



10-Year Report

A Decade of Progress

**Whitehorse
Sustainability
Plan (2015-2050):**

From vision to action for a healthy, resilient
community.



Planning & Sustainability Services
April 2026





Acknowledgements

The City of Whitehorse acknowledges that this work was developed on the Traditional Territories of the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

Introduction

When City Council adopted the Whitehorse Sustainability Plan (2015–2050), sustainability was framed as a long-term vision grounded in stewardship, fairness, and thoughtful planning. Over the past decade, that vision has shifted from planning to implementation, with a stronger focus on measurable results, good data, and integrating sustainability into everyday decisions—from service delivery to budgeting and climate-risk management.

Progress Over the Past Decade

Across all departments, the Sustainability Plan has informed decisions, operations, and partnerships. Progress is evident across all twelve goals through initiatives such as updated land-use plans and bylaws, investments in infrastructure, transportation, and waste reduction, improved energy use and emissions tracking, and programs that strengthen health, safety, equity, culture, food systems, and the local economy.

Gaps and Ongoing Challenges

While progress has been made, the City continues to face complex challenges. Constraints in authority, funding, data, and capacity—both within the City and among partners—combined with rising climate, affordability, and infrastructure pressures, have led to uneven results. These gaps reinforce the need for clearer metrics, stronger financial alignment, and deeper engagement with underserved community members.

Looking Ahead: The Next 10 Years

Moving forward, the City will continue using the Sustainability Plan as a guiding framework, with an increased focus on action, accountability, and resilience. Priorities for the next decade include clearer tracking and reporting, stronger connections between sustainability, budgeting, capital planning, and climate adaptation, and deeper collaboration with First Nation and other governments, organisations, and residents to ensure the Plan continues to reflect best practices in municipal sustainability.

About This Review

The following sections provide a high-level summary of major sustainability actions across City departments over the past decade. The review focuses on initiatives with clear impacts on operations, services, or community outcomes, aligned with the Plan's twelve goals. Each section highlights key actions and results, illustrating how sustainability shapes daily decisions and future progress.

Goal 1 – Strong Downtown and Livable Neighbourhoods

A moderately denser and more livable city, especially downtown, with all neighbourhoods having access to low-impact transportation, diverse services, and varied housing options.



Planning for Growth Within Existing Neighbourhoods

In 2023, Council adopted the Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan, directing growth to existing, serviced areas rather than outward expansion. Development is focused on the Downtown, Urban Core, and Outer Urban Area within the Urban Containment Boundary, where infrastructure and services already exist or are planned.

This approach supports walkable neighbourhoods, access to housing and services, and a strong local economy. Growth is guided by adopted master plans, including the Downtown and Marwell Plans (2018), Whistle Bend Future Areas and Town Square Plan (2020), Range Point Joint Master Plan (2023), Copper Ridge Development Area Plan (2024), and Valleyview South Master Plan (2024). The updated 2025 Trail Development Policy and Maintenance Policy enhance access to trails and connections within neighbourhoods.





Zoning Updates Enabling Gentle Density

In 2024, Council amended the Zoning Bylaw (2012-20) to enable more housing within existing neighbourhoods. The changes make it more permissible to build small-scale, multi-unit housing on serviced land while maintaining neighbourhood character. A Guide for Developing Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing supports builders and the public in understanding and applying these changes.



Reducing Vacancy and Encouraging Reinvestment

In 2024, the City introduced the Vacant and Unoccupied Building Bylaw, requiring owners of long-term vacant buildings to register and maintain them. This reduces blight and safety risks, supports reinvestment, and helps keep downtown and neighbourhoods clean, safe, and welcoming. To ensure timely demolition of vacant and abandoned buildings, the City is offering a tipping fee incentive from August 2024 to January 1, 2027.



Revitalising Downtown

The City has supported downtown revitalisation through programs and events that increase business activity and activate public spaces. The Sidewalk Café and Pop-Up Patio Program and Mobile Food Vendors Program create lively, pedestrian-friendly areas and support local businesses. Downtown events such as Street Eats and Town Square (2023–2024) have increased foot traffic and celebrated local culture. The City initiated a Wayfinding Plan in 2025 with First Nations, business, tourism, and government partners to improve navigation and access, reflect Indigenous culture, and support tourism and local businesses.



What's Next?

- Zoning Bylaw 2025-37, expected to take effect in 2026, will support compact growth and housing in existing neighbourhoods.
- Advance the Chu Niikwän Riverfront Plan, conduct a Downtown Plan review, develop the Wayfinding Plan, and advance various residential development projects through the 2026–2029 Capital Expenditure Program.
- Continue to work with property owners to ensure public safety and compliance is maintained in respect to vacant and unoccupied buildings.

Goal 2 – Efficient, Low-Impact Transportation

Efficient movement of people via transit, cycling, walking, and multi- and single-occupant vehicles.



Shifting Travel Modes and Network Performance

In 2024, the City adopted the Transportation Master Plan (TMP) to guide integrated transportation and land use that encourages shorter trips and safer, lower-emission travel. Building on the 2014 Transportation Demand Management Plan, the TMP aims for 40% of commute trips by sustainable modes by 2040, including 15% transit, 18% active transportation, and 2% shared, along with a 10% reduction in on-road transportation GHG emissions from 2014 levels.



Transit is identified as the primary driver of mode shift, supported by walking, cycling, and shared travel, with a commitment to a Vision Zero and Safe System Approach, enabled by the Safe Mobility Action Plan, which is underway.

Mode shift helps manage congestion as population and traffic grow at similar rates (approximately 2.6% annually). City actions have included a protected bike lane (Chilkoot Way), traffic signal timing improvements, targeted transit investments, and expanded monitoring through auto-

mated bicycle and pedestrian counters installed in 2025.

Planning began in 2023 for the HART Combined Intersection Upgrades project, a City-Yukon Government partnership initiative to improve safety, efficiency, and accessibility at two major intersections: Hamilton Boulevard / Alaska Highway and Two-Mile Hill Road / Range Road through a multimodal conceptual design that supports safer movement for all users.



Investing in Transit Facilities

The City continues to invest in transit facilities and fleet capacity to improve reliability, accessibility, and service quality. Transit operates a 15-bus fleet, with approximately 10 buses in daily service. Since 2015, nine new bus shelters and benches have been added at high use stops, bringing the total to 27 and improving passenger comfort.

In 2025, the City completed design work for the Downtown Transit Hub, a Transit Master Plan (2018) priority. The project will replace the former



Fire Hall #1 with a purpose-built facility next to City Hall, providing a central bus hub with a heated waiting area, public washrooms, and operator facilities to support reliable, year-round transit service.



