



**Council of the Town of Fort Smith**  
**February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 @ 7 pm**

**AGENDA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- a. Confirmation of Quorum and Acknowledgment of First Nations

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**3. DELEGATIONS**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Regular Meeting of Council January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**6. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST**

**7. ADMINISTRATION**

- a. Protective Services
  - i. Director's Report
  - ii. Briefing Note: Fire Training Live Structure
- a. Corporate Services
  - i. Director's Report
  - ii. Account's Paid List
  - iii. Correspondence
- b. Briefing Note: Appointment of Acting Mayor
- c. Briefing Note: Wood Buffalo Frolics Civic Holiday Request
- d. Briefing Note: User Agreement - Slide Zone Shredderz
- e. Briefing Note: Support Request – NWT Snowboard Association Territorial Competition
- f. SAO Report

**8. COUNCIL BUSINESS**

- a. Bylaws
- b. Mayor and Council / Board Representatives

**9. PROCLAMATIONS**

**10. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Regular Meeting of the Council will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026, with reports from Community and Municipal Services.

**11. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS**

**12. QUESTION PERIOD**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**



Council of the Town of Fort Smith  
January 20th, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

MINUTES

The Regular meeting of the Council was held on  
Tuesday, January 20, @ 7 pm within the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Fergusson, D/M Keizer, Cr. Benwell, Cr. Heaton, Cr. Karasiuk, Cr. Bathe, Cr. Tuckey, Cr. Cox, and Cr. Couvrette

Regrets:

Staff Present: Jim Hood, Senior Administrative Officer  
Raveena Brown, Executive Secretary  
Lauren Howes, Director of Community Services

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Mayor Fergusson confirms quorum, reads the Acknowledgment of First Nations.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

|  |  |
|--|--|
| # 25-326                                 | Moved by: Cr. Cox<br>Seconded by: Cr, Karasiuk |
| That the agenda be adopted as presented. |  |
| PASSED                                   |  |

3. DELEGATIONS

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Regular Meeting of Council January 13th, 2026

|   |  |
|---|--|
| # 25-327  | Moved by: Cr. Cox<br>Seconded by: Cr. Tuckey |
| That the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 13, 2026, be adopted as presented. |  |
| PASSED  |  |

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

6. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST

7. ADMINISTRATION

- a. Community Services
  - i. Director’s Report

Director Howes reported that December was a very busy month for Community Services. The month began with a successful Moonlight Madness event, with 18 businesses participating and creating a strong atmosphere in the community. Santa’s Story Time at the library was well attended, and Santa and the elves also visited the daycare, which was greatly appreciated. The Christmas Classic was another success, with eight teams and 88 players participating, followed by the holiday lights display contest and recognition of the three winners.



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New Year's Eve celebrations were very successful, featuring a well-attended, family-friendly event at the REC and fireworks to close out the evening. Director Howes thanked Boom Squad, Municipal Services, and NSixty for their support in making the event a success.

#### ii. 2025 MKL Annual Report

Council was provided with the annual report for the Mary Kaizer Library. At a high level, Director Howes noted that approximately 50 percent of Fort Smith's population holds a library membership, with 185 new library cards issued this year, the highest number in the past five years. Popular programs included Cooks and Books, as well as new teen and kids book clubs. The library recorded over 16,000 items circulated and continues to maintain a strong, up-to-date collection. A highlight of the year was the completion of a new mural in the library, with thanks extended to Melanie Jewel for her work.

#### iii. Briefing Note: Annual Maintenance Closure of the William Schaefer Memorial Pool

Director Howes advised that a full closure of the pool has been scheduled to allow for annual maintenance and required repairs. The closure will begin on February 3 and is expected to last approximately six weeks. This timeframe will allow staff to complete routine maintenance as well as address additional features that currently require attention, ensuring the pool is fully operational for the spring and summer season.

During the closure, all aquatic amenities will be unavailable, including the pool, hot tub, steam room, and sauna. Director Howes noted that recreation programming will continue during this period, and staff are planning to offer additional on-site programming for adults and youth to provide alternative recreational options for the community while the pool is closed.

Cr. Karasiuk asked whether the proposed six-week shutdown period was more intensive than usual or if it was consistent with what occurs annually. He noted that he did not recall a six-week closure in previous years and referenced past extended shutdowns related to issues with the air handling system and power brownouts.

Director Howes explained that annual shutdowns for recreation and aquatic facilities typically range from four to eight weeks based on her experience. She noted that there are current matters within the pool that staff want to address promptly, and that these issues will largely determine the duration of the closure. Director Howes added that a six-week shutdown period was selected to provide a safe and appropriate buffer within that range.

Cr. Heaton asked whether the Town would be offering any form of recognition or consideration for community members who have paid monthly or annual fees, noting that even if the facility is not closed for the full six weeks, it still represents a significant period during which the facility cannot be used.

Director Howes advised that a free swim would be offered for community members before the pool closure to encourage use before the shutdown. She explained that the annual fee structure already accounts for a planned annual closure and is factored into membership pricing. However, Director Howes noted that if the closure extends beyond the anticipated timeframe, the Town would review options to ensure community members continue to receive maximum value from their memberships.

Cr. Couvrette observed that annual pool maintenance has traditionally occurred later in the summer and questioned the rationale for scheduling it in the middle of winter. He noted that during the summer months, residents have alternative swimming options such as Pine Lake or other outdoor locations, whereas comparable alternatives are limited in winter.



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Cr. Couvrette asked whether there was a critical issue necessitating the timing of the maintenance at this point.

Director Howes explained that there are two main reasons for scheduling the pool closure during the winter months. First, she noted that it is becoming common practice in northern communities to hold annual aquatic facility shutdowns in winter, and the Town is intentionally moving toward a consistent January closure going forward. She explained that the coldest weeks tend to place the most strain on the air handling unit, making a winter shutdown more practical from an operational standpoint, even though it requires staff to be creative in maintaining alternative programming for residents.

Second, Director Howes advised that one of the pool pumps currently requires attention and needs sealing work to be completed. She noted that this was a more pressing maintenance issue and was better addressed sooner rather than later. Both factors were considered in determining the timing of the closure.

Cr. Tuckey noted that during his many years on Council, the pool has typically closed in February for approximately six weeks and stated that the proposed closure aligns with past practice.

#### b. Municipal Services

##### i. Director's Report

Cr. Karasiuk indicated that an email response would be sufficient, but raised a concern regarding the automated truck cost, noting it was coming in at approximately \$417,000. He recalled that about \$1 million had been budgeted under the capital plan and questioned whether this amount included the cost of replacement bins to be provided to all residents, noting that those would still need to be purchased separately.

