



**Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting
April 1, 2025**

AGENDA

A. CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM

B. REVIEW

- a. Agenda
- b. Minutes
- c. Visions and Values
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest

C. DELEGATIONS

D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. Corporate Services Director's Report
- b. Accounts Payable Report
- c. Correspondence

E. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Briefing Note: 2025-26 WWS Contribution Agreement with GNWT
- b. Briefing Note: 2025-26 Community Public Infrastructure (CPI) Contribution Agreement
- c. Briefing Note: 2025-26 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Funding Agreement
- d. Briefing Note: 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw

F. OTHER BUSINESS

G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

I. ADJOURNMENT



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

MINUTES

The Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting was held on Tuesday, March 4th, 2025 @ 7:20 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Cr. Benwell, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, D/M Keizer, Mayor Fergusson, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette
Regrets: Cr. Tuckey
Staff Present: Tracy Thomas, Senior Administrative Officer
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary
Jim Hood, Director of Corporate Services

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Fergusson called the meeting to order at 7:20 pm, confirmed quorum.

B. REVIEW

a. Agenda

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That the agenda be amended to add an in-camera session under (F) Other Business.

PASSED

b. Minutes

Moved by: Cr. Bathe
Seconded by: Cr. Couvrette

That the minutes from the Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting on February 4th 2025, be adopted as presented.

PASSED

Cr. Couvrette followed up on the amended minutes, referencing the motion that was passed regarding a letter to be written for the Minister of ITI concerning the 2030 tourism strategy consultations and the lack of a dedicated session for Fort Smith. Since then, ITI has decided to offer a session in Fort Smith, scheduled for Thursday at 6 PM.

Upon reviewing the GNWT website, Cr. Couvrette noted that most communities were provided with two separate sessions—an afternoon meeting with the tourism industry sector and an evening public session. However, in Fort Smith, these were combined into a single public session from 6 to 8 PM. Cr. Couvrette questioned why ITI did not arrange an in-person discussion downtown and instead opted for a virtual session, suggesting this approach makes Fort Smith appear as a secondary priority in the tourism strategy.

Given Fort Smith's status as a key tourism hub in the NWT, with significant natural attractions and a role as a host community for festivals and events, Cr. Couvrette expressed frustration with ITI's approach. He urged the Mayor to follow up with the Minister to advocate for equitable treatment, similar to what is afforded to Hay River, Yellowknife, and Inuvik, ensuring Fort Smith is given appropriate recognition and engagement in tourism discussions.

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Benwell

To have the Mayor follow up with ITI and the Minister about the level and degree of consultation with the community of Fort Smith, regarding the 2030 tourism strategy.

PASSED



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

- c. Vision and Values
- d. Declaration of Financial Interest – none at this time

C. DELEGATIONS

D. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- a. The Corporate Services Director's Report for February

Director Hood noted that the auditors will be here between March 27th and April 3rd.

- b. Accounts Payable Report
- c. Correspondence

Council discussed a request from Uncle Gabe's Friendship Centre to adjust lottery licensing rates. Mayor Fergusson noted that similar concerns had been raised in the past and believed prior bylaw amendments aimed at equity were not fully implemented. She emphasized that this issue should be prioritized in the ongoing bylaw review, given its impact on community organizations.

Cr. Heaton highlighted the Friendship Centre's vital role in supporting children facing food insecurity through its lunch and snack programs. She noted that structural issues and insufficient core funding pose significant challenges. With many families struggling, she stressed the urgency of reassessing bingo regulations for NGOs and charities to ensure these essential services continue, warning that without action, many children could go without meals.

E. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Briefing Note- CAMA Board Meeting – Ottawa February 2025 – **For Information Only**

- a. Briefing Note – Approval of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council approve the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan: *Foundations for the Future: Our Strategic Path 2025-2029*, as presented, and direct Administration to proceed with implementation.

PASSED

- b. Briefing Note – 2025 Mill Rate Calculations

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: Cr. Heaton

That Council select, from the above scenarios, the Mill Rate calculation to be used in the preparation of the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.

