (potential collectors of the accommodation levy), and holding 30-50% of the number of seats.
- Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Food and Beverage
- Retail
- Activity Operators (aurora viewing, fishing, etc.)
- Members at Large (non-voting liaison seats)
  - City Staff, i.e. Economic Development

- Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce
- Tlicho Community Government
- NWTT

It is vitally important to ensure that its role is clearly spelled out in a Terms of Reference. Consideration should be given to adopting a City bylaw that provides the guiding principles and purpose of the Tourism Advisory Committee. The City of Campbell River Bylaw #3643 adopted in 2016 is provided in Appendix 2.

#### **5.4.2 Partnership with NWTT in New Model**

Maintaining a strong partnership with Northwest Territories Tourism is vital to the success of visitor servicing in Yellowknife. This position is supported in NWTT's Strategic Objective; "4. Strengthen our partnerships to enhance marketing efforts". As the gateway to the Territory, serving visitors is a joint responsibility and there are a number of ways the relationship can be reinforced.

Funding from the territorial government in supporting Yellowknife visitor servicing remains an important resource and should not be understated. However, in addition there is a tremendous opportunity to further establish a partnership that plays on the strengths of each partner, reduces duplication of effort and clearly communicates each organization's specific roles and responsibilities.

As an example, currently both organizations provide pre-planning visitor information through telephone, email and social media. Consideration could be given as to how the pre-planning function is best served, which organization takes the lead and the best communication strategies to ensure the visitor and the destination organizations' objectives are met.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) clearly defining the relationship is a recommended action, with the aim to develop and strengthen cooperation between the City of Yellowknife and NWT and to create reciprocal advantages for the benefit of tourism. An MOU between the Yukon and the City of Whitehorse is provided as an example in Appendix 3.

#### **5.4.3 RFP Process**

In order to support the principles of a fair, open and transparent procurement to acquire a service provider/contractor, it is recommended that a Request for Proposal (RFP) is implemented by the City of Yellowknife to compete for a Fee for Service opportunity.

The RFP should be developed to invite submissions from qualified proponents from a business, organization or not-for-profit for the provision of managing and operating the City's visitor services, to offer visitors excellent tourism and visitor services and to promote the City's many attributes. Consideration should also be given to include for the future provision of destination management and destination development strategies, should the accommodation levy and potential DMO be successful. It is also recommended that a Selection Committee review proposal submissions and takes into consideration the following guidelines to determine the successful proponent;

1. Experience & Qualifications; similar project experience, personnel qualifications, etc.
2. Methodology; approach, project understanding, innovation, etc.
3. Proposal; ability to meet demands and expectations of visitors and stakeholders.
4. Budget; pricing structure, fees, visitor centre operating budget, etc.

A successful RFP process should satisfy both the City of Yellowknife and NWTT business requirements and should meet the expectations of government policies, applicable agreements, common law and

expectations of stakeholders. The City of Yellowknife has policies and procedures in place for bids and tenders.

Given the tight timelines to implement as well as the impending levy and subsequent DMO creation, it is recommended that the RFP allow for flexibility in delivery within the initial period.

The following section (5.4.4) describes the possible elements to be included in the RFP. Equally important to the RFP should be the inclusion of a broad cost analysis to ensure proponents understand both the sustainable revenue sources as well as any requirements to ensure leverage of funding or additional funding sources. An example of an RFP is provided in Appendix 4.

**5.4.4 City Central Visitor Centre Elements**

The solution is multi-faceted, requiring a physical presence, an operating model with a governance structure and visitor servicing deliverables. Possible elements include:

Governance	<p><b>Tourism Advisory Committee</b></p> <p>Members appointed on annual basis by City of Yellowknife Council and represent cross section of tourism-related businesses</p>
Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fee for Service Agreement</li> </ul>
Service Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Private or public sector organization or business who can provide visitor servicing services in a professional and unbiased manner</li> <li>○ The contractor/service provider will be required to enter into an agreement with the City</li> </ul>
Location Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Design should reflect local identity and aid in building community pride</li> <li>○ Downtown location</li> </ul>
Facility Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Store front with adequate frontage to clearly sign visitor centre</li> <li>○ Furnishings including desks, counter and other fixtures</li> <li>○ Adequate storage</li> <li>○ High-speed internet</li> <li>○ Computer hardware and software</li> <li>○ Staff facilities</li> <li>○ Access to public washrooms</li> </ul>
Ease of Access & Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Close proximity to parking</li> <li>○ Accessible</li> <li>○ Wayfinding signage</li> </ul>
Hours of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide consistent hours of operation that meet visitor needs</li> <li>○ Flexibility in delivery</li> </ul>
Staffing & Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adequately staffed to ensure all business functions are successfully carried out including but not limited to, recruitment, hiring, training, wages, supervision and regular performance reviews</li> <li>○ Recruit staff that consistently exhibit professionalism on the job and reflect a favourable first impression of Yellowknife</li> <li>○ Staff may be a combination of paid and volunteer staff ensuring labour laws are adhered to</li> </ul>
Staff Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure staff are appropriately trained to meet job requirements including customer service, sales and technology tools</li> </ul>
Information Display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brochure racking for industry, regional and territorial publications</li> <li>○ Tablets or other digital solutions as required</li> </ul>
Visitor Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Greet and assist visitors to the community</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide accurate, helpful and high quality general and detailed information on tourism products and services</li> <li>○ Promote tourism opportunities which motivate visitors to stay longer within the community</li> <li>○ Respond to day to day inquiries via email and telephone</li> <li>○ Proactively engage in social media channels</li> </ul>
Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collect visitor data including but not limited to origin, length of stay, destination, purpose of visit</li> </ul>
Industry Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Liaise with business community, user groups, community groups to ensure accuracy of information</li> <li>○ Liaise with Arctic Ambassadors to ensure consistent information delivery</li> <li>○ Develop and manage consistent branded information distribution program for alternative channels (i.e. hotel lobby)</li> <li>○ Support the Conference Bureau where relevant to Yellowknife stakeholders</li> </ul>
Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identify areas of engagement or opportunity to maximize visitor reach (i.e. mobile/kiosk information services)</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Oversee the operations and financial management of the Visitor Centre</li> <li>○ Provide monthly visitor data</li> <li>○ Provide annual and quarterly reporting</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adhere to the guidelines and expectations established by the GNWT and Dept. of ITI</li> <li>○ Considerations to house future DMO</li> <li>○ Opportunity for cohesive branding of YK Visitor Services, DMO and any other partners.</li> <li>○ Tlicho Community Government opportunities (space, staff, training etc.)</li> </ul>

## 5.5 Next Steps & Timeline

There is a sense of urgency to action the strategy due to the temporary nature of the current Visitor Centre and demands on City Hall space. The Centre is scheduled to end its tenancy at City Hall on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2018. There is also the matter of the future accommodation levy legislation currently slated for 3<sup>rd</sup> reading in October 2018 and the development of a potential destination management organization that will follow.

The following next steps and suggested timelines are extremely ambitious considering these two issues but allow the visitor servicing strategy to move forward proactively.

ACTION	TIMING
Consultants to present strategy to Yellowknife Council	July 23, 2018
Council to provide direction to City Staff	Week of July 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Identify & appoint Council member to oversee portfolio	Week of July 23 <sup>rd</sup>
Determine governance model (with consideration of future DMO) and develop Terms of Reference for TAC	July 30-August 10
Develop RFP including scoring criteria for delivery of Visitor Services	July 30-August 10
Call for applications for Tourism Advisory Committee	July 30 – August 10
Identify and have Council appoint TAC members	August 13



Media communique re: Inaugural TAC	August 14
Issue RFP for delivery of Visitor Services	August 13- August 31
Develop transition plan allowing for flexibility	August month
RFP Closes	August 31
Review and Award RFP	Week of Sept 4 <sup>th</sup>
Media and stakeholder event to introduce and launch new Visitor Services program	Week of Sept 24 <sup>th</sup>
Transition	September 30, 2018

## 6 Appendices

1. Stakeholder Feedback
2. Campbell River Tourism Advisory Committee Bylaw
3. Tourism Yukon-City of Whitehorse MOU
4. RFP Example

## 6.1.1 Appendix 1 Stakeholder Participants

### Open House #1

**Participants:** Yvonne Quick Artic Ambassadors, Margaret & Amanda Peterson My Backyard Tours, Carlos Gonzales Yellowknife Outdoor Adventures, Chris Potyok Northern Star B&B & Tourism Services, Redmond & wife representing a security business, Councilor Rebecca Alty