Karasiuk offered a suggestion that the introduction of new bins could present an opportunity to include Town branding, such as decals or stickers, since each household would be placing a new item at the curb. He also sought clarification on the recommendation for a one-truck, one day per week collection model, noting that it was unclear whether this would involve servicing the entire Town in a single day or splitting collection across different areas on separate days. He asked whether clarification was available or if the question could be forwarded for further review.

SAO Hood advised that the matter would need to be considered further, as it would represent a change in the level of service. He explained that the long-term intention, should the Town move to a single operator model with specialized bins, was for residential waste collection to occur one day per week.

He noted that there are still outstanding questions regarding large commercial bins, as his understanding is that the current equipment would not be able to service those bins. As a result, options for larger commercial bins that can be handled by a single operator side-loading truck are being explored. He added that these considerations would be addressed after the residential bins are fully implemented and staff have had an opportunity to assess how the new truck performs in operation.

Cr. Heaton asked for general information on the Town's sidewalk cleanup process and whether a breakdown or map is available showing which areas are addressed first. She specifically inquired about prioritization for sidewalks near locations with higher concentrations of seniors, such as the Sunset Chalet, Northern Lights, and the downtown core. Cr. Heaton noted that many residents in these areas do not drive and that icy or



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poorly maintained sidewalks pose significant safety risks, particularly for seniors, where a fall can result in lengthy recovery periods.

SAO Hood advised that there is no formal policy outlining the order in which roads or sidewalks are cleared. He explained that, in practice, staff generally prioritize areas with the highest traffic, including the downtown core and main sidewalks. Cleanup efforts typically begin in the central regions of the town and then move outward. He also noted that sidewalk maintenance relies on different equipment than road maintenance, which can affect timing and result in sidewalks taking longer to address, depending on equipment availability.

Cr. Bathe asked how residents should report sidewalks that require attention, and whether the preferred method is through the Town's website or by calling it in directly.

SAO Hood advised that the preferred method for reporting sidewalks requiring attention is through the Town's website, particularly if several days have passed since a storm and most other areas have already been addressed. He added that residents may also contact the Town office by phone, as staff have the capacity to receive and respond to public inquiries.

Cr. Tuckey asked whether the Town has taken any steps to secure the new garbage collection equipment, such as providing a down payment, noting reports that manufacturers may allocate equipment on a first-come, first-served basis in the spring. He expressed concern about the risk of missing the opportunity to obtain the required equipment if no action is taken.

SAO Hood explained that a briefing note has been brought forward requesting Council approval to proceed with the purchase of the truck. He advised that once Council approval is received, the Town can confirm the supplier, which would secure its place for that vehicle. He noted that the Director has already been in contact with the company, that the supplier is aware of the Town's interest, and that a quote has been provided. SAO Hood added that the briefing note and accompanying motion are being presented now due to the timing required to ensure the truck can be purchased for delivery in the spring.

#### ii. Briefing Note: Garbage Truck Purchasing

**# 25-328**

**Moved by:**

**Seconded by:**

That Council approve the purchase of one (1) tandem axle waste collection truck equipped with a Labrie side-load collection arm, from Superior North America Inc., as quoted under Quote #20260113 (dated January 13, 2026), for a total of \$416,828.68.

Cr. Cox asked whether the commercial waste bins are owned by individual businesses or by the Town. SAO Hood advised that the majority of large commercial dumpsters are owned by the Town. He noted that a small number are owned by individual businesses, though the Town still provides collection services for those units. He added that a rental fee is charged for the use of town-owned dumpster units.

Cr. Cox expressed concern that the Town is effectively carrying forward a program valued at approximately one million dollars, while introducing a new truck costing roughly half a million dollars that will not service the existing bins. He noted that he was seeking information on potential new commercial bins and understood that they may be plastic, which raised concerns given northern conditions. Councillor Cox cautioned that in extreme cold, plastic bins could be prone to cracking or shattering when handled by equipment.



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Cr. Cox expressed concern about proceeding with the purchase of a new truck without sufficient information, noting the risk of later discovering that the truck or proposed plastic bins are unsuitable for northern conditions and could result in higher long-term costs. He

acknowledged the desire to avoid a 3 percent price increase but felt that, without clearer details on the bins and overall rollout before the deadline, there is a risk of greater expense and operational challenges once the program is implemented.

Cr. Couvrette expressed support for moving toward an automated or semi-automated collection system but raised concern about the lack of clarity on the total cost of the proposal. He noted that while the truck cost is known, it would be helpful to have at least a ballpark estimate for the cost of the bins to better understand the overall financial impact before proceeding.

SAO Hood explained that staff reviewed different truck options, including a front-load model capable of servicing larger bins, but determined that this type of vehicle would not fit within the Town's facilities and was therefore not viable. He noted that many of the existing metal commercial bins are nearing the end of their service life and will need replacement regardless, making this an appropriate time to address that issue.

He further advised that, as outlined in the briefing note, the proposed system would use larger volume bins for residential collection, meaning that where one large metal bin currently exists, it may be replaced with two or three smaller bins. He noted that zoning bylaw requirements already mandate that garbage bins be screened and set back from the roadway, which may require some properties to consolidate bins in a single location for easier collection. In response to Cr. Couvrette's question, SAO Hood stated that the estimated cost for the bins is approximately \$250,000. He added that when combined with the vehicle purchase, the total remains well within the \$1 million approved in the capital plan, with additional considerations still to be reviewed, but overall costs are expected to remain under budget.

\*chair transferred to Cr. Tuckey at 7:30 pm\*

Mayor Fergusson stated that the plastic bins being discussed are designed and tested for northern climates and are already in use in communities such as Yellowknife and Hay River. She emphasized that these are durable products intended for harsh conditions and noted that they have performed well through multiple winters, aside from damage caused by exceptional circumstances such as being run over.

She also stressed the importance of proceeding with the purchase of a new garbage truck, noting that the current vehicle is outdated, prone to breakdowns, and poses safety concerns for staff. Mayor Fergusson stated that municipal services require modern equipment to improve safety, reliability, and service delivery.

Mayor Fergusson stated that the Town should not delay proceeding and noted that if a homeowner damages their bin, the cost of replacement should be the responsibility of the homeowner rather than taxpayers. She also highlighted that many existing commercial bins are at the end of their service life, with lids that no longer close properly, leading to garbage being exposed and scattered by wildlife.

She emphasized that these failing bins contribute to ongoing cleanliness issues in the community and that replacing them is necessary to support a cleaner and more efficient waste collection system for Fort Smith.