I move that Council select Scenario Two in which the weighting factor used for Residential and Country Residential properties is unchanged, and the weighting factor for Industrial, Institutional and Telecommunications is increased by 5%. This scenario is to be used for the calculation to be used in the preparation of the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.



**Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting
March 4th, 2025**

PT on average assessed value					
PT CLASSES	WEIGHTING	AVERAGE ASSESSED VALUE OF TAXABLE AND GRANTABLE PROPERTIES	PROPOSED MILL RATE 2025	MILL RATE 2024	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE
Residential	0.4350	\$ 144,596	14.61	13.87	\$ 107
Residential - Undeveloped	0.4475	\$ 16,323	15.03	14.18	\$ 14
Commercial	0.8250	\$ 338,894	27.71	26.31	\$ 474
Commercial - Undeveloped	0.8750	\$ 23,571	29.39	27.90	\$ 35
Industrial	0.8670	\$ 240,385	29.12	26.32	\$ 673
Industrial - Undeveloped	0.9290	\$ 13,335	31.20	28.22	\$ 40
Institutional	1.1870	\$ 1,910,141	39.87	36.03	\$ 7,333
Institutional - Undeveloped	1.2390	\$ 55,159	41.62	37.63	\$ 220
Recreation	0.5000	\$ 113,783	16.79	15.94	\$ 97
Telecommunications	1.1660	\$ 514,367	39.16	35.39	\$ 1,941
Country - Residential	0.3866	\$ 158,547	12.99	12.33	\$ 104
Country - Undeveloped	0.3890	\$ 10,067	13.07	12.40	\$ 7
Country - Mixed	0.4500	\$ -	15.11	14.35	\$ -

PASSED

c. Briefing Note – Status Update – NLMCC Co-Stewardship Agreement in Principle

Moved by: Cr. Benwell

Seconded by: D/M Keizer

To ensure the process stays in line with Council’s direction, Administration recommends:

1. Clarifying with TLC partners that the Town’s participation in the AIP is strictly for due diligence and investigation, and that there is no commitment to proceed at this stage.
2. Requesting SRFN, SLFN, and FSMC to form a working group consisting of only Chiefs/Mayors and key Administration personnel.
3. Delaying the review of the Draft AIP until after the working group has been created and the Draft has been revised to clearly state that no party, including the Town of Fort Smith, is obligated to move beyond investigation without formal Council approval.
4. Ensuring that any financial commitments are clearly defined before proceeding further, including identifying who will cover costs associated with the next steps (e.g., legal and environmental assessments)
5. Bringing the matter back to Council; before any further action is taken beyond engagement and investigation.

I move that Council approve the recommendations outlined in the briefing note and direct Administration to take the necessary steps to implement them.

PASSED

*Cr. Couvrette excused himself from this discussion

F. OTHER BUSINESS

a. In Camera Session

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council move in-camera in accordance with the Cities, Towns, and Villages Act, Section 23(3)(e) a matter still under consideration and on which Council has not yet publicly announced a decision if discussion in public would likely prejudice the municipal corporation’s ability to carry out its activities or negotiations.

PASSED

*Cr. Benwell removed herself from the in-camera due to conflict of interest.

Moved by: D/M Keizer

Seconded by: Cr. Bathe



Corporate Services Standing Committee Meeting March 4th, 2025

That Council reaffirms its commitment to working collaboratively with Salt River First Nation to develop a fair, equitable, and sustainable Municipal Services Agreement that benefits both parties. Council remains dedicated to fostering a strong partnership and ensuring that a mutually beneficial agreement is reached as a priority.

PASSED

Moved by: Cr. Heaton
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That Council move out of in-camera at 9 pm.

PASSED

G. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

Moved by: Cr. Couvrette
Seconded by: DM Keizer

That Cr. Tuckey be excused from the Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting on March 4th, 2025.

PASSED

H. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

That next Corporate Services Standing Committee meeting be on April 1st, 2025.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by: Cr. Bathe
Seconded by: D/M Keizer

That the meeting be adjourned at 9:05 pm.

PASSED

Our Vision and Mission

Community Vision

Fort Smith is a vibrant, future-focused community with a small-town feel, where residents enjoy a high quality of life. With efficient services and sustainable land use, the Town actively preserves and enhances its heritage, culture, and natural environment.