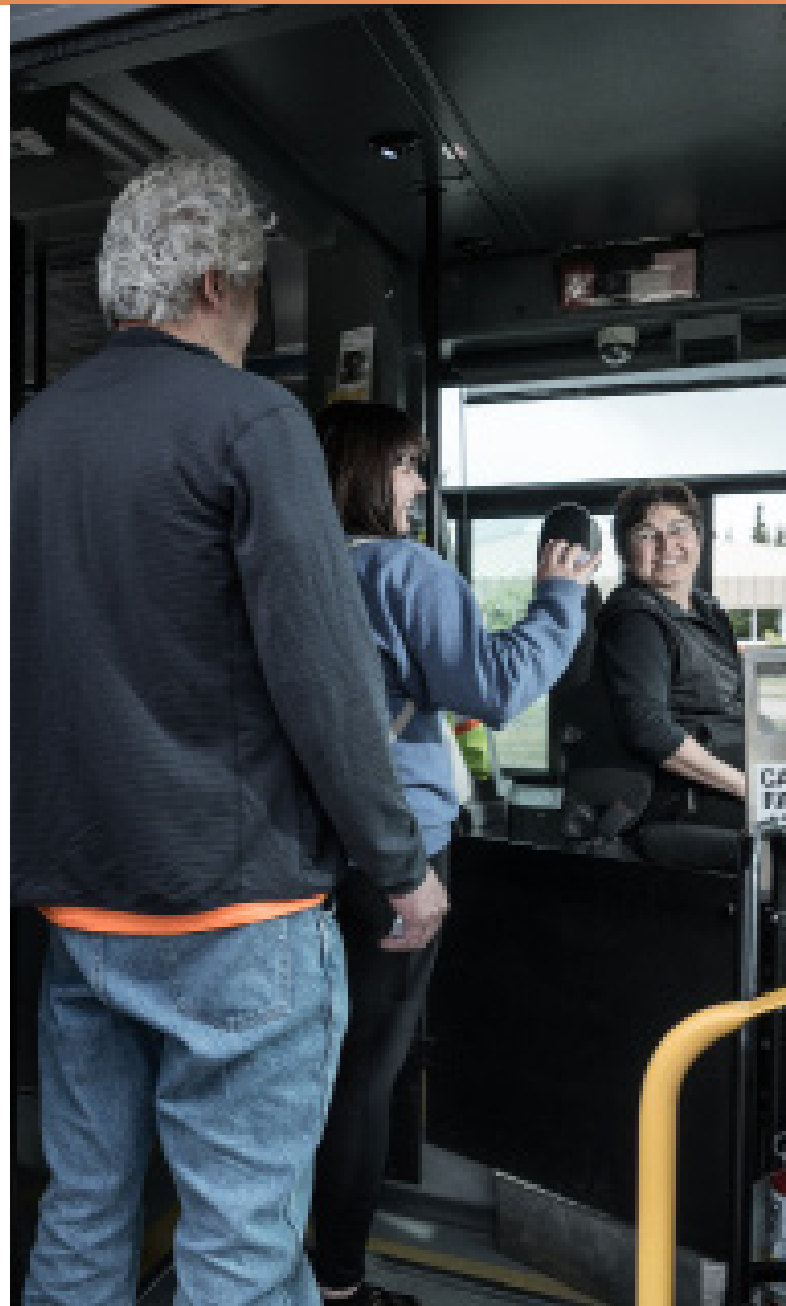
Improving Transit Service

Public transit is central to improving mobility, reducing congestion, and supporting equitable access. The City launched the Modernised Transit Route Plan in 2021.

Key improvements since 2021 include:

- Sunday and expanded holiday service (2022)
- Mobile fare payment and real-time information tools (2022)
- Two new transit routes (2023–2024)
- A 37.5% increase in conventional service hours (2023–2024)
- Added Handy Bus capacity to support para-transit service (2024)

In 2022, the City established a 400-meter north-bound priority bus lane on Lewes Boulevard, part of the Transit Master Plan's transit lane initiative in Riverdale. This initiative improves transit during peak hours by giving priority to bus riders and enhancing service through on-time transfers.





Building a Connected Cycling Network

The Transportation Master Plan aims to create a connected active transportation network that promotes walking and cycling for all ages, following the Bicycle Network Plan (2018). Since 2015, 15.8 km of cycling infrastructure, including painted bike lanes, a protected bike lane (Chilkoot Way connector), and paved paths, have been

added within the Urban Containment Boundary, mostly by the Yukon Government.

The 2024 upgrade of the Black Street Stairs enhanced the airport-downtown connection, while the automated bicycle counters installed in 2025 enable year-round monitoring for better network planning, improving cycling safety and connectivity for everyday trips.



Enabling Transportation Bylaws

While the RCMP enforces driving regulations, City transportation bylaws establish rules that improve safety, reduce conflicts, and enable efficient movement for all users. Since the adoption of the Sustainability Plan, the City has adopted an E-Bike Bylaw (2021), and updated its Bicycle (2021), Snowmobile (2018), All Terrain Vehicle (2018), and Traffic (2025) bylaws.



Improving Snow and Ice Control

The 2025 update to the Snow and Ice Control Policy has improved winter maintenance for safe travel across all transport modes. Changes informed by the 2022–2023 program review took effect in 2023–2024, including fleet expansion, contracted services, and better communications.

The revised policy prioritizes sidewalks, paved trails, and transit stops, supported by targeted actions such as para ramp cleaning contracts, improved snow clearing at accessibility parking stalls, and strengthened enforcement of sidewalk clearing and vehicle removal requirements by City Bylaw Officers.

Additionally, Council approved funding for a two-year pilot program starting in 2025 to improve the maintenance of the Hamilton Boulevard multi-use trail. The maintenance of Park Lane and the Elijah Smith Trail has also enhanced the connection to Hillcrest.

The 2022 update to the Maintenance Bylaw clarified snow and ice removal rules for adjacent property owners, while the 2025 update to the Trail Maintenance Policy improved maintenance for priority trails like the Millennium and Waterfront trails.



Supportive Sustainable Travel Programs and Tools

City infrastructure investments are supported by programs, facilities, and tools that encourage and enable sustainable travel. Since 2015, the Active Commute Whitehorse community challenge has engaged about 40 school and workplace teams and 200 participants, generating roughly 6,300 km of active travel and avoiding 1,940 kg of GHG emissions each year.

The Kids' Bike Rodeo (300+ children annually), Request a Rack (60 racks installed since 2021), and Interactive Trail Map (2025), together improve safety, wayfinding, and year-round trip planning.



What's Next?

- The 2026–2029 Capital Budget allocates \$12.7 million for transportation improvements, delivered over multiple years and supported by external funding partnerships.
- The City is in the process of adding six new buses and replacing four fully accessible buses, strengthening transit capacity and reliability, and planning to complete the Downtown Transit Hub in 2027 (subject to funding).
- Planned actions include reviewing the Chilkoot Way protected bike lane, designing downtown active transportation connectors, updating the Downtown Parking Management Plan, developing the Wayfinding Plan, and advancing sidewalk infill and major repairs.
- In addition to completing the Safe Mobility Action Plan, the City will develop a Complete Streets Policy to improve safety and accessibility for transportation network users through design standard improvements and multimodal inclusivity options.
- Update the Paratransit (Handy Bus) Policy in 2026 to enhance service ease-of-use and accessibility.
- Additional initiatives may include new bus shelters, the HART Combined Intersection Upgrades, Whistle Bend connector design, school zone safety upgrades, paved pathway improvements, and other intersection and signal projects.