\*chair returned to Mayor Fergusson at 8:32 pm\*



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- c. Briefing Note: 2026 General Operations and Maintenance Budget, Utility Fund Operations and Maintenance Budget and Environmental Fund Operations and Maintenance Budget

# 25-329

Moved by: Cr. Cox  
Seconded by: Cr. Bathe

That the Council approve the 2026 General Operating Fund Operations and Maintenance Budget of \$14,402,852; Utility Operating Fund Operations and Maintenance Budget of \$2,842,000 and the Environmental Operating Fund Operations and Maintenance Budget of \$833,857.

PASSED

8. COUNCIL BUSINESS

- a. Bylaws and Policies
- b. Mayor and Council Round Table
- i. Cr. Tuckey noted that the Women’s Hockey Tournament was well attended, showcased a high level of talent, and was positive to see visitors bringing economic activity into the Town.
- ii. Cr. Cox commended Town staff for their response to the recent rain and freeze event, noting the challenging conditions of heavy rain followed by rapidly dropping temperatures. He acknowledged that roads were slick around lunch but stated that by the end of the workday, the roads he travelled were in very good condition, expressing appreciation for the quality of winter road maintenance in the community.
- iii. Cr. Couvrette echoed Cr. Cox commented on the Public Works crew for their work maintaining the roads.
- iv. Cr. Benwell noted that she has not attended any meetings at the museum, but expressed that she is very much looking forward to the new garbage truck.
- v. Cr. Heaton provided an update on several community initiatives, noting that Uncle Gabe’s lunch program needs additional volunteers to help serve meals and support students during lunch hours. She also shared that the church basement thrift store, Sister of Sutherland, recently had its busiest day, raising over \$1,000, and expressed appreciation for the volunteers involved.  
Cr. Heaton further advised that a girl's wellness sleepover is taking place this weekend in partnership with Foxy and Uncle Gabe’s Friendship Centre. She explained that the event is open to girls aged 11 and up, with separate sessions for ages 11 to 14 on Friday night and 15 to 18 on Saturday night, and that registration forms are available at Uncle Gabe’s Friendship Centre or the TDN front office.
- vi. Cr. Karasiuk commended both the road and garbage collection crews for their work in challenging conditions, noting recent instances of heavy rain and poor visibility where crews were still performing at a high level. While expressing support for the upcoming new garbage collection system, he emphasized that current staff have been doing an excellent job.



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He also shared an update in his role related to education, advising that JBT Elementary School has circulated a survey to families regarding next year’s school calendar, but response rates remain low. Cr. Karasiuk encouraged families to complete the survey, noting that it was sent directly by email or text to households in the school system and provides an opportunity for parents to give input on the upcoming calendar.

- vii. Cr.Bathenoted that he has not attended any meetings recently, other than the bylaw discussion earlier in the day, but expressed appreciation for seeing projects move forward. He reflected that waste management has been an ongoing topic during his seven or eight years involved with staff and Council and stated that it is encouraging to see progress being made on that file.  
He also offered kudos after spending time at the library, highlighting the range of programming taking place, particularly the youth book club, and noted it was positive to see children actively engaged and enjoying the programs offered.
- viii. D/M Keizer advised that the NWTAC conference is scheduled for February and noted that the call for resolutions closes at the end of the month. He encouraged members of Council to bring forward any broad, territory-wide resolution ideas in advance, as he and Dana will be working on a submission.  
He also shared positive feedback on the pool, noting that during December it offered programming that was accessible and enjoyable for multiple generations, including his 82-year-old mother and his young grandchildren.
- ix. Mayor Fergusson shared an update on the recent women’s hockey tournament, noting that teams participated from Fort Simpson and Hay River, along with two teams from Fort Smith and a combined Fort Smith and Hay River girls team that finished second overall. She expressed her satisfaction with the outcome and the strong level of participation.  
Mayor Fergusson also noted that the Zamboni broke down during the final game in the second period, but commended staff for their quick response, stating that the issue was resolved promptly and the tournament was able to conclude without disruption.

9. PROCLAMATIONS

10. DATE OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Regular Meeting of Council (Protective & Corporate) | February 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2026, @ 7 pm to be chaired by Cr. Couvrette |
| Regular Meeting of Council (Community & Municipal)  | February 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2026, @ 7 pm to be chaired by Cr. Benwell  |

11. EXCUSING OF COUNCILLORS

12. QUESTION PERIOD



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

**Department:** Protective Services

**Date:** January 29, 2026

**Subject:** Monthly Report

**RECOMMENDATION:**  
**THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH ACCEPTS THE PROTECTIVE SERVICES MONTHLY REPORT FOR JANUARY 2026 AS PRESENTED.**