Observer: Richard Weyallon Tourism Coordinator Tlicho Region

- Visitor servicing in Yellowknife should encompass all the communities in the North Slave
- Knowledgeable staff is key, staff need to know about your business
- A dedicated location is important with consistent hours of operation, in particular during hours businesses are not open i.e. Sundays and holidays
- Critical that information is timely and accurate
- Primary role is for visitor servicing takes place in destination
- First impression of the current visitor centre –facility is not welcoming, doesn't reflect the destination (understood it is interim), a new space should be modernized, wide open spaces, strong branding, perhaps reflecting the night sky
- Inuvik Centre was cited as an example
- Range of opinions on role of visitor centre in taking bookings – some felt a single source was good for the visitor, others felt that the role was to provide a list of options and let the visitor decide
- Concern over the ability for the visitor centre staff to be unbiased if bookings were part of the service offering
- Concerns about the Visitor Centre being in competition with businesses i.e. retail
- Industry stakeholders on average have 80% of their business pre-booked (not verified – information provided by an operator)
- Stakeholders indicated they drive their own business through their websites and own marketing activities
- Brochure distribution outside of the Visitor Centre needs to be addressed, no branding, no coordinated or consistent delivery from one business to the next (i.e. hotel lobby brochure racks)
- Still strong demand for brochures at airport (Artic Ambassadors) 14-18k brochure distribution annually (they limit their distribution to destination brochures and do not distribute individual business brochures due to space limitations and length of visitor interaction)
- Accessible Free Wifi throughout town is a big opportunity – 10 hotspots
- A new centre has the opportunity to be a Learning Centre (example Watson Lake – Aurora Centre)
- Budgets are a consideration and a new centre shouldn't be a large bricks and mortar expenditure
- Overall concern of service quality within the community, the Yellowknife experience is world class (best place to see Aurora in the world) however the delivery is sometimes lacking
- Short on data, would like access to more information about visitor profiles

## Open House #2

Trevor Wotherspoon Watta Lake Lodge, Michael Olson Outcrop Communications, Lisa Seagrave Gallery of the Midnight Sun, Rosanna Strong Strong Interpretation, Faith & Ken Embleton Embleton B&B, Councilor Shauna Morgan

Observer: Richard Weyallon Tlicho Region Tourism Coordinator

- Visitor services doesn't get involved in marketing, most of business came from membership in sector associations, website and Facebook
- A visitor centre provides a sense of place and represents the community, an opportunity to showcase and theme the space
- A visitor centre should provide a good first impression, standardized service and is the formal or official source of information providing the broadest range of information
- Product knowledge is key to a successful visitor centre with certified training for staff
- A visitor centre should be neutral and unbiased
- Visitor centres should engage in social media
- Visitors arrive for the aurora but there is an opportunity to fill their time as they are less aware of the other things to see and do
- China market has become the tipping point and has the greatest impact on business
- There is a sense that businesses are siloed and do their own thing, limited networking or collaboration on marketing or visitor engagement
- All licensed businesses should be able to participate, concerns around unlicensed businesses affecting business and quality, some prefer stakeholder model to membership model
- More opportunities than just a visitor centre, perhaps a travelling show to the south
- Strong concerns regarding retail in a visitor centre and unfair competition
- Some businesses have experienced a decline in business since the previous visitor centre closed, others an increase (depending on the type of business)
- Enjoyed the previous networking opportunity for businesses to support one another
- Visitor Services can fill the gaps for last minute booking/vacancies
- Some sense concern regarding decision around visitor servicing before decision for a DMO and levy



TOURISM ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE

**BYLAW 3643, 2016**

# BYLAWS



Cover photo by Toni Falk



## **Tourism Advisory Committee**

### **Bylaw No. 3643, 2016**

ADOPTED \_\_\_\_\_ 2016

#### **PURPOSE**

To provide terms of reference for the City's Tourism Advisory Committee

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**WHEREAS, the** Council of the City of Campbell River has adopted the following vision and goal statements for tourism growth and development in Campbell River:

**Our Tourism Vision**

*“The people of Campbell River will work in unison to sustainably develop and promote our unique destination. Together we will create a vibrant, year-round visitor economy that generates jobs, grows revenues for tourism businesses and contributes to resident quality of life.”*