Goal 3 – Healthy Environment and Wilderness

Clean air, water, and soil; healthy habitat; and a sense of wilderness.



Parks and Environmental Stewardship

In 2010, the Whitehorse Official Community Plan (OCP) identified land for five Regional Parks: Chadburn Lake, Chasà Chùa (McIntyre Creek), Wolf Creek, McLean Lake, and Paddy's Pond / Ice Lake, protecting approximately 30% of the municipal land base.

Consistent with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2018), the Whitehorse 2040 OCP emphasises the importance of Regional Parks for habitat protection, ecological connectivity, and balancing recreation with ecosystem health. It promotes environmental stewardship by protecting natural systems, wetlands, and biodiversity, while reducing flood risks and ensuring the quality of air, land, and water.

The Zoning Bylaw safeguards wetlands, riparian areas, steep slopes, and wildlife corridors through Environmental Protection and Greenbelt zoning, promoting low-impact development to uphold ecological integrity and biodiversity. Setbacks and restrictions in high-impact

zones protect air, land, and water quality, and reduce flood and geohazard risks.

The Parks and Public Open Space Bylaw (2015, updated 2021) sets rules on activities that could harm natural areas and restrict inappropriate motorised access. The Maintenance Bylaw governs the restriction of unauthorised accumulation of waste on public lands. The Waste Management Bylaw (2018, updated 2024) has provisions on waste disposal that will not attract wildlife.

Increased bylaw patrols in parks, open spaces, and trail systems have improved public education on animal safety, park use, and safe cycling, promoting overall community safety. The City promotes eliminating illegal dumping and reducing human-wildlife conflict. It participates in a working group with Yukon Government, First Nation governments and non-profit organisations, to increase education efforts on avoiding and mitigating human-wildlife interactions in Whitehorse. The Community Cleanup Grant provides about \$20,000 each year to support non-profits in removing litter and caring for shared spaces.



Chadburn Lake Park: Wilderness Protection at City Scale

At approximately 7,550 hectares, Chadburn Lake Regional Park is the largest municipal park in Canada, offering wilderness access minutes from downtown. The Chadburn Lake Park Management Plan (2017) outlines 26 actions by 2028 to protect ecosystem integrity while managing recreational use.

Recreation is low-impact and non-motorised, with motorised boats prohibited to protect water quality and habitats. Access is managed via designated roads, trailheads, and parking areas. The City promotes stewardship through land use planning, bylaws, and City programs.



Chasàn Chùà Territorial Park: An Urban Wilderness Corridor

Chasàn Chùà (McIntyre Creek) is a wildlife, cultural, and recreational corridor recognised in the Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan for maintaining ecological connectivity within the City and adjacent landscapes.

In 2024, the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, City, Government of Yukon, and Parks Canada formed a Steering Committee to guide long-term management. Priorities include wetland and riparian protection, wildlife movement, trail management, and reducing human-wildlife conflict. In 2025, the area was designated a Territorial Park.



Drinking Water Supply and Stewardship

Over the past decade, the City has strengthened the infrastructure, policies, and monitoring systems that protect drinking water quality and support responsible water use. Whitehorse's drinking water is sourced from the Selkirk Aquifer through seven municipal wells and is treated at the Selkirk Pumphouse in Riverdale. Drinking

water quality is regularly monitored and meets national standards.

The Water Utility Bylaw (2013) provides for the City's operation, maintenance, and control of the water distribution network that delivers drinking water to homes and businesses across Whitehorse. Mandatory water metering for commercial and multi-residential properties supports accurate billing, improves leak detec-

tion, and encourages responsible water use.

Infrastructure upgrades and operational improvements have also helped reduce water waste. Improvements to the distribution system have reduced freezing incidents in low-demand areas and reduced the need for water bleeding.



Wastewater and Stormwater Management

Wastewater and stormwater systems protect local waterways, soils, and aquatic habitats. The City operates three wastewater treatment facilities and maintains a collection system that safely distributes and treats wastewater. The 50 km of stormwater pipe and other drainage infrastructure manage the movement of rainwater and snowmelt runoff across the City.

Routine maintenance and monitoring of water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure assist in ensuring the systems operate as designed. This also helps spot and reduce pollutants and issues related to set parameters. Together, these systems help protect the natural environment while supporting community health and quality of life.

The City is also replacing aging commercial and multi-residential water meters with advanced metering technology to improve water use tracking and system efficiency.



What's Next?

- The 2026–2029 Capital Budget invests over \$25 million in water and wastewater upgrades, subject to external funding.
- Plans to abate and demolish the former Selkirk Water Treatment Plant, decommissioned in 2015, and prepare the site for future use. Planned improvements to the current plant will strengthen regulatory compliance, improve system reliability, and ensure capacity to support future growth.
- Launch a Force Main Assessment project to evaluate wastewater pipes, identify failure points, and enhance system safety and reliability. Improvements to lift stations and preventative maintenance will strengthen City wastewater infrastructure.
- Continue implementing the Chadburn Lake Park Management Plan. Starting in 2026, the City plans to support the preparation of a Parks Management Plan for Chasàn Chùà Territorial Park.

Goal 4 – Green Buildings and Infrastructure

Reduce environmental impacts of private and City-owned buildings and infrastructure.



Building More Efficient City Facilities

Over the past decade, the City has improved building performance through new construction and targeted upgrades. The Whitehorse Operations Building (WOB) at 187 Range Road, completed in 2020, and expansion completed in 2025, was built to high energy-efficiency standards and includes energy-recovery ventilation, lower-emissions heating, and a 300-kW rooftop solar array. Fire Hall #1 downtown was also designed with high-efficiency heating and ventilation.



Upgrades to City facilities have reduced energy use, extended building life, and improved operational efficiency, including:

- Building envelope upgrades at the compost processing facility, Takhini Arena mechanical rooms, City Hall, and the Parks Building at 133 Tlingit Street
- Door and window replacements and removal of unnecessary roll-up doors at the Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre
- Ventilation upgrades at the Canada Games

Centre and Mount McIntyre Recreation Centre using high-efficiency energy recovery units

- Optimization of waste heat recovery from the Canada Games Centre ice plant to reduce space-heating demand.



Better Building Rules and Planning Ahead

City investments are supported by stronger construction standards, including the adoption of the 2020 National Building Code of Canada and the City's 2025 Building and Plumbing Bylaw update, improving energy performance in public and private buildings.



What's Next?

- Implement the 2025 National Building Code when it comes into effect in the Yukon in 2027.
- Continue renovations and energy-efficiency upgrades at City Hall and assess Takhini Arena envelope upgrades in 2026, with construction planned for 2027.