## Fire/EMS Response Activities

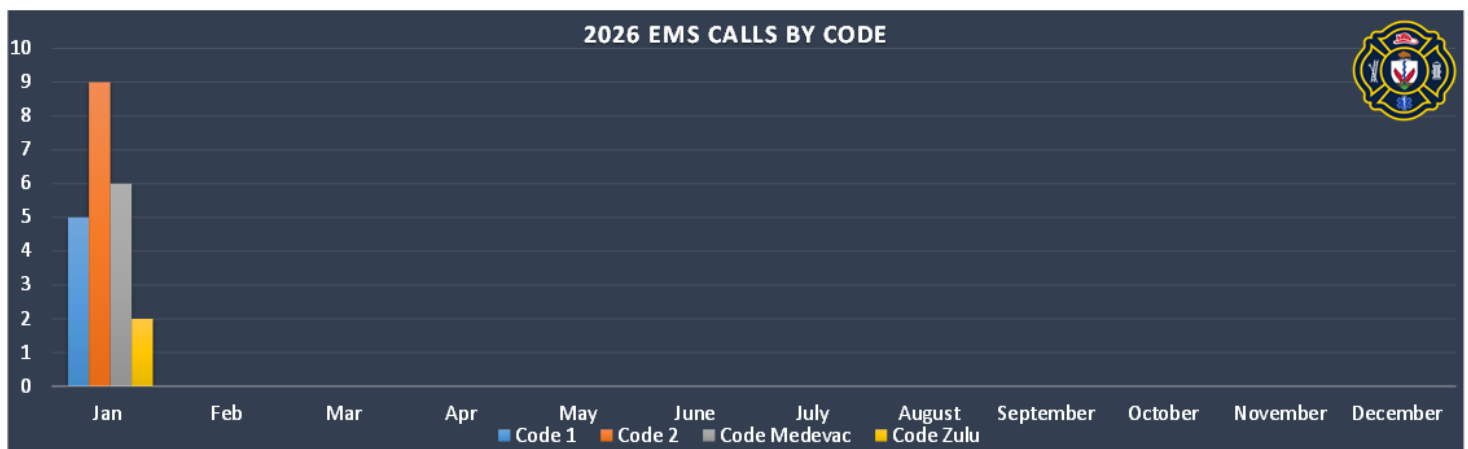
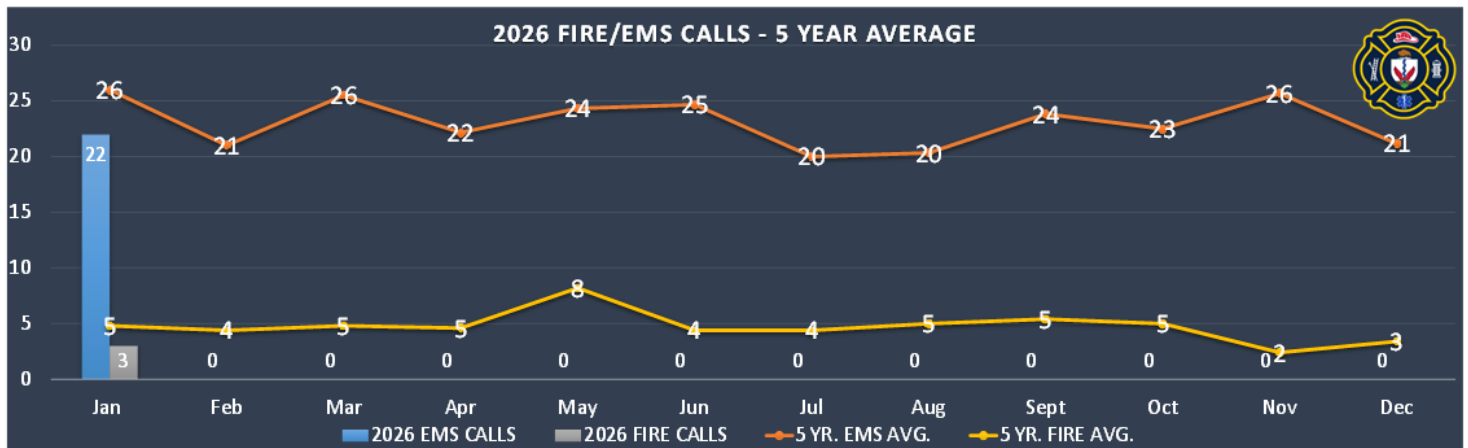
Fort Smith Fire/EMS responded to 26 calls during January 2026, consisting of 3 fire calls and 23 EMS calls. The overall call volume remains close to monthly averages.

Of note was a full response structure fire in Alberta. Crews worked hard to protect exposures and reduce damage, although the involved structure was unfortunately lost. The Fire Department Volunteer Association made their traditional loss donation to support the homeowner through this difficult time.

## Fire/EMS Training Activities

Five training events were carried out this month. January focuses on reviewing and implementing training plans for the next 12 months. We are continuing the NFPA Fire Investigator training for senior members and just kicked off the 2026 Emergency Medical Responder Course! We have scheduled a Wounded Warriors Mental Wellness course for March and a Wildland Urban Interface Members Course for May!

The Fire/EMS officers' group has met to discuss training plans and provide very meaningful input to the new Protective Services position being introduced to the org chart.



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

## Land & Development Summary

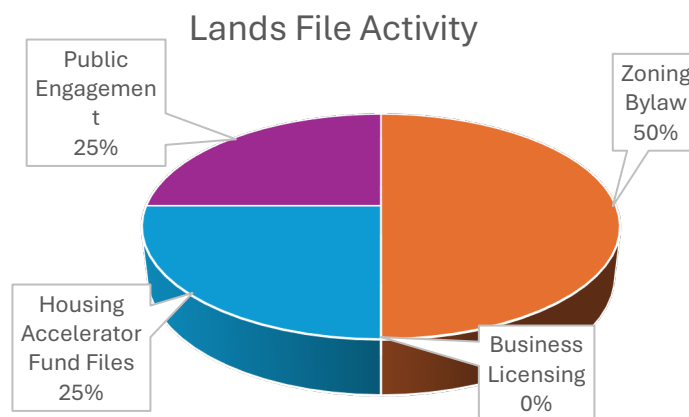
Lands and Development Officer Nick Carbery took a much-needed break but is back in the office. Nick's focus is being redirected to exclusively supporting the enforcement of the Zoning Bylaw, the Housing Accelerator Fund application processing and monitoring, as well as reviewing and monitoring business licenses and developments throughout our community.

This shift away from supporting other bylaw enforcement will provide more in-depth attention to developments, as we are seeing an increase in work in the community.

The broader bylaw enforcement work that Nick's role provided will be filled by the new Protective Services role as part of their duties.

The lands department is working with MACA tax assessors and the public to address tax assessment concerns and finalize municipal tax preparation ahead of the annual billing cycle.

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Zoning Bylaw        | 2        |
| Public Engagement   | 1        |
| Business Licensing  | 0        |
| Housing Accelerator | 1        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>4</b> |



## Licensing Report

| <b>Business License Holder</b>   | <b>Number</b> | <b>Address</b>    | <b>Notes</b>              |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
|                                  |               |                   |                           |
| <b>Development Permit Holder</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Address</b>    | <b>Notes</b>              |
| Karl Cox                         | DPA-001-26    | 131 Woodbison Ave | Construction / Excavation |
| <b>Dog Tag Holder</b>            | <b>Number</b> | <b>Address</b>    | <b>Notes</b>              |
| Jocelyn MacKeinzo                | 2             | 34 Ravens Cr.     | One Time                  |
| Karl and Jessica Cox             | 3             | 142 Woodbison Ave | One Time                  |

## Bylaw Enforcement Summary

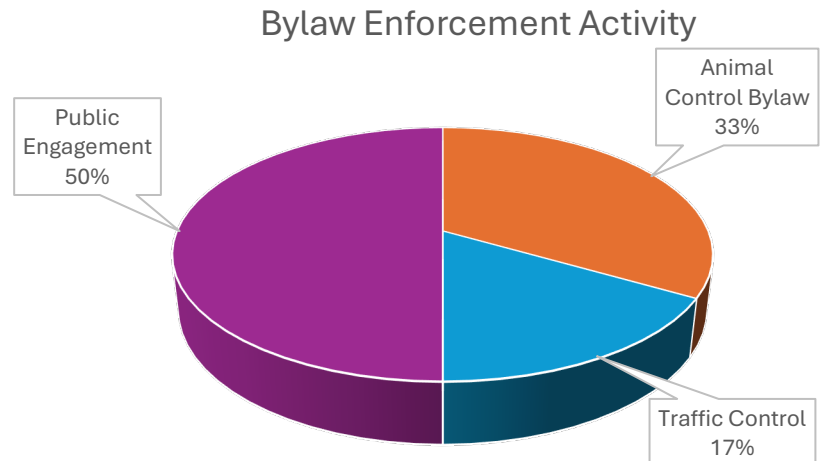
Animal control remains a major concern for residents. Dane continues proactive patrols and responds quickly to public complaints.