Council Vision

The Town of Fort Smith is a thriving, well-managed local government where proactive stewardship ensures the long-term sustainability of our publicly owned assets. We are committed to sound governance, responsible planning, and delivering services that meet the needs of our residents at reasonable levels.

With a strong organizational culture and a collaborative approach, we foster positive relationships with neighboring First Nations and Metis communities and work together toward shared prosperity. By supporting local economic opportunities, accessible services, and a good quality of life, we create a community where seniors can retire with dignity, young people can build a future, and all residents can feel a sense of belonging and possibility.

Mission

The Town of Fort Smith provides a broad range of essential and valued services that support our community's well-being, both now and for future generations. Through responsible resource management and responsive delivery service, we create a well-functioning and forward-looking community that enriches the lives of all who call Fort Smith home.





REPORT TO COUNCIL

Corporate Services
Corporate Services Monthly Report

Date: March 27, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH ACCEPTS THE CORPORATE SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT AS PRESENTED.

BACKGROUND

Corporate Services currently has one vacant position. The Director of Corporate Services position is still vacant but is being temporarily filled by Jim Hood. Attempts to staff this position have been unsuccessful so far so the services of a recruiter are currently being used to assist in finding a suitable candidate. The Clerk/Receptionist position has been staffed through a competition run both internally and externally with internal candidates being given preference. The successful candidate is Shanna Schaefer and she begins in the position on March 31st. Corporate Services is looking forward to welcoming Shanna to the team and to being fully staffed out front at least temporarily since December 2024.

The February utility billing was delayed due to the staff vacancy and the new Accounts Receivable Clerk becoming more familiar with the position. Bills went out on March 20, 2025. Efforts will be made to ensure the next billing will be completed closer to mid-month.

The audit of the 2024 financial year began on Monday March 24th with the arrival of a three-person team from Avery, Cooper and Co. They are expected to complete their field work on April 3rd and to have audited financial statements for Council approved before the end of April.

The Capital Budget for 2025 has been approved by Council and work is already underway to move forward on the priority projects and evergreen purchases approved in that budget.

Some areas that will be focused on in the coming months is a review of all contribution agreements to ensure proper reporting is submitted and developing a tool to track contribution agreements. In keeping with strategic priorities of Council, IT Upgrades are moving forward and we are looking at increasing our financial software capabilities to streamline processes like a customer portal and allowing things like business licensing and pet licensing to be done online.

Prepared by:
Jim Hood
Director of Corporate Services
Date: March 27, 2025

Reviewed by:
Tracy Thomas
Senior Administrative Officer
Date: March 27, 2025



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: April 1, 2025
Subject: 2025–2026 WWS Contribution Agreement with GNWT

PURPOSE:

To seek Council approval to enter into the 2025–2026 Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) for Water and Waste Services (WWS) funding in the amount of \$798,000.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) administers annual Water and Waste Services (WWS) funding to support communities with the operational costs of providing water and waste services. The Town of Fort Smith is eligible for funding under MACA's WWS Funding Policy, revised October 3, 2023.

The GNWT has issued a Contribution Agreement offering WWS funding to the Town in the amount of \$798,000 for the 2025–2026 fiscal year.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The agreement provides funding between **April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026**, and includes nine monthly payments ranging from \$88,600 to \$89,200. The funds must be used to support the operational costs of delivering water and waste services.

Key conditions include:

- The Town must have met all obligations under previous WWS funding agreements.
- Any additional sources of WWS-related funding must be disclosed within 30 days of becoming available.
- The Town is required to submit an audited schedule of WWS revenues and expenditures within 120 days of fiscal year end, using MACA's standardized reporting format.

The agreement also contains standard provisions related to financial accountability, insurance, confidentiality, and termination.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve entering into the 2025–2026 WWS Contribution Agreement with the GNWT and authorize the Mayor and SAO to execute the agreement on behalf of the Town.

Motion:

That Council approve the Town of Fort Smith entering into the 2025–2026 Water and Waste Services (WWS) Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories in the amount of \$798,000, and authorize the Mayor and Senior Administrative Officer to sign the agreement on behalf of the Town.