Goal 5 – Energy and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Reduction

Increased renewable energy, reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) production, and increased operational cost savings.



Corporate Energy, Waste, and GHG Reduction Initiatives

Since 2019, the City has voluntarily tracked GHG emissions from municipal buildings, fleets, and landfill and wastewater operations, to inform and support targeted emission reduction actions. Reduction efforts have focused on fuel switching, renewable energy, electrification, and organics landfill diversion.

Key actions taken include Phase 1 of the Whitehorse Operations Building biomass boiler heating system and rooftop solar installation to generate electricity, the installation of 18 Level 2 electric vehicle chargers, and the addition of 20 electric passenger and utility vehicles, supported by regulatory updates and expanded composting.

Corporate emissions declined modestly in 2021 and 2022, supported by these actions and improved electricity use efficiency. Despite this progress, the City is not yet on track to meet the Climate Action Plan's net-zero goal by 2050 (adopted in 2025), underscoring the need to accelerate and sustain emissions-reduction efforts.





Community-Wide GHG Inventory to Support Emissions Reduction

In 2025, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics developed a community GHG inventory for Whitehorse using fuel-based and administrative data, estimating emissions from heating, transportation, aviation, electricity generation, mining, and other fuel uses.



What's Next?

- Support lower community GHG emissions by limiting urban sprawl, promoting energy-efficient development and the use of active transportation as outlined in the Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan.
- Dedicate resources to implement the Climate Action Plan and support performance monitoring, enhanced energy and emissions data and modelling, and coordinated efforts that reduce emissions.
- Assess landfill gas management options to reduce methane emissions and continue to improve organic waste diversion through composting.
- Implement Phase 2 of the biomass boiler project for the Whitehorse Operations Building heating system (subject to funding).
- Update and use the community and corporate inventory to support awareness, policy development, and collaboration to advance community-wide GHG emissions reductions.

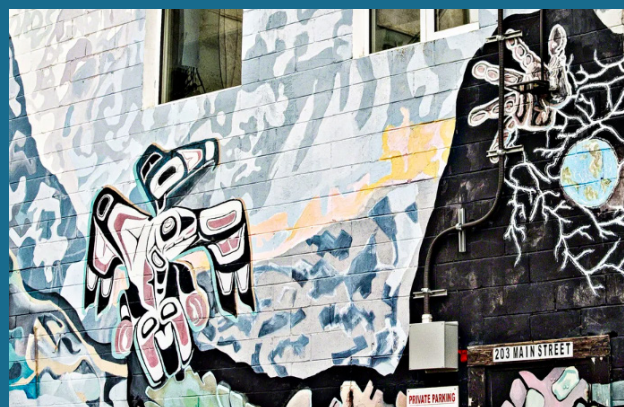
Goal 6 – Dynamic and Diverse Culture, Heritage, and Arts

Rich and diverse visual arts, heritage, cultural landscapes, and community activities.



Arts and Culture Through Public Art

The City fosters a vibrant arts community through its Public Art Program, with over 400 artworks in City-owned facilities. Following the Public Art Policy (2017), the City dedicates about 1% of eligible capital construction budgets to public art. The City actively monitors the condition and accessibility of these works.



Heritage Programming

The City leases Jenni House in Shipyards Park to the Yukon Film Society, which has hosted over 200 artists through residencies and offered 185 workshops and events for around 6,000 residents. Additionally, the City leases historic buildings like Donnerworth House and LePage Park to the Yukon Historical and Museums Association, which has delivered heritage programming such as Arts in the Park and free concerts and arts demonstrations.





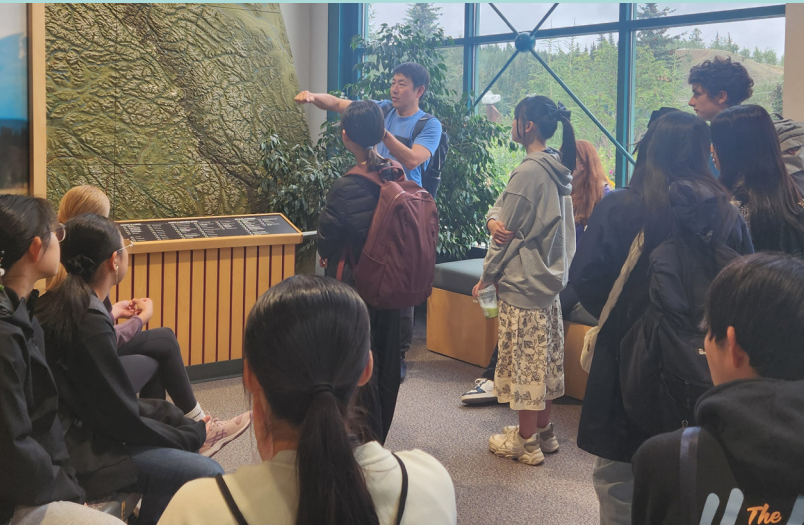
Festival & Special Events Grants

Introduced in 2008, the Festivals and Special Events Grant Program distributes approximately \$50,000 annually to 15–20 non-profit organisations for inclusive, community-led events.



Street Eats

Street Eats, held annually, is a free downtown food festival that animates public space with local performers and vendors.



Sister City Program

Since 2000, the Sister City Program has supported cultural exchange with Juneau, Alaska; Lancieux, France; and Ushiku, Japan through exchanges, cultural activities, and community events such as Japan Fest. Chortkiv, Ukraine, joined the honorary partnership in 2023.



Seasonal Festivities

Seasonal celebrations, downtown light displays, parades, and Canada Games Centre programming have further expanded access to arts and culture. Delivered with the Multicultural Association of the Yukon and Kwanlin Dün First Nation, these initiatives have supported newcomer inclusion, youth engagement, and intergenerational connection.

What's Next?

- Plans to modernise the Heritage Management Plan, in collaboration with the Government of Yukon, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council. This plan aims to broaden heritage recognition, guide land use, and inform an update to the Heritage Bylaw (2002) in line with reconciliation and long-term planning.
- Planned update to the Public Art Policy and future public art installations, including at the Robert Service Campground, will emphasise local and First Nations artists, public access, and community benefits.

Goal 7 – Social Equity: Affordable Housing and Poverty Reduction

Programs and initiatives to equitably provide for the basic needs of the entire community.



Enabling Housing Supply Through Zoning and Permitting

The Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan reaffirms the City's and community partners' commitment to ending and preventing homelessness through the implementation of the partner-led Safe at Home: A Community-Based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness in Whitehorse (2017).

In 2025, the City also introduced its construction e-permitting system, allowing online applications, real-time tracking, digital submissions, and automated updates to reduce administrative barriers and speed up building project approvals.