The Bylaw review process is continuing with a focus on completing the animal control bylaw with input received from the Fort Smith Animal Society, where possible. A draft version of this bylaw will be ready for review by the next meeting of Council.

Several other bylaws are nearly through first draft review, including property standards, ATV, traffic control, noise, business licensing, and water and sewer. Further updates will be provided to Council and the Bylaw Review Committee.

# REPORT TO COUNCIL

|                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| ATV Bylaw             | 0         |
| Unightly Land         | 2         |
| Garbage Bylaw         | 1         |
| Animal Control Bylaw  | 8         |
| Noise Control Bylaw   | 0         |
| Traffic Control       | 0         |
| Public Engagement     | 0         |
| Fire Protection Bylaw | 0         |
| Civic Address Bylaw   | 2         |
| Taxi Livery           | 3         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>          | <b>18</b> |



## Emergency Management

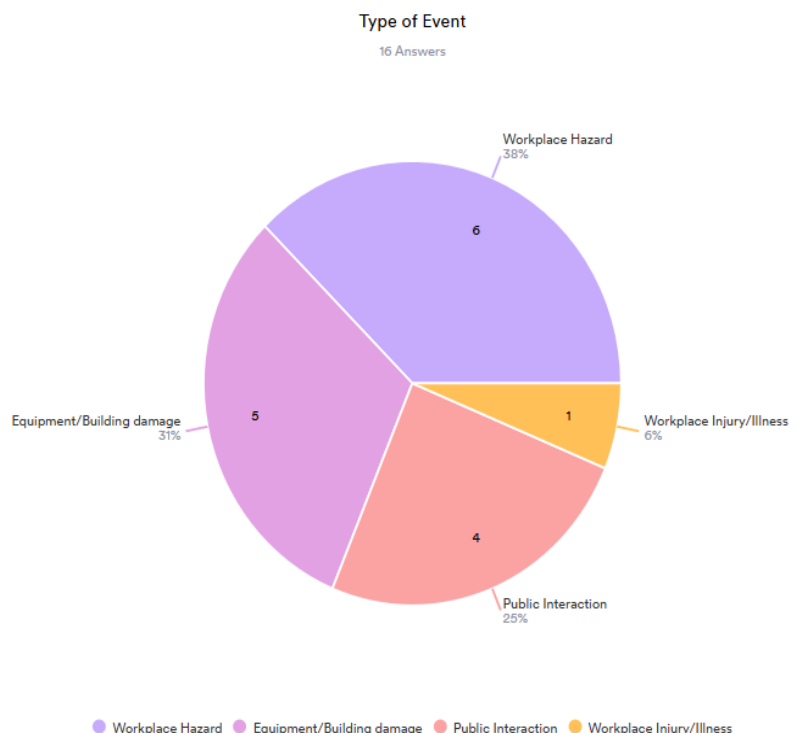
The Emergency Management Plan update is being drafted for the 2026 Emergency Management Plan cycle. Contact information and partner agency plans will be updated in early spring to ensure the most accurate resources are available.

Improving our evacuation and reception center at the CRC is a priority. Installation of a backup generator ensures the provision of lighting, food services, and air handling. Incorporating the heating system is still a challenge, as it is shared with the GNWT INF system of PWK. To date, Infrastructure has indicated that they do not want to pursue tying power generation to that system.

## Occupational Health and Safety

The Town Occupational Health and Safety program online app continues to be updated, allowing employees to access the most current safety information from any job site at any time.

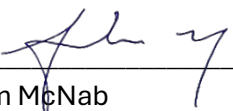
This chart shows the incidents' relative volume and the reported categories. All incident reports are forwarded to the respective Directors for review and follow-up. The JOHSC met in January as scheduled.



# REPORT TO COUNCIL

## Capital Projects Update

1. **Emergency Equipment Evergreen** – Evergreen planning for 2026 has begun, and orders will be placed after approval of the Capital Budget.
2. **Fire Hall retrofit** – A scope of work has been created, Maskwa has been chosen as the project manager.
  - a. Final drawings and a quote for the work have been delivered. Costs will be brought forward as part of the annual capital planning process for Council consideration.
3. **New Fire Hall RFP** – In consultation with the SAO, it has been decided that a tender will be created to assess the future viability of Town Hall, including a needs analysis of Town Hall and a quote for retrofit.
  - a. If Town Hall remains a viable structure, a scope of work to meet the needs analysis, and a class C quote for the demolition of the old library for improved parking, as well as the retrofit and expansion of the existing Town Hall.
  - b. The RFP for design of the new Protective Services building will include the incorporation of an attached Town Hall for consideration. This cost estimate could be compared against the retrofit and expansion option.
  - c. Feasibility of an integrated Town Hall and Fire Hall will need to consider the significant land requirements to meet the needs of both operations simultaneously, as well as significant building separations, given the uses.
4. **Fire Training grounds** – The GNWT Lands department is being engaged for an update on the land transfer process for the new site.
  - a. A needs assessment has been completed for our department's level of service, and quotes have been received.
  - b. The first piece of equipment has been approved for purchase by Council, and the order has since been placed.
  - c. Request for approval of the second piece of fire training equipment is being presented at the February meeting.
5. **Replacement Ambulance** – Specifications for a replacement ambulance have been drafted. One response has been received. We are working on the next steps for this procurement.
6. **Fire Break Maintenance** – Work will begin for the 2026 year mid to late summer pending approval of the Capital Budget.
7. **New FireSmart** – Tenders will be put out for the DMAF funding to conduct work outlined in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
  - a. The Town has reached out to all indigenous partners. We have received responses from all groups and are preparing to move forward on this project for early spring.



Adam McNab  
Director of Protective Services



## Briefing Note

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**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Protective Services  
**Date:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026  
**Subject:** Fire Training Live Structure

### PURPOSE:

To obtain spending approval from Council for the purchase of a Mobile Drager Flashover firefighter training structure as part of the approved 2025 capital plan budget allocation of \$463,000.00 for a fire training ground.

### BACKGROUND:

The Fort Smith Fire Department operates as an NFPA 1001–trained organization responsible for structural firefighting and emergency response. While members are trained to national standards, fire behaviour and flashover recognition remain high-risk, low-frequency skills that require regular, realistic, hands-on training to maintain safety and effectiveness.