**Goal Statement #1 – Destination Marketing**

*We will conduct effective destination marketing in target markets with a focus on generating incremental overnight stays in paid accommodation.*

**Goal Statement #2 – Visitor Servicing**

*We will provide visitors with information where/when/how they need it to support longer lengths of stay and increased spending and, we will educate and train stakeholders and community at-large to deliver remarkable experiences.*

**Goal Statement #3 – Destination Development**

*We will contribute tourism knowledge and expertise to ensure visitor perspective is considered in all significant local projects/ventures;*

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the City of Campbell River has deemed it appropriate to establish a Tourism Advisory Committee;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the City of Campbell River in an opening meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

**PART 1: Title**

**1.1** This bylaw may be cited for all purposes as Tourism Advisory Committee Bylaw No.3643

**PART 2: Definitions**

2.1 In this bylaw unless the context otherwise requires:

**TAC or  
Committee** means Tourism Advisory Committee

**City** means the City of Campbell River

**Council** means the Council of the City of Campbell River

**MRDT** means Municipal and Regional District Tax applied to the purchase of accommodation.

**Rolling 5-  
Year Tourism  
Strategy** Means the five-year strategy to achieve measurable progress towards the goals and vision for tourism that is updated annually by the TAC and recommended to Council for adoption

**Annual  
destination  
marketing  
and visitor  
servicing  
plan** Means a detailed tactical plan for a 12-month period in support of achieving the goals and vision of the rolling five-year tourism strategy including a proposed annual budget allocated to specific tactical areas that is prepared annually and recommended to Council by the TAC

## **PART 3: Purpose**

3.1 The purpose of the Tourism Advisory Committee is to provide policy advice and recommendations to Council that will advance the City's progress towards its tourism vision and deliver measurable returns in each of the three goal statement areas.

3.2 The following matters are within the mandate of the Committee:

- a) Provide market intelligence, contribute tourism industry knowledge and ideas and develop a rolling 5-year tourism strategy and an annual destination marketing and visitor servicing plan;
- b) Recommend annual updates to the rolling 5-year tourism strategy and the annual destination marketing and visitor servicing plan to Council ensuring these plans clearly identify strategies and tactics along with anticipated measures of success to achieve quantifiable progress against each goal statement and ultimately towards the adopted vision for tourism in Campbell River;
- c) Recommend a resource allocation model/budget to accompany this annual destination marketing and visitor servicing plan that includes funds allocated from the City budget, funds anticipated to be received from MRDT collection, partner funds and stakeholder cooperative marketing investments
- d) Regularly assess returns from approved investment strategies, communicate these results to Council and to stakeholders/partners and recommend revisions to future strategies based upon lessons learned and returns achieved;



- e) Work closely and support the efforts of the contracted tourism service provider to:
  - (i) Regularly engage with Campbell River's tourism stakeholders to identify new market opportunities to be considered for investment;
  - (ii) Offer formal input opportunities (workshops, open houses) for tourism stakeholders to contribute their ideas and market knowledge to the annual update of a rolling 5-year strategic tourism plan and to the development of the annual destination marketing and visitor servicing plan;
  - (iii) Design and offer cooperative marketing opportunities into which Campbell River's tourism stakeholders may 'buy into' that promote specific businesses as well as the larger destination of Campbell River;
  - (iv) Engage with potential tourism partners where mutual benefit can be derived from such partnerships including but not limited to First Nations, regional partners, sector-specific partners, and Provincial partnerships.
- f) Assess the performance of the contracted service provider and make recommendations to Council related to the continuation of this relationship;
- g) Receive and review information, correspondence and minutes from other external organizations/committees as requested by Council and forward them to Council with recommendations as required.

## **PART 4: Membership**

### **4.1 The TAC shall consist of nine members as follows:**

- a) Three (3) members representing the Accommodation providers (collectors of the MRDT) – selected through a sector-administered voting procedure.
- b) Six (6) members appointed by Council following a skills-based public application process designed to identify individuals having specific experience/knowledge of tourism or destination marketing, visitor servicing or related and relevant skills. While the ability to contribute, expertise is the priority for selection, these six members, if possible, should capture broad representation from a wide of range of visitor experiences such as:
  - (i) Small inns/B&B's
  - (ii) Arts, culture, heritage
  - (iii) Restaurants/retail
  - (iv) Activity operators
  - (v) Sport tourism
  - (vi) Boating/angling.
- c) Three (3) Non-voting liaison members representing:
  - (i) City of Campbell River – Economic Development
  - (ii) Campbell River and District Chamber of Commerce

- (iii) Business Improvement Areas – located within the City of Campbell River.