Support for the Cornerstone Community Residence

In 2018, the City supported the Cornerstone Community Residence at 704 Main Street, led by Opportunities Yukon by providing a \$1 million grant and development incentives, helping deliver 53 housing units. The project delivers accessible, affordable rental housing with space for social enterprises, supporting independent living and community connection for people with disabilities.





Support for The Hearth Supportive Housing

In 2021, the City supported The Hearth, a permanent supportive housing project led by the Safe at Home Society, which will convert a former hotel at 4051 4th Avenue into 67 homes for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Homes will be allocated using Whitehorse's By-Name List, with dedicated units for Indigenous residents, women, and youth. City support included applying for \$5 million in federal funding, reducing development fees, providing a grant for permit and inspection costs, and supporting long-term housing stability.



Cost-of-Living Relief and Access to Essential Services

The City reduces cost-of-living pressures through programs that improve access to food, essential services, and transportation. The Food for Fines program allows residents to pay parking tickets through food or monetary donations. It has raised more than \$124,000 for the Whitehorse Food Bank and other local non-profits since 2005.

The City has also provided \$10,000 in annual contributions to the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition to support efforts to reduce and eliminate homelessness. Eligible seniors have received up to \$500 per year through the Senior Utility Charges Rebate.



What's Next?

- Develop a five-year Housing Action Plan to help address gaps in the housing supply.
- Review options for the future redevelopment at the former Municipal Services Building site on 4th Avenue.
- Reviewing the current Zoning Bylaw. Proposed changes aim to enable a broader range of housing options across all neighbourhoods, supporting the timely delivery of affordable and supportive housing.

Goal 8 – Connected, Engaged, Participatory Community

Citizens are involved in decisions that affect them; act as stewards of the environment; and are connected and responsible to each other, the environment, and their government.



Neighbourhood Programs and Inclusive Engagement

The City delivers year-round, neighbourhood-based programs and engagement strategies that strengthen connection, with a focus on families, seniors, youth, and underserved populations. Fridays in the Park operates in park locations throughout the City, growing from approximately 1,700 participants in 2024 to 2,000 in 2025, while Tobogganing Fridays engaged nearly 1,000 participants across two winter seasons. The annual Whitehorse Seniors' Tea has further supported inclusive engagement.

The City has supported stewardship and participation through landfill and water treatment facility tours, school and public outreach presentations, multilingual waste education materials, distribution of 800 waste-diversion colouring books, and the launch of the Compost Champions Program for multi-unit

residences. Bylaw education constables have delivered bike safety education to youth and adults at a variety of public events, including the Kids Bike Rodeo, Fridays in the Park and Fireweed Community Market, as well as in schools.

In 2024, the City launched its FireSmart Program, which brings together residents, businesses, governments, and organizations to reduce wildfire risks.

City digital and in-person channels further expand engagement. Since 2021, the Engage Whitehorse website has received 130,000+ visits, hosted nearly 60 City projects, and attracted 900+ subscribers. Social media followings grew from 6,300 to 21,800 on Facebook and 1,400 to 9,000 on Instagram (2019–2026), while City newsletters now reach 4,300+ subscribers, complemented by public, youth, and business town halls and community pop-ups.



Volunteerism and Stewardship Recognition

Volunteerism plays a vital role in fostering community connection and shared responsibility. Since 1987, the Volunteer of the Year Awards have recognised outstanding contributions, with each year seeing 25 to 50 nominees.

Hands-on stewardship involves initiatives such as the 20-Minute Makeover, where volunteers actively participate in cleanup efforts. Neighbourhood volunteers maintain about 30 outdoor rinks, ensuring they remain in great shape. Additionally, trail stewardship partnerships promote volunteer-led trail building and maintenance every year.



Partnerships and Grants Enabling Community Capacity

The City works with community partners to enhance inclusive opportunities, including Halloween events, International Older Persons Day activities, and local sport programming. The Recreation Expo, launched in 2024, has connected residents with 40+ businesses and community organisations.

Funding supports community-led participation. Recreation and Youth Grant programs provide

over \$200,000 annually to more than 45 organisations that have delivered programs aligned with the Territorial Youth Strategy. Accessibility improvements at the Canada Games Centre and city-led events have further enhanced inclusive engagement.

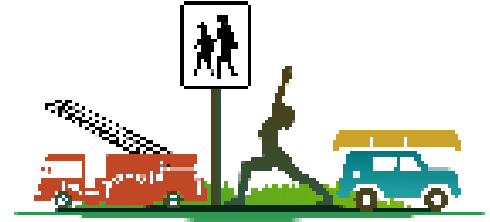
In 2018, the City signed a Declaration of Commitment that strengthened relationships among the City, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

What's Next?

- Expand opportunities for in-person community engagement, simplify public input processes, and collaborate with partners to understand residents' information needs better.
- The 2026 Arctic Winter Games will further deepen community connections, encourage volunteerism, and inspire civic pride. Building on its successful experience hosting the Games in 2012, the City will once again welcome the event in 2026, supported by \$250,000 in cash and \$500,000 in in-kind contributions. The Games will bring together approximately 2,000 volunteers and highlight First Nations culture, youth leadership, and community inclusion.
- The Compost Champions Program will increase participation with planned expansion for food service businesses.

Goal 9 – Safe and Healthy Community

Physical and mental health and safety from hazards such as fire, crime, and traffic.



Safer Streets and Personal Mobility Safety

The City has advanced safe mobility by lowering residential speed limits (40 km/h), reducing speeds on select arterials (50 km/h), reinforcing 30 km/h school and playground zones, and applying neighbourhood traffic-calming measures. The Selkirk Elementary School Active Travel Plan (2022) has guided infrastructure safety improvements in Riverdale, including supporting the redesign of the school parking lot and upgrading the multi-use path at Selkirk Street and the crosswalk at Lewes Boulevard.



The 2024 update to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw has further improved public safety by strengthening taxi driver standards, enhancing enforcement, and improving accessibility and transportation support for people with mobility needs.



Trails, Active Living, and Safe Access to Nature

Whitehorse features a designated and maintained trail network that spans 320 km, which includes 260 km of natural surface and 42 km of paved paths, to promote physical activity and wellbeing. The Trail Development Policy and Trail Maintenance Policy were updated in 2025 and provide safety and maintenance standards.

Since 2015, approximately 16 km of single-track and 14 km of paved multi-use trails have been developed, enhancing neighbourhood connectivity. The Interactive Trail Map (2025) provides up to date information on trails, including permitted uses and closures.



Vandalism Prevention and Community Safety

Vandalism has remained a concern in Whitehorse, particularly downtown, affecting perceptions of safety and the use of public spaces. The City addresses safety through its bylaws and partnerships.

In 2025, the City and the Government of Yukon began working in partnership to develop a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan for Whitehorse to enhance safety and wellbeing for all residents. The City is also supporting neighbourhood-based prevention through partner-led initiatives, such as the Downtown Whitehorse Safety Response Action Plan (2024), and by encouraging residents to report concerns through RCMP programs.