Modern structural fires involving synthetic materials and lightweight construction develop rapidly, reducing reaction and escape time. Firefighters must be able to recognize early indicators of flashover and apply coordinated suppression and ventilation techniques under realistic heat and smoke conditions.

Current training methods rely primarily on classroom instruction, limited simulations, and infrequent access to external live-fire facilities. These approaches are constrained by cost, travel, weather, and scheduling, limiting opportunities for consistent, repeatable training focused on interior fire behaviour.

To maintain NFPA 1001 compliance, meet occupational health and safety obligations, and reduce firefighter risk, the Department requires a permanent, on-site training solution that allows controlled, instructor-led exposure to flashover conditions.

### Identified Need

The Department requires a training facility that:

- Supports ongoing maintenance of NFPA 1001 Firefighter I and II competencies
- Provides realistic, repeatable training focused on fire behaviour and flashover recognition
- Allows safe, controlled exposure to extreme thermal conditions
- Reduces reliance on external training sites and associated travel and scheduling impacts
- Increases training frequency, participation, and operational readiness

### Proposed Solution

A flashover training structure provides a purpose-built environment designed specifically to teach fire behaviour, heat management, and flashover recognition. The structure supports instructor-controlled, progressive training scenarios that allow firefighters to develop and maintain critical interior firefighting skills in a consistent and repeatable manner.



## Briefing Note

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Such a facility enables realistic training evolutions focused on interior operations, hose stream application, crew coordination, and situational awareness—skills that cannot be effectively replicated through classroom or simulated training alone.

### Conclusion

The acquisition of a flashover training structure is a strategic investment in firefighter safety and operational readiness. It provides a consistent, on-site training capability that supports NFPA 1001 compliance, reduces risk during interior operations, and strengthens the Department's ability to deliver safe and effective emergency services to the community.

This purchase aligns with the original intent of the 2025 capital project and represents the second major training structure acquired in conjunction with the Taylor'd Series 40 system previously approved by Council.

A detailed cost breakdown and description of the structure are attached. The total cost of \$200,000.00 includes the training structure, in-person live-fire instructor training on the system, and transportation to Fort Smith.

The live-fire training structure will be purchased within the approved capital budget of \$463,000.00, of which \$189,439.00 has been committed to date. With the combined acquisition of both training structures, the remaining balance for the capital project will be \$73,561.00, to be allocated toward any required site preparation, utility servicing, or fencing. Final site preparation requirements will be dependent on the selected installation location.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the quoted price of \$200,00.00 for the purchase and delivery of a Drager Flashover structure and the associated-on site training and delivery outlined in the attached quote.

## Price Information

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>CUSTOMER:</b> Fort Smith Fire Department<br><br><b>ADDRESS:</b> 70 Breynat Street<br>Fort Smith, NT<br>X0E 0P0<br><br><b>ATTENTION:</b> Adam McNab<br><br><b>TITLE:</b> Fire Chief<br><br><b>E-MAIL ADDRESS:</b> protectiveservices@fortsmith.ca<br><br><b>REFERENCE:</b> Dräger Mobile FTT-A1021 Loon Flashover Observation System<br><br><b>DELIVERY INFO:</b> Approx. 22 weeks after receipt of purchase order and notice to proceed. Subject to project backlog at time of order entry. | <b>DATE:</b> Jan. 26, 2026<br><br><b>QUOTE:</b> ESP000050<br><br><b>PHONE:</b> 867-621-0486<br><br><b>FAX:</b><br><br><b>PSS:</b> Matt Vienneau<br><br><b>RSM:</b> Chris Linville |
|--|---|

| Item | Qty | Description  | Unit Price   |
|------|-----|--|--------------|
| A    | 1   | <p><b>Dräger Loon Mobile (FTT-A1021M) Flashover Observation System</b><br/>Includes design, construction, manuals, and Train-the-Trainer course from certified Dräger Swede Survival Trainer.</p> <p>Complete Mobile Flashover System, mounted on low profile Tri-axle custom made trailer, built to specifications of Swede Survival Systems, with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ One (1) 20-foot Observation Chamber Container</li> <li>➤ One (1) 10-foot Burn Chamber Container mounted 3-feet above Observation Chamber with clean out and fuel loading capability through the front doors.</li> <li>➤ The burn chamber shall include a mounting system for holding panels of Class A materials against the container doors, side walls, and ceiling of the burn chamber.</li> <li>➤ The burn chamber, and upper front area of observation chamber shall be insulated then steel lined with 1/8" sheet</li> <li>➤ Patio stones to line floors of burn room for heat resistance.</li> <li>➤ Controllable ventilation system. Operator can control vertical ventilation through a chimney damper and horizontal ventilation through a door, from one location.</li> <li>➤ Baffles between burn room and observation chamber to control smoke for training effects and to control flow path.</li> <li>➤ Crib fire drum provided as the incipient fire and initial heat source for the evolutions. It is movable to locations throughout the burn chamber to vary the evolutions.</li> <li>➤ Two (2) egress-doors on opposite sides at back of Observation Chamber, with non-binding door closers.</li> <li>➤ A clean-out platform shall be available outside the container doors at the front of the burn chamber. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Paint – Red Oxide</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | \$166,750.00 |

|   |   |  |                     |
|---|---|--|---------------------|
|   |   | <b>Chassis Information:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Custom made tri-axle 30-foot heavy duty</li> <li>➤ 5<sup>th</sup> Wheel or gooseneck coupler rated 30,000lbs</li> <li>➤ 16" wheels, 14 ply tires</li> <li>➤ Landing gear rated 60,000lb</li> <li>➤ D.O.T. and Transport Canada trailer lighting</li> <li>➤ Air brakes on all axles</li> <li>➤ Black enamel rust resistant paint</li> <li>➤ Rear Ramps and side ramps included</li> <li>➤ Total estimated weight of 25,000lbs with system</li> </ul> |                     |
| B | 1 | <b>Train-The-Trainer Instructional Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Two Third-Party instructors on site in Fort Smith, NWT</li> <li>➤ The training curriculum consists of two parts: The first part is a two-day, onsite training course for up to ten (10) of the department's instructors. The second part is a complete documentation package on operation and maintenance of the system.</li> </ul>  | <b>\$ 24,750.00</b> |
| C | 1 | <b>FREIGHT Estimate – To be confirmed at time of purchase</b>  | <b>\$8,500.00</b>   |