## PART 5: Appointment of Members

5.1 The following shall apply to all appointments:

- a) Council will appoint members to the Committee.
- b) In the event of a vacancy, Council may appoint a person for the unexpired term.

## PART 6: Terms of Appointment

6.1 The following shall apply to all appointments:

- an) All appointments shall be for a two (2) year term, commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January;
- b) Notwithstanding section 6.1(a), Council's inaugural appointments shall consist of five (5) two-year appointments and four (4) one-year appointments;
- c) The Committee may review the attendance circumstances of any member who has missed three consecutive meetings without prior permission and may recommend to Council that the membership of such member be terminated;
- d) Any appointee to the Committee may be removed by an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3rds) of all members of Council.

## PART 7: Chair

- 7.1 The Committee shall elect, from its members at its first meeting of each year, a Chair and Vice-Chair who shall hold office for the ensuing year or until their successors are elected.
- 7.2 The Chair shall preside at meetings of the Committee when present and in his absence, the Vice-Chair will preside over the meeting.
- 7.3 The Chair is responsible for ensuring the rules of procedure are followed prior to and during each meeting, and, in consultation with the staff liaison that items on their meeting agenda fall within their mandate.
- 7.4 The Chair or Acting-Chair shall conduct the meeting in accordance with this bylaw, the *Community Charter*, *Local Government Act*, Council policy, Council's Procedure Bylaw and Roberts Rules of Order.
- 7.5 If the Chair or Acting-Chairs are not present at the time appointed for the meeting, the staff liaison should call the meeting to order and the members present should immediately elect a Chair *pro tem* to preside over that meeting, or until the Chair or Acting-Chair arrives. Such office is terminated by the entrance of the Chair or Acting-Chair, the end of the meeting, or the election of another Chair *pro tem*.
- 7.6 The Chair's duties are:

- a) Check if a quorum is present and open the meeting at the prescribed time;
  - b) Announce the business in the proper sequence – as on the agenda;
  - c) Recognize members entitled to speak, in the order in which they request to speak;
  - d) State and put the questions (resolutions which have been moved and seconded) to a vote;
  - e) Enforce the rules of procedure and decorum;
  - f) Expedite business;
  - g) Decide questions of order and respond to parliamentary enquiries; and
  - h) Declare the meeting adjourned when the business is complete.
- 7.7 The Chair shall serve as a leader and facilitator who encourages people to participate, helps people listen to each other and reflects back the common threads of the discussion. The Chair should be prepared to put aside their personal interests in an effort to help the Committee reach general consensus.

## PART 8: Meeting Procedures

- 8.1 The Committee shall meet at least 4 (four) times per year at the call of the Chair.
- 8.2 The Committee should strive for consensus in their decision-making; however, final decisions are made by resolution adopted by majority vote.
- 8.3 A quorum for a meeting shall be most members currently serving on the Committee.
- 8.4 Committee proceedings will be open to members of the public, unless authorized to be held in-camera by the *Community Charter*.
- 8.5 The Committee meeting minutes shall be presented to Council for information and placed on the next regularly scheduled Committee agenda for review and adoption. Upon adoption, the minutes are to be signed by the Chair or member presiding and distributed to the Committee members.

## PART 9: Delegations and Correspondence

- 9.1 All delegations requesting permission to appear before the Committee shall submit a written request to the City Clerk, including a written synopsis clearly outlining their topic of concern and recommendations by 3:00 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week preceding the meeting.
- 9.2 Delegations will be given 5 minutes to present, unless a longer period is agreed to by majority vote of those members present.
- 9.3 Where a request to present has not been received by the City Clerk as prescribed in section 9.1, an individual or delegation may present to the Committee if approved by majority vote

of those members, present.