The Vacant and Unoccupied Building Bylaw improves safety by requiring owners to register and secure vacant buildings to prevent hazards and unauthorized access. The Maintenance Bylaw aims to maintain a clean and safe community by addressing issues such as graffiti, property maintenance, snow and ice, and the accumulation of refuse.



Emergency Preparedness and Fire Response

Whitehorse Fire Services protect public safety through fire suppression, prevention, inspections, and life-safety compliance. From 2023–2025, Fire Services responded to 800+ incidents annually. The City maintains an Emergency Operations Centre to coordinate its response to major emergencies and disasters. It has been activated during flood events, the COVID-19 pandemic, potential wildfires, and to address landslide issues. The City regularly trains its staff, including with other governments and agencies.

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2024) has guided FireSmart initiatives that strengthened community resilience. The program has reached approximately 3,900 residents since 2024 through 70 education events and 389 home assessments. In 2025, the City undertook targeted fuel abatement on its properties to reduce the risk of wildfire in the community.



Emergency preparedness is guided by the Emergency Management Plan (2024), with Health and Safety Services coordinating emergency management and Communications leading public alerting and crisis communications.

The Asset Management Policy (2020) and the State of Infrastructure Report (2025) guide the proactive maintenance of infrastructure to ensure reliable essential services during emergencies and strengthen the City's response capacity and community resilience.



What's Next?

- The City's Asset Management Policy and Climate Action Plan implementation will help address asset gaps and strengthen infrastructure reliability, reduce risk, and build climate resilience through integrated, lifecycle-based planning. A critical infrastructure identification project is underway to further support climate vulnerability assessments.
- The Whitehorse Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan and Downtown Transit Hub will help enhance safety and usability through improved amenities, accessibility, and year-round transit reliability.
- Targeted emergency investments, including fire hydrant upgrades, an improved emergency notification system, and a third fire hall in Whistle Bend in 2026 (\$18 million), will improve safety, accessibility, and response times for growing neighbourhoods.
- In 2026, the Emergency Program will prioritize updating the City's Evacuation Plan, which will outline procedures from individual homes to neighbourhood-level evacuations and responses to city-wide emergencies. To support this, the City will implement public communication and education initiatives to inform residents.

Goal 10 – Diverse Local Economy

A stable, diverse economy that is resilient to global change and features a strong labour force, a healthy municipal corporation, and a supportive environment for entrepreneurs and local businesses.



Economic Leadership and Planning

The City fosters economic resilience through strategic planning, infrastructure delivery, and financial stewardship. In 2015, Council adopted a 5-year Community Economic Development Strategy to enhance collaboration with local stakeholders, and explore opportunities for coordination and joint initiatives, such as participating in local economic development conferences and roundtable discussions.

Other planning documents guide City decisions related to economic development, including the Downtown Retail and Entertainment Strategy (2016–2025), Local Food and Urban Agriculture Study (2020), and the Downtown and Marwell Plans.





Procurement and Policy Tools

In 2020, the City updated its Procurement (Purchasing and Sales) Policy to strengthen sustainable procurement by integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into planning, specifications, and solicitation of documents where practicable. Membership in the Canadian Collaboration for Sustainable Procure-

ment (CCSP) supported this work by providing shared resources and best practices.

The City tracks procurements over \$100,000 that incorporate sustainability and reports these initiatives to Council semi-annually. Since 2021, 67%–69% of procurement has been awarded to local businesses, supporting business diversity, reinforcing local supply chains, and contributing to a resilient local economy.



Business Activity and Downtown Vitality

The City has promoted economic vitality through seasonal programs and partnerships that boost business activity and visitation and make it easier for small businesses to operate. Since 2013, the Mobile Food Vendors Program has hosted up to 10 vendors downtown each year. The Street Eats initiative, launched in 2017, promotes local street food, while Town Square events in 2023 and 2024 brought markets and cultural programming to the area. So far, 20 food businesses have participated in the Mobile Food Vendor program, with three opening permanent locations. In 2022, the City introduced the Sidewalk Café and Pop-Up Patio Program, with seven businesses participating to date.

City facilities and services offer affordable spaces for businesses and businesses-supporting organisations to operate, such as the Spruce Bog Craft Fair at the Canada Games Centre and



Fireweed Community Market in Shipyards Park, which welcomed 112 and 186 vendors respectively in 2025. The Shipyard Park continues to be a popular venue for small and major events in Whitehorse.

The City has also supported local economic activity through tourism coordination, enabled by a 2023 memorandum of understanding with the Yukon Government Department of Tourism and Culture and ex-officio participation on the boards of the Yukon Convention Bureau and the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce. The City has made annual \$20,000 contributions to the Yukon Convention Bureau.

What's Next?

- In 2025, Whitehorse registered over 2,800 active licensed businesses, including 409 new licenses, though recent declines need further analysis. The City will review its Business Licensing Bylaw in 2026 to better understand this trend. Efforts to modernise business licensing, develop the Wayfinding Plan, and enhance program coordination aim to improve business accessibility and customer experience.
- Propose a new Economic Development Strategy and advance the recommendations from the 2025 Downtown Commons Needs Assessment to guide its actions in supporting a healthy local economy.

Goal 11 – Zero Waste

Minimise waste generation and maximise resource recovery through reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting.



Waste Reduction and Diversion Programs

The Solid Waste Action Plan (2013) provides a strategic framework for waste prevention, reduction, and diversion in Whitehorse. The plan identifies priority diversion streams, such as organics, cardboard, clean wood, and mixed recyclables. City bylaws, services, and capital investments now reflect these priorities. Commercial organics collection, introduced in 2018, increased commercial organics tonnage by approximately 300% compared to 2015.



In 2024, the City launched residential curbside recycling, completing the transition to three-stream collection for eligible households. In 2025, program operations were turned over to a producer responsibility organization under the Yukon Government's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulation, shifting program delivery and costs from the municipality to producers of packaging materials and aligning Whitehorse with recycling systems across Canada.

Investments in diversion infrastructure have expanded local processing capacity. The 2019

Compost Facility expansion increased organics processing capacity, with bulk compost sales rising 25% and bagged sales increasing 237% since 2016. Clean wood diversion, strengthened through FireSmart collaboration, more than doubled in 2025.

The Waste Management Bylaw establishes requirements for the storage, collection, transportation, and disposal of waste in Whitehorse and identifies materials prohibited at the Waste Management Facility.