**Notes:**

- 1) All funds are in CAD Dollars.
- 2) Product designed in Kingston, Ontario and manufactured in Canada
- 3) Customer responsible for site permits, if required.
- 4) Customer responsible for providing access at site for installation equipment.
- 5) Bonding price, if required, not included.
- 6) Municipal, Provincial, or Federal Taxes are not included.
- 7) Offer valid 60 days from quotation.
- 8) Warranty is 12-months after handover.
- 9) Payment terms:
  - a. 25% of total project price will be invoiced on notice to proceed,
  - b. 50% of total project price will be invoiced when equipment is shipped.
  - c. 25% will be invoiced when installation and training is complete, and system is handed over.
- 10) Terms of payment net 30 days upon receipt of unit.
- 11) The sale of the products identified herein is expressly subject to the Draeger Safety Canada Ltd Terms and Conditions of Sale which are attached hereto and which may also be found at:  
[www.draeger.com/en-us\\_ca/Terms-Conditions](http://www.draeger.com/en-us_ca/Terms-Conditions).
- 12) In the event of significant delay or price increase of material occurring during the performance of the contract through no fault of the Contractor, the contract sum, time of performance, and contract requirements shall be equitably adjusted by change order in accordance with the procedures of the contract documents. A change in price of an item of material shall be considered **significant** when the price of an item increases five (5) percent between date the quote is issued and the date of installation.

**Authorized Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Chris Linville

Title: Regional Sales Manager

Phone: 1-403-360-6470

Email: [Chris.linville@draeger.com](mailto:Chris.linville@draeger.com)

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **FINANCES AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

##### **BUDGET 2026**

On January 20, Council approved the 2026 Budget as prepared and presented by SAO Jim Hood, and it was subsequently announced to the public in accordance with legislative and transparency requirements. This marked the successful completion of a unique experience in annual budgetary processing – occurring as it did during a period of significant personnel turnover - and provided residents of Fort Smith with an enhanced example of Council's commitment to providing service excellence to the community and likewise afforded all community stakeholders thoughtful visibility into the Town's financial priorities for the year ahead.

##### **PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS**

Following the dissemination of property assessment in December, Corporate Services assisted Lands personnel in fielding inquiries about the values from community members, and engaged with Fort Smith Economic Development and Tourism Officer Daniel Wiltzen to create additional infographics for promotion of understanding surrounding the assessment curation process. Representatives from the GNWT Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) also held a two-day public open house at Town Hall to allow members of the Fort Smith property-owning community to come forward and engage in focused discourse, one-on-one with the participant members of the territorial team who had prepared the assessment roll for Fort Smith. These sessions were a valuable availability for providing residents with an opportunity to ask questions, seek clarification, and better understand assessment methodologies directly from the territorial authority.

##### **2023 WILDFIRE CLAIM**

The 2023 wildfire expense repayment claim settlement with the Government of the Northwest Territories was finally concluded, bringing this long-standing matter to a close. All remaining billing was addressed by MACA, with all expectation for information reporting and expense recovery on both sides reaching satisfaction and ultimate closure.

#### **PAYROLL & HUMAN RESOURCES**

##### **PAYROLL**

The rollover into 2026 saw Town financial management software experience some early operating issues. In processing the first pay of the new year, Pay and Benefits clerk Shyamin Jayakoodige,

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

noted that our regular system-based workflows were not generating accurate results with respect to deduction values; specifically, employment insurance was going unaddressed and uncollected for all staff. These matters were quickly reported directly with the software vendor, who began a robust troubleshooting and coding maintenance process to correct. The successful solution required some time to implement, so communications were shared with all staff explaining the error and outlining the planned corrective measures. As of this date, the system problem is entirely corrected, with plans to recoup the outstanding EI deductions in the next payroll process (for payday February 6), thereby satisfying Town requirements under the Employment Insurance Act, and creating a better basis for troubleshooting in the future.

### **RECRUITMENT**

Recruitment efforts for the maternity replacement for our Pay and Benefits Clerk were completed successfully, with Albertan candidate Ishreen Rai being the successful applicant. Ishreen brings with her a degree in Commerce, and recent valuable employment experience as a member of a client-facing team in an Edmonton-based accounting firm. Ishreen will be arriving in Fort Smith in the coming days, and is scheduled to begin her employment on February 2. This appointment will ensure continuity of payroll and related administrative functions.

Corporate Services received a written appeal regarding the outcome of a recent recruitment effort, from a member of the public. The individual expressed dissatisfaction with the appointment of the chosen incumbent, and reflected their long-standing membership as a resident of Fort Smith in seeking a review of the competition in full. A thorough audit of the competition, including consultation with screening committee members to ensure their confidence in the conduction of the hiring process, and a wholistic examination of procedures and decision-making at the various stages of the hiring effort, was conducted by the Director of Corporate Services over a two-day period. There were no issues identified that would necessitate a change in the outcome of the position appointment, and all mechanisms of approach outlined in the Staff Recruitment Policy were followed in good faith. A response has been issued to the complainant, and the matter has been concluded with no further action required.

### **GOVERNANCE, RISK MANAGEMENT, & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE**

#### **RIM**

Preliminary groundwork has begun to establish an enhanced Records and Information Management (RIM) policy for implementation by all Departments in their ongoing responsible maintenance and handling of the information that is risen from operations. This initiative is intended to strengthen Town ability to engage in forward-thinking evidence-based governance, support legislative compliance, and lay the foundation for a digital-first approach in the future, as workflows and standard operating practices continue to advance toward a digitally-exclusive basis

## ***REPORT TO COUNCIL***

Corporate Services  
Corporate Services Monthly Report

**Date:** January 28, 2026

of business management. Initial work is focused on updating and expanding the existing retention table, with policy advancement to follow.

### **INSURANCE**

Submissions have been made toward the annual insurance renewal processing. All required information has now been provided to insurance representatives, with careful consideration given to amending the previous coverage to recognize the year to year changes in property and assets the Town maintains in its portfolio of responsibility.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT**

#### **CASH HANDLING**

Representing the Department of Corporate Services, Cassandra delivered a presentation on proper cash handling methodology with members of the Community Services Department to strengthen their approach to engaging and processing public-facing point-of-sale transactions. The meeting was well-attended, with participants asking thoughtful questions and expressing their interest in additional training opportunities in future.

Prepared by:  
Cassandra Gibbons  
Director of Corporate Services  
Date: January 28, 2026

Reviewed by:  
Jim Hood  
Senior Administrative Officer  
Date:



## Briefing Note

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**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Administration  
**Date:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026  
**Subject:** Appointment of Acting Mayor – February 25-March 2, 2026

### PURPOSE:

To seek Council's appointment of an Acting Mayor for the period of February 25 to March 2, 2026, during which both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be absent.