- 9.4** The deadline for the public to submit items to the City Clerk for inclusion on the Committee agenda shall be 3:00 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week preceding the meeting.
- 10.1** This section applies to a person appointed to the Committee under section 6 in relation to Committee meetings.
- 10.2** Where a member of a Committee attending a meeting of a Committee considers that he or she is not entitled to participate in the discussion of a matter, or to vote on a question in respect of a matter, because the member has;
- a)** a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the matter, or
  - b)** another interest in the matter that constitutes a conflict of interest, the member must declare this and state in general terms the reason why the member considers this to be the case.
- 10.3** After making the declaration under section 11.2 of this Bylaw, the Committee member must not do anything referred to in section 101(2) of the *Community Charter*, as if that section applied to Committee members.
- 10.4** The official responsible for recording the minutes of a meeting of the Committee will record the declaration of a conflict by a member of the Committee, the reasons given for the declaration, the time of the member of the Committee's departure from the meeting room, and if applicable, of the member's return.
- 10.5** If Council considers that a member of the Committee has acted in breach of this section, it may remove the member from the Committee, unless Council considers that the breach was done inadvertently or resulted from an error of judgment in good faith or that the conflict of interest would be of a type described in section 104 of the *Community Charter* or a regulation under that section.

## **PART 11: Remuneration**

- 11.1** No member of the Committee will receive any remuneration for services, however, a member is entitled to reimbursement for any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Committee that were previously approved by the Committee. The Committee's budget will be established by Council on an annual basis.

## **PART 12: Technical & Administrative Support**

- 12.1** The City Manager shall designate a staff liaison and recording secretary to aid the work of the Committee. Designated support staff may attend the Committee meetings in a resource capacity, but not be permitted to vote. The Committee does not direct the staff liaison, nor can they request other staff resources. Such requests must go through either the City Manager or Council.

- 12.2** The staff liaison provides support to the Committee on behalf of Council to ensure the mandate of the Committee is met. Acting in their capacity as liaison, staff provides Committees with technical and operational information that assists the Committee in their work on behalf of Council. The staff liaison will assist with the preparation of recommendations to Council as requested by the Committee.
- 12.3** Under the direction of the Chair, the recording secretary shall be responsible for the preparation of agendas, minutes and follow-up from the meetings.
- 12.4** The recording secretary will have meeting agendas available for pick up on Friday at noon prior to the meeting of the Committee.
- 12.5** The Committee is entitled to reasonable use of City services and facilities, such as meeting rooms, photocopying, stationery supplies, etc. for Committee business, which are to be arranged by the recording secretary.

## **PART 13: Reporting**

- 13.1** The Committee Chairperson, with the assistance of the staff liaison, will report to Council on behalf of the Committee utilizing the standard reporting format adopted by the City. If deemed appropriate by the City Manager, such reports shall be accompanied by a staff report.
- 13.2** To make a presentation before Council at a regular meeting, the request is made to the City Clerk by submitting the report or presentation in written form. The report must clearly state any requests being made of Council and any recommended Council resolutions for further action. Generally, a report to Council will include background on the purpose of the report, facts or information, the findings or conclusions from the information (if required), and the recommendations of the Committee.
- 13.3** Prior to November 30th each year, the Committee will present an annual report to Council, setting out its activities and accomplishments for the previous year. The report shall also present to Council for its approval, work plan and budget for the following year.

## **PART 14: Expectations**

- 14.1** The Committee and its members are required to:
- a) be accountable and responsive to Council;
  - b) be open and transparent by observing legislative meeting protocol and conducting their business in public meetings;
  - c) be collaborative in nature and respectful;
  - d) remain accessible to each other, and to the Committee;
  - e) regularly consult with the peer groups that they represent; and
  - f) regularly share, and disseminate information between all Committee members on a timely basis.

**14.2** As the Committee and its members are representatives of the City of Campbell River, members must distinguish when speaking in public, whether they are speaking as a member, a representative of another agency or community group, or as an individual. As a general rule, it is the Chair of a Committee that speaks publicly on behalf of the Committee when and where appropriate.