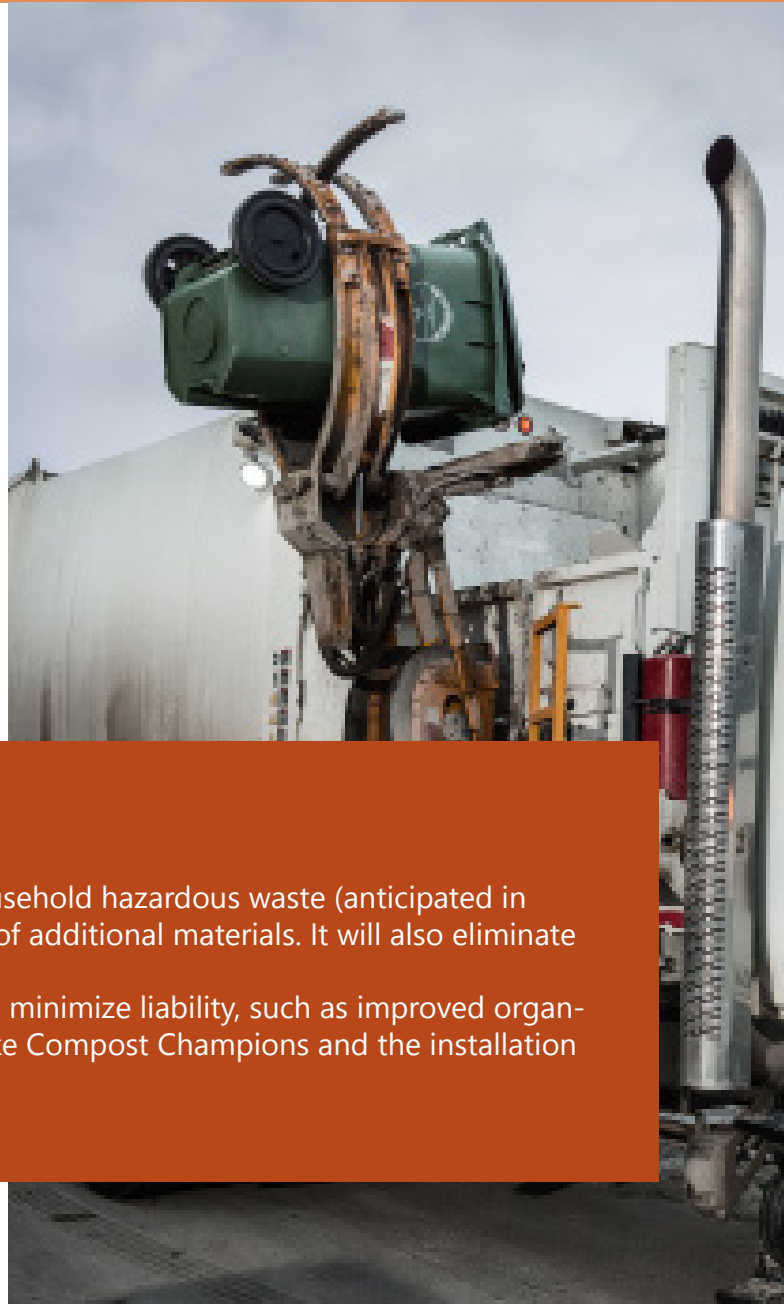
Circular Economy and Public Education

The City promotes circular economy principles, encouraging residents and businesses to reduce waste by extending the life of materials through sharing, reusing, repairing, and recycling. Outreach activities, including landfill tours, presentations to schools and community groups, and participation in events such as the Fireweed Community Market and Fridays in the Park, have supported public awareness and participation in waste management.



Environmental Grant and Credit Program

Since 2015, the City's Environmental Grant program has awarded more than \$60,000 to support community-led waste reduction, repairing and reusing projects, including Raven ReCentre's Whitehorse Tool Library. The Solid Waste Diversion Credit program has provided approximately \$150,000 in annual funding to community recycling organisations.



What's Next?

- Continue to support the rollout of EPR for household hazardous waste (anticipated in 2026) and advocate for expanding regulation of additional materials. It will also eliminate its Diversion Credit program.
- Prioritize initiatives that extend landfill life and minimize liability, such as improved organics diversion through educational programs like Compost Champions and the installation of new contaminant-separation equipment.

Goal 12 – Resilient, Accessible Food Systems

Production, processing, distribution, and sales of local, healthy food to all residents.



Planning and Regulatory Framework for Local Food

The City's Local Food and Urban Agriculture Study outlines potential actions to support a healthy food system, addressing production, processing, distribution, nutrition support, and resource recovery. The Climate Action Plan builds on this study to promote community gardens, local food production, and improved food security.

The Zoning Bylaw permits community gardens and greenhouses in most Residential zones, in some Commercial zones, and in Environmental Protection, Greenbelt, Parks and Recreation, Public Service, and Future Planning zones.

The Lease, Encroachment, and Property Use Policy (2021, updated 2023) outlines how the City manages land lease agreements. Over the past decade, the City has had non-profit leases for community gardens with the Downtown Urban Gardeners Society, Valleyview Community Association, and more recently, the Whistle Bend Community Association.

The Animal Control Bylaw (2012) permits residents to own animals including hens with regulations for responsible ownership. The complementary Maintenance Bylaw and Business License Bylaw (2017, updated 2019) support safe, small-scale food production while ensuring public health and neighbourhood livability.





Enabling Local Food Through Compost Production

The City supports local food systems through the production and distribution of finished compost. A 2019 facility expansion boosted processing capacity, leading to a 25% increase in bulk compost sales and a 237% rise in bagged sales since 2016, reflecting strong community demand.



Expanding Community-Based Food Growing

The City's Environmental Grant program advances the Local Food & Urban Agriculture Study's recommendations by supporting neighbourhood-scale food production, land access, and food skills.

Since 1994, the City has invested almost \$70,000 in Environmental Grants for schools, non-profits, and local businesses to enhance food production and education, leading to more community gardens and greenhouses over the past decade, especially in Downtown, Riverdale, and Whistle Bend.

Shipyards Park serves as a vital venue for vendors at the Fireweed Community Market, allowing them to sell locally grown and prepared food. The Canada Games Centre is an ideal central location that offers from time to time cooking, canning, and gardening classes to improve food literacy.



What's Next?

- The proposed Zoning Bylaw 2025-37 is expected to allow community gardens as principal uses in residential, park, and institutional zones and permit market gardening under home-based business regulations. These changes aim to reduce regulatory barriers and promote small-scale food production in neighbourhoods.
- Bylaw education constables will continue education on responsibility of animal owners.

Appendix - Supporting Strategies and Plans

Below is a list of key City public strategies and plans that play a crucial role in supporting the actions outlined in the sustainability plan across various departments. Find the referenced policies and bylaws on the City website under the “Our Government” page in “Bylaws and Policies.”

Bicycle Network Plan (2018)

The Whitehorse Bicycle Network Plan aims to enhance year-round cycling, expand transportation options, and increase ridership. It outlines future routes for all ages and abilities, following Transportation Association of Canada guidelines for safe and comfortable infrastructure.

Climate Action Plan (2025)

The Whitehorse Climate Action Plan outlines how the City will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Many of its actions also deliver broader environmental and community benefits, reinforcing the City’s overall sustainability goals.