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: April 1, 2025
Subject: 2025–26 Community Public Infrastructure (CPI) Contribution Agreement

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Fort Smith receives annual Community Public Infrastructure (CPI) funding through a Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA). This funding supports eligible capital infrastructure projects as outlined in the Town’s Capital Plan.

ANALYSIS:

The 2025–26 Contribution Agreement outlines the provision of \$1,833,000 in CPI funds, subject to the Town fulfilling all 2024–25 obligations, submitting its Capital Plan for 2025–26, and disclosing all sources of funding. The Agreement was signed on April 1, 2025, and includes standard terms regarding eligible expenditures, financial accountability, insurance, reporting requirements, and the potential for audits and clawbacks if funds are not used in compliance.

Quarterly reports must be submitted by the end of October 2025 and January 2026, with a final audited report due within 120 days of fiscal year end. The Town must also track and report any additional funding sources and maintain a separate bank account for CPI funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council accept this report for information and formally acknowledge the 2025–26 Community Public Infrastructure Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories in the amount of \$1,833,000.

Motion:

“That Council acknowledge and accept the 2025–26 Community Public Infrastructure (CPI) Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories in the amount of \$1,833,000, and that the Mayor and Administration be authorized to execute the agreement as required.”



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council

From: Administration

Date: April 1, 2025

Subject: 2025–26 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Funding Agreement with GNWT

PURPOSE:

To seek Council approval to enter into the 2025–2026 Contribution Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding.

BACKGROUND:

The Town of Fort Smith receives annual O&M funding through a contribution agreement with the GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA). This funding supports the delivery of core community government programs and services.

Each year, a new agreement is prepared outlining payment terms, eligible expenditures, and conditions. The Town must meet all reporting obligations and conditions of the agreement to ensure continued funding.

CURRENT SITUATION:

The proposed 2025–2026 O&M Contribution Agreement provides total funding of **\$2,466,000**, to be disbursed in monthly installments of **\$274,000** from April 1, 2025, through December 1, 2025.

This represents an increase of **\$58,000** over the 2024–2025 O&M allocation of **\$2,408,000**.

Key terms include:

- Compliance with MACA’s O&M Funding Policy (revised October 3, 2023);
- Submission of audited financials within 120 days of fiscal year-end using MACA’s standardized format;
- Recordkeeping for seven years to support potential audits;
- Notification of any additional funding sources related to O&M operations;
- GNWT's right to withhold or recover funds in cases of non-compliance.

The agreement period runs from **April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026**, and must be signed by both the Town and the GNWT before funds can be released.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the execution of the 2025–2026 Operations and Maintenance Contribution Agreement with the GNWT and direct the Mayor and Administration to proceed with signing the agreement.

Motion

“That Council authorize the Mayor and Administration to sign the 2025–2026 Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Contribution Agreement between the Town of Fort Smith and the Government of the Northwest Territories in the amount of \$2,466,000.”



THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH
BY-LAW 1061

A BY-LAW OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH, IN THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MUNICIPAL AND EDUCATION MILL RATE, PASSED PURSUANT TO SECTION 76 OF THE PROPERTY ASSESSMENT AND TAXATION ACT, BEING CHAPTER P-10, OF THE REVISED STATUTES OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES 1988.

WHEREAS, the Council of the Municipal Corporation of the Town of Fort Smith, in the Northwest Territories, deems it to be in the public interest and is required by the provision of the Property Assessment and Taxation Act to establish Mill Rates for Municipal and School purposes; and

NOW THEREFORE, the Council of the Town of Fort Smith, at a duly assembled meeting enacts as follows:

- 1. That this bylaw may be cited as the “2025 Mill Rate Bylaw”;
- 2. That assessed property in the Town of Fort Smith, liable to taxation and in respect of which grants-in-lieu of taxes may be paid, shall be liable for taxation and grants-in-lieu of taxes as follows:

a) Residential Developed.....	14.61
b) Residential Non-Developed.....	15.03
c) Commercial Developed.....	27.71
d) Commercial Non-Developed.....	29.39
e) Industrial Developed.....	29.12
f) Industrial Non-Developed.....	31.20
g) Institutional Developed.....	39.87
h) Institutional Non-Developed.....	41.62
i) Recreational.....	16.79
j) Telecommunications.....	39.16
k) Country Residential Developed.....	12.99
l) Country Residential Non-developed.....	13.07
m) Country Residential Mixed Use.....	15.11

- 3. That the rate of taxation to be applied to lands and improvements liable to taxation, or in respect of which grants-in-lieu may be paid, for school purposes shall be as follows for the year 2025.

a) School Levy.....	2.91
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READ A FIRST TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025, A.D.

READ A SECOND TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025, A.D.



**THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH
BY-LAW 1061**

READ A THIRD TIME THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2025, A.D.

MAYOR

SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

I hereby certify that this bylaw has been made in accordance with the requirements of the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* and the bylaws of the Municipal Corporation of the Town of Fort Smith.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



Briefing Note

To: Mayor and Council
From: Administration
Date: April 1, 2025
Subject: 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw

PURPOSE:

To present the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.

BACKGROUND:

Council approved the 2025 Operating Budget which included proposed property tax revenue of \$4,219,316: an approximate 6.5% increase over the 2024 amount. This requires revision of the Mill Rate. Mill Rate is determined as follows:

$$\text{(Property Tax Revenue Requirement)} / \text{(Total Assessed Value of all properties in Town)} = \text{Mill Rate}$$

From this equation two things can be determined:

- With a fixed Total Assessed Value, an increase in the Revenue Requirement will result in an equivalent increase in the Mill Rate; and
- With a fixed Revenue Requirement, an increase in the Total Assessed Value will result in an equivalent decrease in the Mill Rate.

So, the 6.5% increase in Property Tax Revenue should result in an average 6.5% increase in the Mill Rate. Note that increases in Total Assessed Value (i.e., new construction) and the re-weighting of property classes will reduce the Mill Rate increase necessary to meet the Property Tax Revenue Requirement.

Some Notes regarding Assessed Values:

- The Town does not assess properties; this information is provided by the GNWT, and the role of the Town is to establish the Mill Rate based on the approved Property Tax Revenue Requirement; and
- The GNWT assesses properties by 'class'; these classes include Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Institutional; these classes are further subdivided by grantable (government properties) or taxable (private properties) and developed or vacant.
- These classes, while similarly named, are not the same as municipal development zones, i.e., a person running a home occupation in a Residential Zone may be assessed in the Commercial Class.
- When property owners disagree with the GNWT assessment of their property, they can dispute the assessment at the Board of Revision which meets each Spring. The outcome of this meeting may result in minor changes to the Total Assessed Value. There were no appeals to the Board of Revision this year.

The Council can assign different mill rates to different classes of property and can use these reallocations to distribute the tax burden across classes of property. The 2025 assessment calculations are based on the class of property and the percentages assigned to their respective taxable assessment, as shown in the table below:



Briefing Note

PT on average assessed value					
PT CLASSES	WEIGHTING	AVERAGE ASSESSED VALUE OF TAXABLE AND GRANTABLE PROPERTIES	PROPOSED MILL RATE 2025	MILL RATE 2024	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE
Residential	0.4350	\$ 144,596	14.61	13.87	\$ 107
Residential - Undeveloped	0.4475	\$ 16,323	15.03	14.18	\$ 14
Commercial	0.8250	\$ 338,894	27.71	26.31	\$ 474
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Institutional - Undeveloped	1.2390	\$ 55,159	41.62	37.63	\$ 220
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Telecommunications	1.1660	\$ 514,367	39.16	35.39	\$ 1,941
Country - Residential	0.3866	\$ 158,547	12.99	12.33	\$ 104
Country - Undeveloped	0.3890	\$ 10,067	13.07	12.40	\$ 7
Country - Mixed	0.4500	\$ -	15.11	14.35	\$ -

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw.

“That Bylaw 1061, the 2025 Mill Rate Bylaw, be submitted for First Reading at the Regular Meeting of Council on April 15, 2025.”