READ THE FIRST TIME this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2016

READ THE SECOND TIME this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2016

READ THE THIRD TIME this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2016

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2016

Signed by the Mayor and City Clerk this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2016

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### 6.1.3 Appendix 3 MOU City of Whitehorse and Tourism Yukon

#### **PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT - TOURISM**

**Between**

**CITY OF WHITEHORSE** (hereinafter the City)

**and**

**GOVERNMENT OF YUKON, DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM & CULTURE, TOURISM BRANCH** (hereinafter Tourism Yukon)

Whereas, Tourism Yukon and the City (the Parties) share mutual interest and benefit from the positive impacts that tourism provides to the City of Whitehorse and Yukon;

Whereas, the Parties, as represented by the Director of Tourism (Tourism Yukon) and the Director of Community and Recreational Services (City), agree to continue to work in partnership to jointly promote tourism and tourism experience opportunities in Whitehorse and Yukon;

Whereas, the Parties are interested in integrating interdependent tourism-related activities to achieve efficiencies and enhance the effectiveness of these efforts;

Whereas, the Parties have confirmed their interest in maintaining an ongoing partnership jointly promoting Yukon and Whitehorse as a place to visit, live, work, and play the Parties agree to undertake and/or maintain the following joint initiatives in 2015-2017:

1. The Parties agree to meet twice per year to explore additional opportunities to work together and to assess the performance of existing activities and initiatives;
2. The Parties agree to explore opportunities to work together on several key Action Items in the new Economic Development Strategy recently completed by the City, including but not limited to:
  - Signage/Way finding – Review tourist-oriented directional and attraction signage;
  - Leverage appropriate marketing initiatives to serve the City's resident attraction strategies;
  - Work together to ensure points-of-first contact are positive (i.e. customer service training requirements for taxis/airport shuttles, improved complaint tracking and penalty systems);
  - Explore development of a resident ambassador program (where residents host visitors to the City for a meal or some other assistance);
  - Collaborate with the Yukon Convention Bureau to attract the target demographic for conferences and events;
  - Improved marketing of local events by leveraging Tourism Yukon's marketing assets like [travelyukon.com](http://travelyukon.com);
  - Tourism Yukon to provide visual assets and information to enhance relevant sections of the City's website promoting Whitehorse as a place to visit, live, work, and play;
  - Work together to develop a Resident Attraction Package and Welcome Package for new City residents; and
  - Review existing arts and cultural strategies to identify additional ways that the City can support the local arts and cultural opportunities in partnership with Tourism Yukon.

3. The Parties agree to work together on Sport Tourism with the objective of sharing information, coordinating planning and maximizing benefits for Whitehorse and Yukon. in collaboration with other stakeholders;
4. Tourism Yukon agrees to invite the City to participate in appropriate familiarization tours that promote Whitehorse businesses, services, attractions, and events;
5. The Parties agree to work together to ensure that content on the travelyukon.com website, social media, and other material such as the Yukon Vacation Planner produced and distributed by Tourism Yukon appropriately reflects the priorities of the City;
6. Tourism Yukon agrees to distribute Visitor Parking Passes and City pins, supplied by the City, at the Yukon Visitor Information Centre in Whitehorse;
7. The City agrees to forward visitor inquiries to Tourism Yukon and Tourism Yukon agrees to fulfill these inquiries with a Yukon Vacation Planner and/or other appropriate information that satisfy the potential visitor's needs;
8. The City agrees to direct visitors seeking tourism-related information at the City's offices to the Yukon Visitor Information Centre in Whitehorse;
9. Tourism Yukon agrees to provide outdoor banners to the City without charge and the City will erect the banners throughout the City on existing hardware without charge – any costs to repair and replace hardware will be borne by Tourism Yukon; and
10. The Parties agree to review the terms, conditions, and activities in this Partnership Agreement every two years in the context of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, learning, and community leadership.

Agreed to between the parties:

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Hon. Elaine Taylor

Minister of Tourism and Culture

Government of Yukon

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Date

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His Worship Dan Curtis

Mayor

City of Whitehorse

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Date



#### **6.1.4 Appendix 4 City of Campbell River Sample RFP for Destination Marketing, Development & Visitor Servicing**

See Attached PDF File [RFP\\_16-72\\_Tourism\\_Implementation\\_Services\\_FINAL\\_10Nov16](#)

#### **6.1.5 ACRONYMS – the following acronyms have been employed in this document**

<b>GNWT</b>	Government of Northwest Territories
<b>NWTT</b>	Northwest Territories Tourism
<b>ITI</b>	Industry, Tourism and Investment
<b>NWT</b>	Northwest Territories
<b>NFVA</b>	Northern Frontier Visitors Association
<b>DMO</b>	Destination Marketing/Management Organization
<b>PWNHC</b>	Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre
<b>TAC</b>	Tourism Advisory Council/Committee