Copper Ridge Development Area Master Plan (2024)

The Copper Ridge Development Area Master Plan guides residential growth between Copper Ridge Place and Falcon Drive, promoting housing choice, preserving natural areas, enhancing connectivity, and ensuring safe, inclusive development.

Chadburn Lake Park Management Plan (2017)

The Chadburn Lake Park Management Plan outlines a ten-year strategy focused on ecological protection, habitat conservation, cultural recognition, and inclusive recreation to enhance Whitehorse’s wilderness character and quality of life.

Community Economic Development Strategy (2015)

The Community Economic Development Strategy 2015–2020 Work Plan outlines actions the City will take to strengthen the local economy, support businesses, and enhance quality of life through sustainable and inclusive development. It identifies strategic goals such as improving the business climate, supporting entrepreneurship, attracting residents, investing in infrastructure, and creating a vibrant downtown.

Downtown and Marwell Plans (2018)

The Downtown Plan outlines a 10-year vision for a vibrant “Greater Downtown,” focusing on connections with Marwell, land use integration, improved mobility and safety, and expanded employment opportunities for long-term economic and community vitality.

The Marwell Plan outlines a 10-year vision for Whitehorse’s industrial and commercial area, promoting connectivity and redevelopment while considering industrial relocation and site renewal as part of a “Greater Downtown.”

Downtown Parking Management Plan (2019)

The Downtown Parking Management Plan identifies technology enhancements, supply and demand management, and pricing strategies as key priorities for future parking management in the downtown area.

Downtown Retail and Entertainment Strategy (2016–2025)

The Downtown Retail and Entertainment Strategy seeks to revitalise Downtown by evaluating the retail, service, and arts sectors. It highlights market trends and gaps, recommending enhancements in placemaking, connectivity, parking, and support for local businesses and culture.

Emergency Management Plan (2024)

The Emergency Management Plan outlines a coordinated approach for responding to emergencies in Whitehorse, detailing roles, and responsibilities to protect lives, property, and the environment while ensuring public confidence and supporting quick recovery.

Local Food and Urban Agriculture Study Potential Actions (2020-2030)

The City of Whitehorse Local Food and Urban Agriculture Study outlines a 10-year framework to strengthen Whitehorse’s local food system, aligning with City and Yukon strategies to enhance food security, resilience, community connection, and sustainable economic development.

Modernised Transit Route Plan (2021)

The Modernised Transit Route Plan enhances the 2018 Transit Master Plan to address indirect routes, long travel times, and evolving demand. It recommends updated routes and schedules to improve efficiency, frequency, and service alignment with community needs.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2018)

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan sets a long-term vision to improve parks, recreation, and community wellness through inclusive access, strong programming, and quality public spaces. It outlines actions to expand programming, strengthen partnerships, and guide future investments.

Selkirk Elementary School Active Travel Plan (2022)

The Selkirk Elementary School Active Travel Plan aims to enhance safety for school routes in Riverdale by promoting walking and cycling, improving infrastructure, and raising awareness about active transportation. It informs infrastructure investments while serving as a model for future initiatives.

Solid Waste Action Plan (2013)

The City of Whitehorse Solid Waste Action Plan outlines key strategies for enhancing waste prevention, reduction, and diversion, aligning with waste management targets.

State of Infrastructure Report (2025)

The State of Infrastructure Report 2025 outlines the City's various infrastructure assets, their value, condition, and life expectancy. This information supports effective asset management and allows for proactive planning for upgrades and replacements.

Transit Master Plan (2018)

The City of Whitehorse Transit Master Plan seeks to create a transit system that addresses mobility needs, supports growth, and aligns with planning goals, while promoting sustainability, active transportation, and vibrant neighbourhoods surrounding downtown. It identifies key challenges and opportunities for the City's transit network.

Transportation Master Plan (2024)

The Whitehorse Transportation Master Plan presents a vision for transportation planning through 2040, emphasising accessibility, equity, safety, and sustainability while balancing diverse community needs for an optimal transportation system.

Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan (2023)

The Whitehorse 2040 Official Community Plan is the top policy document for a municipality, outlining its vision and direction. Adopted by bylaw, the City of Whitehorse has authority under the Municipal Act to develop the plan, which guides its decision-making with a framework of goals and policies.

Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2024)

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan outlines how Whitehorse can reduce wildfire risk through shared responsibility and coordinated action among governments and residents. It prioritizes four focus areas and includes near-term steps to support long-term resilience.

Contact Sustainable Whitehorse

Learn more, share feedback, and get involved in building a healthy, resilient community.

Online

whitehorse.ca/sustainable-whitehorse

<https://www.whitehorse.ca/our-government/sustainable-whitehorse/>

Email

sustainability@whitehorse.ca

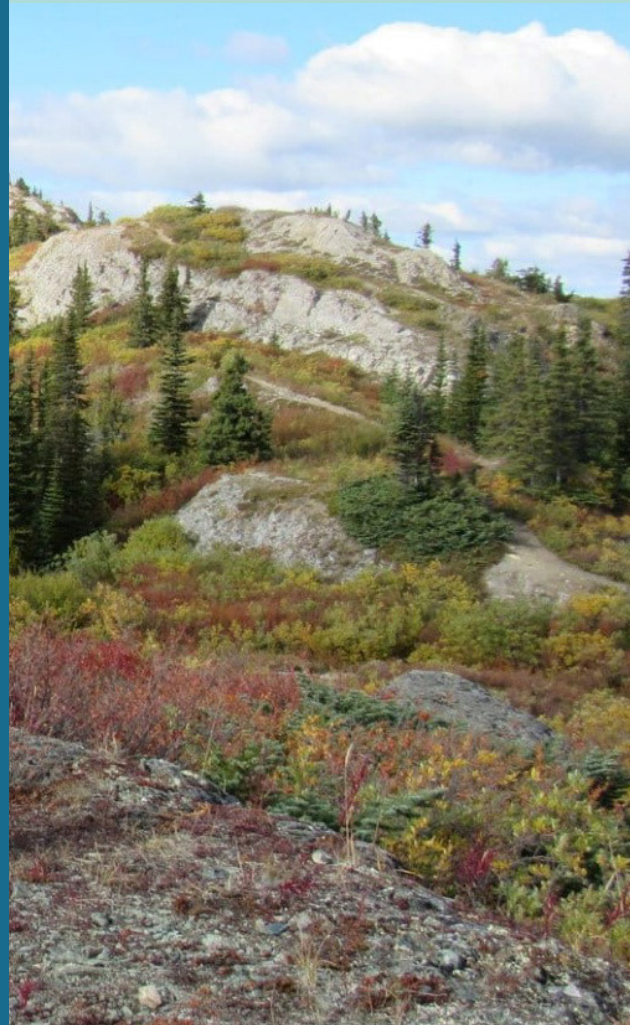
Mail

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In Person

Whitehorse Operations Building
187 Range Road
Whitehorse, Yukon

Community partnerships and public participation are central to advancing sustainability in Whitehorse.



Planning & Sustainability Services
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