### BACKGROUND:

Section 3 of Bylaw 902 – Council Procedures – provides that:

*“Where both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent or unable to perform their duties, Council shall appoint an Acting Mayor.”*

Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have advised that they will be away from February 25 to March 2, 2026, to attend the NWTAC AGM.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council appoint Councillor \_\_\_\_\_ as Acting Mayor for the period of February 25 to March 2, 2026, in accordance with Section 3 of Bylaw 902 – Council Procedures.



## Briefing Note

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**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Administration  
**Date:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026  
**Subject:** Wood Buffalo Frolics Half-Day Civic Holiday – March 6, 2026

### PURPOSE:

To request Council's approval to set the date for the Wood Buffalo Frolics half-day civic holiday as per Bylaw 1004.

### BACKGROUND:

Bylaw 1004 recognizes the tradition of encouraging the citizens of Fort Smith to participate in the annual Wood Buffalo Frolics by proclaiming a half-day civic holiday on the Friday of the event weekend.

### DETAILS:

- In 2026, the Wood Buffalo Frolics weekend falls on March 6-8, 2026.
- As per Bylaw 1004, the half-day civic holiday is to be observed from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. (Mountain Time) on the Friday of the event weekend.
- It is proposed that Friday, March 6, 2026, be officially set as the half-day civic holiday for this year's Wood Buffalo Frolics.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council declare Friday, March 6, 2026, from 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. (Mountain Time) as the half-day civic holiday for the Wood Buffalo Frolics, in accordance with Bylaw 1004.



## Briefing Note

**To:** Mayor and Council  
**From:** Community Services  
**Date:** February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026  
**Subject:** Support Request – NWT Snowboard Association Territorial Competition

### PURPOSE:

To inform Council of a request from the NWT Snowboard Association for support in hosting the Territorial Snowboarding Competition in Fort Smith on February 27, 28, and March 1, 2026, and to seek approval for the provision of town resources.

### BACKGROUND:

The NWT Snowboard Association organizes annual territorial competitions, attracting participants and spectators from across the Northwest Territories. These events support community engagement, tourism, and sport development in Fort Smith.

The Association has requested assistance from the Town to ensure the event runs safely and efficiently. Requested support includes:

- Tables and chairs
- Sound system
- Support from Recreation Staff
- Use of the portable and heated washrooms
- Use of on-site garbage dumpster
- Temporary road closure and blockage of Marine Drive (from Mills St to Wapiti St) from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on February 27<sup>th</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> & March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

Providing these resources aligns with the Town's commitment to supporting community events and recreational programming.

### ANALYSIS:

The requested support will allow the Association to safely host the event and provide participants and spectators with adequate facilities. Town staff involvement is limited to setup, monitoring, and logistical support, ensuring minimal disruption to other services. Temporary road closures will be coordinated with local authorities to maintain public safety.

### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council approve the in kind amount of \$1,768.61 for the provision of tables, chairs, sound equipment, two recreation support staff, a garbage dumpster, and temporary road closure and blockage of Marine Drive (from Mills St to Wapiti St) from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on February 27<sup>th</sup> 28<sup>th</sup> & March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026., in support of the NWT Snowboard Association Territorial Competition.

# REPORT.TO.COUNCIL

Administration  
Senior Administrative Officer Report

**Date:** February 3, 2026

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF FORT SMITH ACCEPTS THE SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REPORT AS PRESENTED.**

## BACKGROUND

### **BUDGET 2026**

At the last meeting of Council, the 2026 Operation and Maintenance Budgets for General Operations, Utility and Environmental Funds were approved. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Senior Management Committee in the preparation of the budget. The Directors spent many hours analyzing their areas of operation and determining the budget required to continue to provide the level of service expected by the community. The weekly SMC meetings since November were dedicated to the budget and Directors defended their budget requirements to each other before they were brought forward to Council. They made compromises in their own departments for the betterment of the community as a whole. Their focus was always on levels of service and Council's strategic direction as their guiding priorities. Thank you to them for a job well done.

### **CONSOLIDATED RATES AND FEES BYLAW**

The next step in the budget process is the review and presentation of the Consolidated Rates and Fees Bylaw. At the January 28<sup>th</sup> SMC meeting, the Directors were asked to review the rates and fees associated with their departments. The budget included rate increases in ambulance fees to achieve the necessary revenue. Other fees will be reviewed to ensure they are sufficient to achieve the targets in the budget. We hope to bring forward a draft Consolidated Rates and Fees Bylaw to the February 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **MILL RATE BYLAW**

Also required is the annual Mill Rate Bylaw. As you are aware, there was an issue with the assessment roll and notices distributed in December which as resulted in the need to send out adjusted Notices of Assessment to all property owners with assessed improvements older than 2024. These new notices will be in the mail by February 6<sup>th</sup>. The appeal period is 45 days for the new assessment notices. Should there be appeals, there will need to be a Board of Revision. Notice must go out to appellants 21 days before the hearing. That means the earliest the Board can be held is 61 days from February 6. This is important because the Mill Rate cannot be calculated until the final assessment values are known. Based on the dates, property tax notices will likely not be completed and mailed until mid-May. Last year the tax notices were dated May 6 so the assessment error may result in a slight delay.

### **CAPITAL BUDGET**

The town, in addition to being required to pass an operations and maintenance budget, must pass a capital budget. As you can see from the Directors reports, we are still working on the projects and purchases approved in the 2025 budget. In 2026, the focus of the capital budget will be more on

projects and purchases that support the maintenance and sustainability of our current infrastructure. I have asked the Directors to identify critical components of the current infrastructure that if they fail, would result to prolonged and adverse reduction in levels of service. The goal is to establish an inventory of components that will allow for only minor disruptions in service. Also, there may be more minor capital projects that focus on maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure rather than adding more infrastructure which requires more O&M funding to maintain. We hope to have a capital budget prepared for Council consideration in early March.

## **Water Sampling**

With reports of lead being found in drinking water in Yellowknife, our water department will be conducting sampling in all town facilities. All sampling of treated water in our system have never shown levels of lead above approved standards. If any lead is present, it would only be from plumbing pipes and fixtures within the facilities. We don't anticipate finding negative results but Council will be informed when the testing is complete and samples analyzed.

## **PROJECTS**

The current capital projects are listed below. Some updates have been provided by the Directors. More update on these projects will be provided at the next meeting.

Protective Services Building Design  
Protective Services Building Retrofit  
Asset Management Plan and Software Review  
CRC Backup Generator  
Water License Renewal  
Bylaw Review  
HAF Program  
Water and Sewer Assessment Project  
Conibear Park  
Lagoon Liner Replacement  
Landfill Reclamation and New Cell Design  
Riverside Park Project  
Raw Water Intake  
Main Lift Station

Prepared by:  
Jim Hood  
Senior Administrative Officer