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Mayor Rebecca Alty and City of Yellowknife Councillors
PO Box 580
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2N4

November 16th, 2018

Re: City of Yellowknife 2019 Budget

Dear Mayor Alty and City of Yellowknife Councillors,

The Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce takes pride in the positive relationship that has been developed between the City and the Yellowknife Chamber, and the many successful partnerships we've established. It is in this spirit that we bring forward our comments on the City of Yellowknife's 2019 draft budget.

We'd like to start by acknowledging the financial pressures that the City of Yellowknife faces. We understand that the cost of goods and services are continuously increasing, that regulatory burdens require substantial investment for compliance, and the City must also account for inflation. We'd like to remind Council that these are the same financial pressures that Yellowknife businesses and residents must face and adapt to.

We also understand the City's need to invest in essential infrastructure, such as paving, water and sewer maintenance, and we commend the City of Yellowknife for their lean internal operations where wages and salaries represent only 35% of expenditures, a percentage that is substantially higher in many other Canadian jurisdictionsⁱ.

With that said, the City's spending has increased from \$59.4 million in 2009ⁱⁱ to \$95.1 million in 2019 (including \$14.6 million in amortization)ⁱⁱⁱ, while the City's population growth has remained relatively stagnant. It's not practical for us to make specific recommendations about operational spending cuts as Administration are the experts, however, we urge Council to scrutinize the City's services to ensure they are well-used and appropriate for a City of 20,000 people.

In addition, we urge the City to aggressively lobby the Government of the Northwest Territories to provide the additional \$11.4 million in funding that the City is entitled to. You have the full support of the Yellowknife business community and we are pleased to offer our continued support and assistance with lobbying the Territorial Government to close this funding gap.



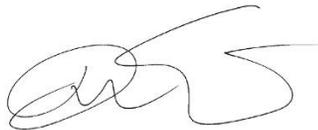
Keeping the financial strain that the City expects to experience when faced with the 2020 and 2021 Budget, and our desire to ensure that commercial property taxes remain competitive over the long-term – we do not support the \$450,000 proposed capital expenditure for the Trail Enhancement and Connectivity project (pg. 120). We feel that this significant amount of capital spending could be better spent elsewhere.

We strive to take a balanced approach when reviewing the City's budget and would like to voice our support for several projects that we felt are reasonable and will have a meaningful impact on the Yellowknife business community. We support the \$75,000 expenditure for the 'Design and Construction Standards' project (pg.140), the \$50,000 expenditure for the 'Economic Development Strategy' project (pg. 207) and the \$103,000 expenditure for the 'Homelessness Employment' project (pg. 211).

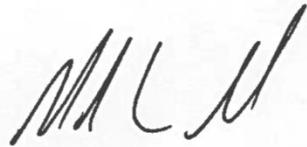
We'd also like to voice our support for the proposed expenditures related to implementing the recommendations of the Accessibility Audit. We believe that meaningful growth can be best achieved when all Yellowknifers have a fair opportunity to participate in our community.

We look forward to discussing the 2019 budget with you and attending budget deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,



Deneen Everett, Executive Director
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce



Mike Lalonde, President
Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce

ⁱ Wages & Salaries as % of expenditures: Leduc 50.83%, Edmonton 55.7%, Fort St. John 38.7%

ⁱⁱ City of Yellowknife. (2008). 2009 Budget Updated. Retrieved from: https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/city-government/resources/Budget/2009_Budget_Update/2009_Budget_Update_Combined_Files.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Yellowknife. (2018). Consolidated 2019 Budget. Retrieved from: <https://www.yellowknife.ca/en/city-government/resources/Budget/2019-Budget/18.-Consolidated-2019-Budget.pdf>